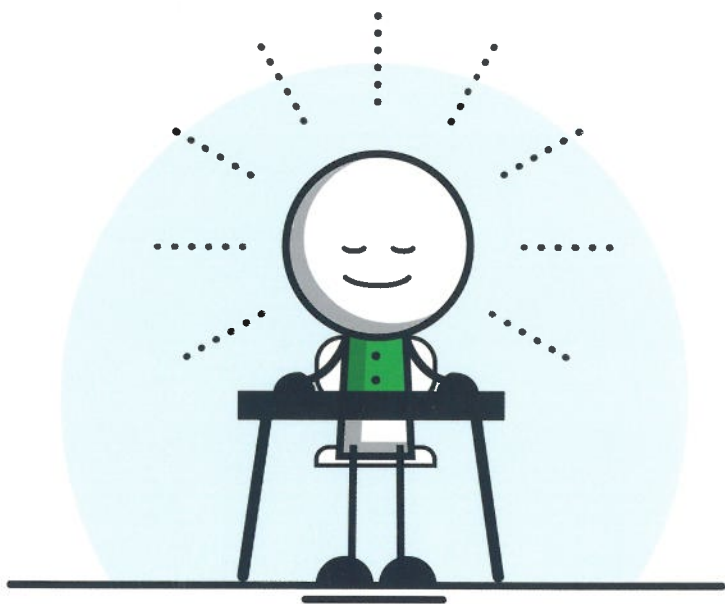


Mindful Moments

A book of mindfulness-based practices for the classroom.



INSTITUTE OF
**POSITIVE
EDUCATION**

'Be happy in the
moment, that's enough.
Each moment is all we
need, not more.'

Mother Teresa

With Grateful Hearts

The Institute of Positive Education would like to thank everyone who has contributed to this book. This booklet was produced by the Institute of Positive Education with contributions from Janet ETTY-Leal.

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Mindful Moments Introduction

Why Mindful Moments?

Mindfulness can be defined as paying attention to the present moment with intent and purpose.

The use of mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs) in schools is continuing to increase and there is an ever-growing body of research regarding their effectiveness. The research shows that practising mindfulness leads to improved levels of wellbeing for both the teacher and the student (see below for references).

One important commonality in the literature is the need for teachers to engage in their own personal mindfulness practices before attempting to teach mindfulness to their students (Albrecht, Albrecht & Cohen, 2012; Arthurson, 2015; Jongbloed, 2016).

In addition, Arthurson (2015) encourages teachers to educate their students regarding the impact of mindfulness on the brain. MBIs carried out with adults have resulted both behavioural changes and physical changes in the brain, after as little as two weeks (Klingberg, 2010).

Mindfulness is linked to a number of social, emotional, cognitive and behavioural wellbeing indicators in children and young people. Some of the most commonly reported benefits are summarised in the table below.

It is by personally engaging in mindfulness practices that you can best discover their many benefits. After educating the parent, teacher and student communities about these benefits, you could then take the step of adopting a whole-school approach. By embedding mindfulness into your classrooms, you can help to create a flourishing school for all your practitioners.

References:

Black & Fernando, 2014; Britton, Lepp, Niles, Rocha, Fisher & Gold, 2014; Flook, Goldberg, Pinger & Davidson, 2015; Ricarte, Ros, Latorre & Beltrán, 2015; Schonert-Reichl, Oberle, Lawlor, Abbott, Thomson, Oberlander & Diamond, 2015; Sibinga, Webb, Ghazarian & Ellen, 2015; Bernay, Graham, Devcich, Rix & Rubie-Davies, 2016; Chadwick & Gelbar, 2016; Dariotis, Cluxton-Keller, Mirabal-Beltran, Gould, Greenberg & Mendelson, 2016; Vickery & Dorjee, 2016; Hwang, Bartlett, Greben & Hand, 2017; Lomas, Medina, Ivztan, Rupprecht & Eiroa-Orosa, 2017; Renshaw & Cook, 2017.

