



MINDFUL MINI BREAKS

The Power of Meditative Breathing



You have likely seen in a sitcom when someone is panicking and they are given a paper bag to breathe into. It turns out this isn't just good comedic content, it's actually a good practice to calm our bodies and respond to overwhelming feelings of stress. The good news is that you don't need the paper bag.

When you begin to feel overwhelmed, regardless of the reason, you can take a time out. In your personal time-out, use your breath to bring you some calm.

1. Find a quiet place to sit comfortably.
2. Focus on your breath.
3. Inhale through your nose for three seconds, hold that breath for two seconds, and exhale through your mouth for four seconds. You don't need to have a timer, simply count slowly in your head.
4. Pay attention to the feeling of your lungs expanding, the sound of your breathing, or any other aspect of the breath that keeps you focused.
5. You can close your eyes or leave them open. The important thing is to keep focused for about 5-7 minutes on your breathing.

This simple act is incredibly helpful in reducing stress and anxiety. The more you do it, the better the benefits. During stressful times, like this global pandemic, it is not necessary to make any big changes in your health and wellness routines. In fact, what you really need is to find small ways to re-center which will help with the big emotions that occur in response to this crisis, and just do the next right thing.