



Staying Healthy AT HOME

MAKING TIME FOR YOUR DAILY CALM: MINI MINDFULNESS ACTIVITIES

Mindful Breathing

When we're stressed, we tend to start breathing shallowly, which can actually increase feelings of anxiety. This mini mindfulness activity is great for helping you to tune in and calm down. And, it can be done absolutely anywhere.

- Breathe in deeply through your nose as you count to three.
- Hold your breath within your lungs to the count of three.
- Breathe out slowly through your mouth as you count to three.
- As you continue to breathe, tune in to any negative feelings by asking yourself, "What's happening for me right now?"

*Allow the answer to arise naturally... "I am feeling _____
(i.e. anxious/depressed/afraid/frustrated)."*

- With your next deep breath out, release that negative statement and replace it with a positive one as you breathe in...

"I am allowing compassion/calm/peace/joy/serenity to enter into my experience."

- Continue to breathe and direct your mindful attention toward the positive statement.
- Keep repeating the process of breathing and holding the positive statement in awareness until you notice the negative emotion losing its power.
- Remember that the idea is not to invalidate or deny negative feelings but, rather, to turn painful emotions into more manageable, effective, and useful experiences.

Mindful Movements to Beat the Mid-day Slump

1. Stretch arms over head: Inhale arms up, exhale and swing your arms down past your sides. Bend at the knees on the

exhale to where it feels comfortable. Straighten the knees on the inhale.

2. Breathe of Fire: This invigorating breathing exercise involves 20-40 short powerful exhales. It's an ideal way to release built up tension and lift your mood. Try it seated or standing. Take a full breath in through your nose and pause for a moment. Start with your arms up, making fists with your hands, and as you exhale pull your elbows down to your waist. Exhale out your mouth in short spurts, as if you're abruptly shushing someone: Sh. Sh. Sh. Every time you exhale you pull your belly back to your spine.

3. Toes up/Heels up: If possible, take off your shoes. This full body reboot increases blood flow to your feet and ultimately to the rest of your body. As you inhale, lift your heels up. As you exhale, release heels and lift your toes up. Rock up and down for 5 breaths.

4. Side Sways: Moving your spine side-to-side is invigorating. As you inhale, reach your arms into a "T" position. As you inhale reach your right arm overhead and sway to the left. Inhale brings arms back to the "T." Exhale sway to the right. Repeat for five breaths.