Benefit	Research
Improved attention	Black & Fernando, 2014; Ricarte, Ros, Latorre & Beltrán, 2015; Bhayee, Tomaszewski, Lee, Moffat, Pino, Moreno & Farb, 2016
Increased levels of self-control and emotional regulation	Black & Fernando, 2014; Parker, Kupersmidt, Mathis, Scull & Sims, 2014; Flook, Goldberg, Pinger & Davidson, 2015; Schonert-Reichl, Oberle, Lawlor, Abbott, Thomson, Oberlander & Diamond, 2015; Dariotis, Cluxton-Keller, Mirabal-Beltran, Gould, Greenberg & Mendelson, 2016; Jongbloed, 2016; Vickery & Dorjee, 2016; Wisner & Starzec, 2016; Kaunhoven & Dorjee, 2017; Lomas, Medina, Ivtzan, Rupprecht & Eiroa-Orosa, 2017
Promotion of pro-social behaviour	Black & Fernando, 2014; Parker, Kupersmidt, Mathis, Scull & Sims, 2014; Flook, Goldberg, Pinger & Davidson, 2015; Schonert-Reichl, Oberle, Lawlor, Abbott, Thomson, Oberlander & Diamond, 2015; Jongbloed, 2016; Wisner & Starzec, 2016; Lomas, Medina, Ivtzan, Rupprecht & Eiroa-Orosa, 2017
Enhanced academic achievement, working memory and metacognition	Zenner, Herrnleben-Kurz & Walach, 2014; Ricarte, Ros, Latorre & Beltrán, 2015; Jongbloed, 2016; Quach, Jastrowski & Alexander, 2016; Vickery & Dorjee, 2016; Volanen, Lassander, Hankonen, Santalahti, Hintsanen, Simonsen, Raevuori, Mulla, Vahlberg, But & Suominen, 2016; Renshaw & Cook, 2017
Decreased/prevention of depression, suicidal ideation and thoughts of self-harm	Britton, Lepp, Niles, Rocha, Fisher & Gold, 2014; Langer, Ulloa, Cangas, Rojas & Krause, 2015; Schonert-Reichl, Oberle, Lawlor, Abbott, Thomson, Oberlander & Diamond, 2015; Ricarte, Ros, Latorre & Beltrán, 2015; Sibinga, Webb, Ghazarian & Ellen, 2015; Volanen, Lassander, Hankonen, Santalahti, Hintsanen, Simonsen, Raevuori, Mulla, Vahlberg, But & Suominen, 2016; Renshaw & Cook, 2017
Reduced anxiety	Parker, Kupersmidt, Mathis, Scull & Sims, 2014; Carsley, Heath & Fajnerova, 2015; Langer, Ulloa, Cangas, Rojas & Krause, 2015; Ricarte, Ros, Latorre & Beltrán, 2015; Dove & Costello, 2017; Hwang, Bartlett, Greben & Hand, 2017; Lomas, Medina, Ivtzan, Rupprecht & Eiroa-Orosa, 2017
Lowered stress levels	Zenner, Herrnleben-Kurz & Walach, 2014; Schonert-Reichl, Oberle, Lawlor, Abbott, Thomson, Oberlander & Diamond, 2015; Sibinga, Webb, Ghazarian & Ellen, 2015; Dariotis, Cluxton-Keller, Mirabal-Beltran, Gould, Greenberg & Mendelson, 2016; Johnstone, Roake, Sheikh, Mole, Nigg & Oken, 2016; Hwang, Bartlett, Greben & Hand, 2017; Lomas, Medina, Ivtzan, Rupprecht & Eiroa-Orosa, 2017; Renshaw & Cook, 2017

Mindful Skills: A Prerequisite for Learning

By Janet ETTY-Leal

It has been such a pleasure to witness the personal transformations that have taken place in Mindfulness classes. Working for over 15 years with thousands of children from 3-18 years of age, from all walks of life, has brought countless moments of joy. In particular, seeing children with trauma, ASD, ADHD and learning problems experience states of calm, and share illuminating insights, continues to inspire and fuel my passion for this work.

The original translation of the word mindfulness is 'to remember'. The power of pausing creates moments for children to remember where their attention is, and how they can direct and sustain it. Mindfulness involves remembering what really matters in the present.

Mindfulness practices give children the opportunity to rediscover themselves; opportunities to open their hearts and minds to new ways of feeling and thinking. Mindfulness also embraces the key character strength of curiosity, supporting a compassionate, inquiry-based approach to learning.

These practices retune the nervous system to enhance learning. States of stress ignite the fight-flight sympathetic nervous system, where energy is directed to the muscles, limbs and hindbrain. Consequently, blood supply to the organs and key areas of the brain is limited, inhibiting learning and memory. Mindfulness techniques gently reset neural functioning to restore the parasympathetic system. The frontal cortex returns to full functioning, enabling effective thinking and processing. As children participate in practices that fully engage their attention, neural networks fire and wire effectively, and dendrite growth is enriched.

There are many emotional and mental benefits associated with mindfulness, and it is our hope that the practices in this book enable you and your students to experience these benefits firsthand.

Mindful Moments: A Tool Kit for the Classroom

Mindfulness practices create secure anchor points for children's minds. Focus can be redirected from painful, stressful memories and worrisome projections, to a safe landing place in the present moment.

The practices in this book provide you with a varied 'mindful menu' of possibilities. The activities are also designed to embrace a variety of learning styles. Students can discover personal ways to focus attention and experience calm inner states. Dr Norman Doidge, author of 'The Brain's Way of Healing', reminds us that retuning the body helps to reset the brain.

Activities include standing and seated practices, connection to the senses, a range of breathing exercises, and some partner exercises. These practices could be implemented in a variety of ways, for example to:

- 'book end' the day – for greeting and farewells
- start a lesson and highlight learning intentions
- provide opportunities to focus and refresh attention
- restore calm and congruence, and as
- portals of transition – practices that segue into new activities, dovetailing with the curriculum.

Remember that these practices will benefit everyone in the classroom – including the teacher! It is helpful to lead these practices with a sense of sharing them with the students.

With commitment and consistency, these practices can bring minds to a shared calm, kind destination, creating a harmonious space for optimal learning.

Accompanying Notes

Age Levels

Recommended age levels have not been included, as many of the following mindful moments can be adapted for almost all school-aged children. Younger students and older students alike can most definitely reap the benefits of participating in the following practices...and so can teachers!

Duration

We have deliberately chosen practices that require minimal, if any, equipment and can be completed within a few minutes. A suggested duration has been included for each activity.

Implementation

The following mindful moments can be used at the beginning or end of a lesson, to reset students' focus during a lesson or to segue into a new activity.

Variations

We warmly encourage teachers and students to enjoy the following mindful moments, and then to have fun researching innovative variations that can add freshness, providing ongoing wellbeing and learning benefits.

Tips

Mindful moments are a low-cost, high-impact intervention for schools. Further training can be beneficial for teachers; however, no additional resources are required to implement these practices in the classroom.

To maximise the positive impact of these mindful moments, here are some tips and insights that teachers have shared:

- It is important for teachers to personally practice the techniques well beforehand, becoming familiar and comfortable with these practices before sharing them with students.
- Consider the appropriateness of the different practices for the age and stage of the students in your class.
- Ask students for feedback about their experiences with mindful moments, and seek their input to help fine-tune the types of practices with which you engage in the classroom.
- Mindfulness practices are best implemented within supportive school environments.

We'd love for you to get in touch and share any mindfulness practices that you have implemented in your classroom: institute@ggs.vic.edu.au. Thanks!

Role of the Teacher

The following suggestions are mentioned to assist you in running mindful moments as effectively and successfully as possible.

- **Be genuine!**
Your enthusiasm, or lack of it, is contagious and will impact student participation or buy-in.
- **Be expectant!**
Expect that you will be able to inspire your students to discover and enjoy mindfulness practices that work for them.
- **Be prepared!**
Ensure you are comfortable and familiar with the practice before sharing it with your students.
- **Be calm!**
Ensure your instructions are clearly understood and heard by all, but also communicated in a tone and at a pace that conveys a sense of peace.

Disclaimer

Each of the mindful moments described in this book have been successfully implemented by teachers at Geelong Grammar School (GGS).

Trainers at GGS' Institute of Positive Education have also harnessed the power of these exercises with educators and students around the world, and there certainly appears to be a universal appeal with regard to participating in mindfulness practises.

Despite our successes in using the activities described, we encourage educators to consider, with prudence, when, where, why and how to best use each activity.

Not all activities will work for you and your students. Also, be mindful to harness your intuition and experiences to skilfully introduce a new practice, and draw upon your classroom management skills to ensure the desired outcomes are achieved.

Some of these practices have been handed down through generations of wellbeing practitioners and educators, so make the most of them! We hope they have a positive impact on your students' wellbeing.

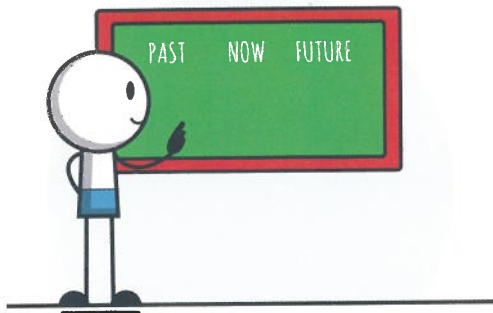
Some Words of Caution

Although numerous studies have found that mindfulness practitioners are 'models of flourishing mental health' (Lyubomirsky, 2007), it is also important to note that mindfulness is not necessarily beneficial for all people. Some participants have reported stress, a feeling of depersonalisation and the discarding of positive thoughts (Briñol et al, 2013). While the research does strongly suggest that these practices are broadly applicable, there may be cases in which asking someone to pursue an activity that is having a detrimental impact, due to the stress of not being able to do it or not feeling as though it is beneficial, could be harmful rather than helpful.

Mindfulness practices are a personal choice and everyone needs to work out which practices best work for them. Where possible, we teach our students these strategies and then ask them to find ways in which they could be most useful for them on an individual level. In particular, it's important to encourage students to:

- observe the present moment without judgement,
- focus on progressing toward goals rather than achieving them,
- be patient and allow things to unfold in their own time,
- trust themselves and that things will work out,
- be open and pay attention to things around you as if for the first time, and
- let go and detach from ruminations (Lyubomirsky, 2007).

**Seated
Mindful
Moments**



1. Now Point Focus

Equipment: Whiteboard, markers and eraser

Duration: 2 minutes

Practice: Seated

Teacher Preparation:

Using a green marker, write 'PAST' on the left-hand side of the board. Use a blue marker to write 'NOW' in the centre of the board. Use a red marker to write 'FUTURE' on the right-hand side of the board.

Students focus on the word 'PAST'. With each out-breath, invite students to release any negative emotions associated with things that have already happened – letting go of any frustration, guilt, regrets or anger. As you breathe out, slowly erase each letter on the board.

Students focus on the word FUTURE. With each out-breath, invite students to release any negative emotions about anything that has not even occurred – letting go of any anxiety, worry, concern or fear. As you breathe out, slowly erase each letter on the board.

Students focus on the word NOW, focusing their attention on what they want to achieve this lesson. Teacher writes learning intention under the word NOW.



2. Grateful Bodies

Equipment: None

Duration: 3 minutes

Practice: Seated

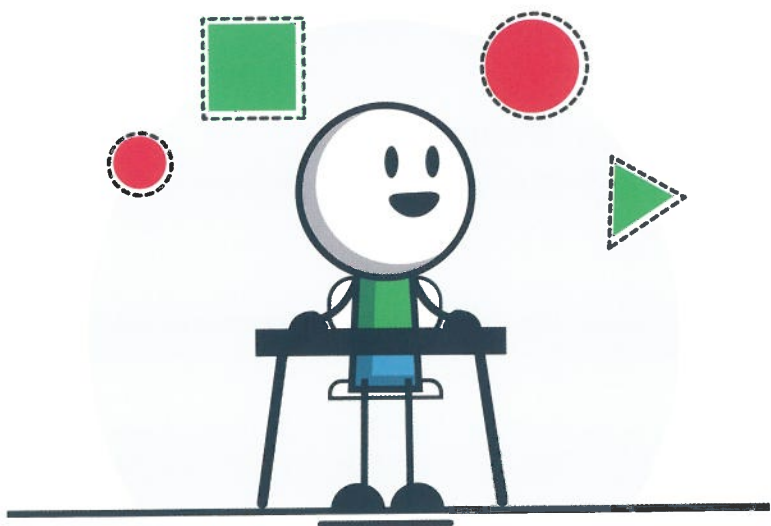
Students sit at their desks, taking a few moments to settle their body and centre their spine. Suggest that students close their eyes, or softly look down at their lap.

Students bring their awareness to the feet, sensing a feeling of gratitude for the incredible service they provide: balancing, moving and supporting the body, all day, every day.

Students bring their awareness to the hands, sensing a feeling of appreciation and gratitude for the incredible service they provide: holding, writing, moulding, making, expressing and creating things all day, every day.

Students bring their awareness to all the amazing, interconnected systems of the body: skeletal, muscular, cardiovascular, respiratory, digestive and neurological...supporting you, always.

Prompt students to sit with a quiet sense of gratitude for this wonderful piece of equipment that is their body, and to remember the need to treat it with care.



3. Mindful Sensing: Sight

Equipment: None

Duration: 2 minutes

Practice: Seated

Students sit at their desks, taking a few moments to settle their body and centre their spine.

Students look out the window, noticing 3 man-made objects and 3 elements of nature, taking note of colours and details.

Students shift their focus back inside the classroom. How many shapes can you notice? Are they rectangular, square, triangular, circular or irregular? Notice the colours and details of these shapes.

Students focus on their desk and notice the shapes, surfaces, textures and details, reflections and shadows, any books, technology, pens, scratches or marks on the surface of desk.

Prompt students to return their focus to the front of the room, where instructions are written for the lesson ahead.



4. Mindful Sensing: Touch

Equipment: None

Duration: 3 minutes

Practice: Seated

Students sit at their desks, taking a few moments to settle their body and centre their spine. Suggest that students close their eyes or softly look down at their lap.

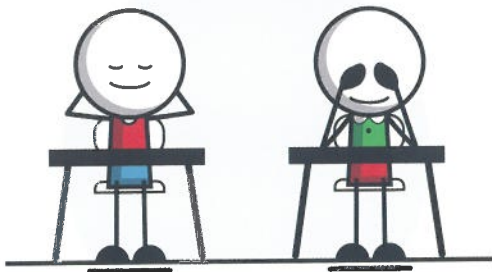
Students bring their awareness to the feet – the touch of shoes against each foot, the feeling of socks or tights against the skin, sensations of warmth or coolness.

Students shift their attention to parts of the body resting on surfaces – the feet resting on the floor, body resting on the base of the chair, spine resting against the back of the chair – becoming aware of the fact that they are safe and supported.

Students bring their attention to the body – the touch, feel and weight of clothing against the body, textures and warmth, and sensations of the air touching any parts of the body not covered by clothing.

Students bring their attention inside the body – the feel of the breath as it moves, up and down, in and out, with the in-breath and the out-breath.

Students take 3 deep, connected breaths and return their awareness to the room.



5. Mindful Sensing: Touch with Hands

Equipment: None

Duration: 3 minutes

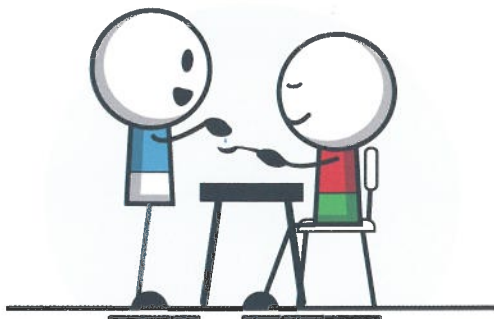
Practice: Seated

Students sit at their desks, taking a few moments to settle their body and centre their spine. Invite students to close their eyes, or softly look down at their lap.

Students bring their awareness to the spine and rest back into their chair. Students breathe in and stretch their arms above the head, linking the fingers of each hand together, then breathe out and cup the hands behind the base of the head. Students let their head rest in their hands, taking note of the warmth from the hands spreading into the head. Rest for 5 deep, slow breaths.

Students breathe in and stretch their arms above their head. Breathe out and rub hands gently together as they bring their arms down so that their elbows rest on the desk. Students create 'cups' with their hands, lowering their head into their hands so that their palms rest against the bone under the eyes and fingers rest against the forehead. Students let the warmth from their hands spread to the eye sockets. Rest for 5 deep, slow breaths.

Ask students to breathe in, slowly and gently remove the hands, and blink the eyes.



6. Mindful Sensing: Taste and Sight

Equipment: Plastic teaspoons and water

Duration: 3 minutes

Practice: Seated

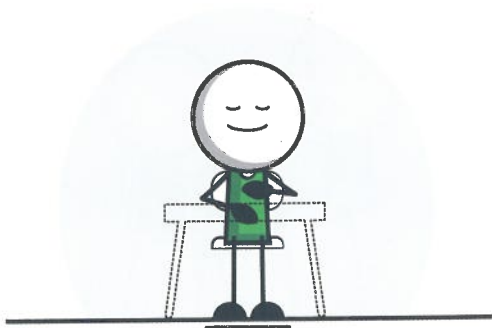
Students sit at their desks and breathe in, stretching their hands above their heads, then breathe out, lowering the arms beside the body. Students shake their hands out and rest them gently in their lap.

Give students a teaspoon, and ask them to hold it firmly and straight. Select students to pour one drop of water into each spoon.

Students carefully notice the shape of the water drop, and the colours and shapes reflected in it, mindfully moving the spoon to let the water roll on the surface, without letting it spill off the spoon.

Students carefully pour the water onto their tongue, close their eyes and notice any sensations as the water is absorbed on the tongue and all through the mouth. Pause for 5 deep, slow connected breaths.

Ask students to bring their awareness to the room and open their eyes.



7. Mindful Breathing with Hands

Equipment: None

Duration: 3 minutes

Practice: Seated

Students sit at their desks and take a few moments to settle their body, with their feet firmly planted on the floor.

Students stretch their arms out in front of their body. Breathing in, stretch hands wide open and raise them above the head. Breathing out, let hands soften and float down. Repeat 3 times.

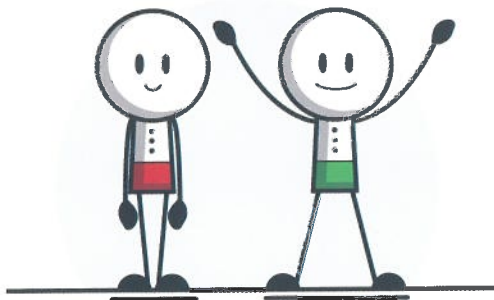
Students bring their arms in front of their body and slowly circle hands inwards, moving with the in-breath, then slowly circle the hands outwards with the out-breath. Repeat 3 times.

Students rest their hands in their lap, palms facing upwards. Breathe in and stretch hands wide open. Breathe out and let them return to a soft shape. Repeat 3 times.

Students rest back into the chair, placing one hand over their heart, the other over their belly. Feel the breath moving up and down through the body, from the lower hand to the upper hand. Repeat 3 times.

Ask students to slowly open their eyes, returning their awareness to the room.

Standing Mindful Moments



8. Changing Shape

Equipment: None

Duration: 2 minutes

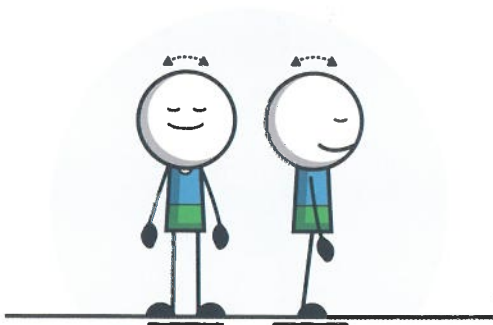
Practice: Standing

Students stand in a space behind their desks, with feet firmly planted.

Students make a thin, tight shape throughout their whole body – legs squashed together, arms pushing into the sides of the body and shoulders under their ears. With the outbreath, students let their muscles soften and feel the body calmly respond. Repeat 3 times.

They then make a wide, tight shape – feet widely spaced and arms outstretched. With the outbreath, students let all the muscles return to softness and the arms drop to the side of the body. Repeat 3 times.

Students notice their body return to a natural, calm state of balance – feet under hips, arms softly resting beside the body, chest open, shoulders soft, chin gently tucked in and head lightly resting over the body. Prompt students to notice the breath returning to its own natural rhythm.



9. Balance Point Focus

Equipment: None

Duration: 2 minutes

Practice: Standing

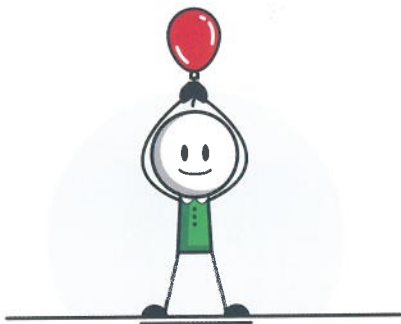
Students stand in a space behind their desks, feet hip-width apart, standing straight and tall, feeling the head floating, resting lightly over the body.

Students let the breath deepen and slow down. While breathing in, they roll over the soles of their feet to pause on their toes. While breathing out, students roll back over the soles to pause on their heels. Repeat 4 times.

Students pause, feeling the body return to its natural balance point over the centre of the feet and noticing how light the body feels.

Students let the breath deepen and slow down. While breathing in, they sway over the soles of the feet to rest on their right foot. While breathing out, students sway over the soles of the feet to rest on their left foot. Repeat 4 times.

Students pause, feeling the body return to its natural balance point over the centre of the feet. Prompt them to allow the breath to return to its own rhythm, noting how light the body feels and how well aligned it is.



10. 'Balloon Man' Practice

Equipment: None

Duration: 2 minutes

Practice: Standing

Students stand in a space behind their desks and create a wide space between the feet. Taking a deep breath in, students roll the arms upwards to float over the head as though they are holding a giant balloon. Pause for a count of two.

They then bend the knees and slowly sigh the breath out through the mouth, as the head rolls forward and the hands drop down towards their feet. Pause for 3 breaths.

Students breathe in, pushing through their feet to roll the body open and upwards with arms floating over the head.

Repeat 4 times.

To close the practice, students stand straight and still with arms resting beside the body. Ask them to let the breath settle and return their awareness to the room.



11. Mindful Sitting

Equipment: None

Duration: 2 minutes

Practice: Standing to sitting

Students stand behind their desk, with the chair touching the back of the legs.

Students create a wide space between the feet, noticing the sense of power, strength and stability throughout the lower body.

Students breathe in and shift their weight to the left leg, then breathe out and shift their weight to right leg. Repeat 3 times.

Students centre their body, letting the upper body feel like it is floating, noticing the upper body being supported by the legs and feeling the head resting lightly over the body. Students slowly, mindfully bend their legs, lowering their body down to quietly and securely land in the chair.

Students pause, breathe in and gently sway the spine to the right, then breathe out and gently sway the spine to the left. Repeat 3 times.

Ask student to notice the spine returning to the centre and let it rest against the back of the chair.



Guided Mindful Moments

These practices are scripts that can be read to your class as guided meditations. They are best read using a calm voice and at a slow pace. Pauses, indicated by ellipses, have been included to guide the pace of your reading.



12. Senses Meditation

Equipment: None

Duration: 3 minutes

Practice: Guided Meditation

'I invite you to close your eyes or lower your gaze, take a depth breath, sigh and allow your breathing to become slow and even, releasing any tension that you are holding in your body. Breathing in...and out...

Begin to notice the sounds around you. Try not to judge them – they are neither good nor bad, they just are. You might hear internal sounds, sounds that are close by, or something in the distance. Subtle sounds that you may not have noticed before.

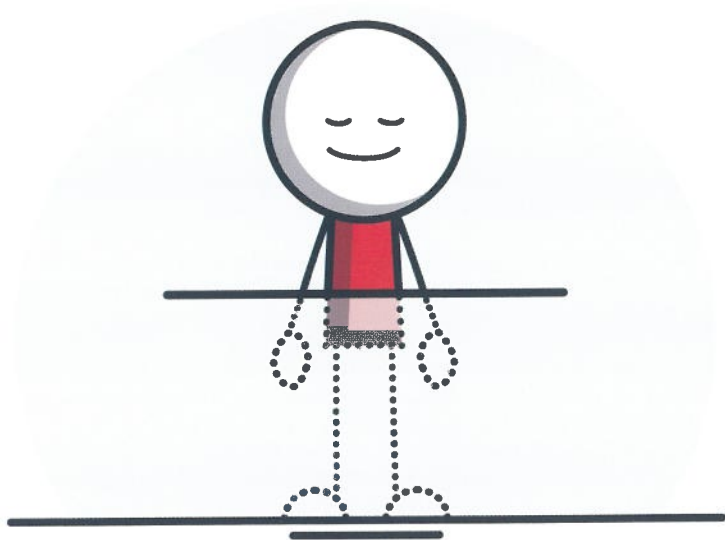
Shift your awareness to your sense of smell. What can you sense in the air? Food? Fragrance? The smell of damp earth or green grass? A dusty smell of books or the crispness of fresh air?

Now start to notice your sense of taste. Do you notice an aftertaste of the last thing you ate? Notice your tongue in your mouth, your saliva, and your breath as you gently and slowly breathe in...and out...

Bring your awareness to your sense of touch. The sensation of being in contact with the chair, the floor, the feeling of clothing on your skin and shoes on your feet. Observe the warmth or coolness of your hands and feet.

Begin to gently open your eyes and observe the space around you. Observe the light and shadows in your surroundings. Notice the different colours and patterns.

As you step forth into the rest of the day, I invite you to mindfully observe and enjoy your surroundings. Be at peace and be present.'



13. Body Scan

Equipment: None

Duration: 3 minutes

Practice: Guided Meditation

I invite you to close your eyes or lower your gaze, take a depth breath, sigh and allow your breathing to become slow and even, releasing any tension that you are holding in your body.

Release any tension in your jaw, allowing your face to relax. Feel this sense of release travelling down your neck and into your shoulders, allowing your shoulders to melt toward the floor and your arms to rest comfortably. Relax your back and feel the warmth spreading through your back and down to your stomach muscles.

Relax your hands and arms, releasing any tension, and feel the warmth and heaviness in them.

Allow this feeling of warmth and heaviness to travel down your legs. Feel the weight of your body as if you are melting into the chair.

Take slow, deep breaths and imagine the breath travelling in through your feet, up through your torso, into your arms all the way to your fingers. As you slowly breathe out, imagine the air travelling back down your arms, into your torso and back through your feet.

Take another deep breath, imagining the breath travelling in and through your body. Slowly breathe back out again, imagining the breath travelling back out through your feet.

I invite you to slowly bring your awareness back to the room. Gently open and close your hands, rotating your wrists inwards...and outwards, and lightly rocking your feet from toe...to heel.

Enjoy the feeling of calmness within you. As you begin to open your eyes, bring this sense of peace with you into your day.'



14. Dolphin Thoughts

Equipment: None

Duration: 3 minutes

Practice: Guided Meditation

'I invite you to sit quietly and comfortably with your spine lengthened, feeling space between each vertebra. With your head aligned, keep your feet planted on the ground and your arms softly by your side or in your lap.

Draw your attention to the breath, as you slowly breathe in...and out...Imagine your mind is a vast ocean – moving and filled with life. Each day is the tide...and each thought is a wave. Imagine there are fish swimming among the waves, as they move to...and fro...

Some thoughts are like small fish, quickly darting in and out of your consciousness. Allow these thoughts to dart through, without judgement.

Some thoughts are like dolphins, playful and full of joy. Allow your mind to find one of these joyful thoughts and to savour it. Remember that feeling of joy, belonging, happiness, awe or love...

Other thoughts are like sharks, large and intimidating. They might be thoughts of anxiety, worry, fear, anger or sadness. If any 'shark' thoughts arise, allow the shark to swim past your attention and turn your focus to a dolphin thought. Imagine the shark isn't interested, and swims away and out of view as you watch a dolphin thought jumping and playing in the waves.

If any shark thoughts arise, don't let its size intimidate you, turn your attention to a dolphin thought instead and let the shark swim away. Focus your attention on anything positive or joyful, kind or loving, inspiring a feeling of belonging or happiness.

Remember this moment, this feeling, bringing it with you into the rest of your day.'



15. Nature Meditation

Equipment: None

Duration: 3 minutes

Practice: Guided Meditation

'I invite you to sit quietly and comfortably with your spine lengthened, feeling space between each vertebra. With your head aligned, keep your feet planted on the ground and your arms softly by your side or in your lap.

Choose a natural object within your gaze and focus on it. This could be a tree, a cloud, a flower or a single blade of grass.

Relax, slow your breathing and simply observe this object. Look at this object as though you are seeing it for the first time. Notice its colour, texture, and the way the light and shadows play on its surface. Pay attention to its shape, the profile of the object, whether it is still or moving, whether it is planted, stagnant or free.

If you begin to notice thoughts drifting into your mind, do not judge yourself. This is normal. Just redirect your attention and allow your thoughts to return to the present moment.

Allow yourself to embrace an awareness of the item's energy, purpose and connection within the environment. Bring this same energy, purpose and connection with you into your present moment, and into your day.'



16. Gratitude Meditation

Equipment: None

Duration: 3 minutes

Practice: Guided Meditation

'I invite you to sit quietly and comfortably with your spine lengthened, feeling space between each vertebra. With your head aligned, keep your feet planted on the floor and your arms softly in your lap. If you feel comfortable, gently close your eyes or lower your gaze.

Relax your breathing and become aware of your breath – its depth, its life-giving power and restorative properties. In this moment, be grateful for your breath. Think of how you use your breath – to laugh, to sigh, to speak, to exercise...Feel a growing warmth and sense of gratitude about the power in your breath.

Consider your body and the way it moves – its strength, its flexibility, its versatility. Cast aside all judgement and expectation about your body and, in this moment, thank your body for all that it does...It carries you, protects you, gives you life and enables your purpose. As you continue to breathe in...and out...feel a growing sense of gratitude for your body.

Bring your awareness to a loved one, someone who has supported and cared for you – someone who has invested and believed in you. Recall a moment you've had together that has brought you joy, meaning or laughter...Note how they have enriched your life, and contributed to your growth and wellbeing. In this moment, take note of the sense of gratitude that you have for that loved one.

Think back on an inspiring time in nature – an image, an interaction, an experience in a beautiful environment. Recall the sense of joy it sparked within you, a sense of wonder or of peace and contemplation. In this moment, take note of how nature has enriched your experience, and be conscious of a growing sense of gratitude for this moment of inspiration.

Take a moment to rest in the awareness that you have much to be grateful for in life – the value of your experiences, connections and environment...and how these empower and guide who you are. Take this sense of gratitude forth into your day – noting it, expressing it and living with thankfulness.'



17. Mindful Music

Equipment: Calm music, e.g. Mozart, 'Clarinet Concerto in A Major, Adagio'

Duration: 3 minutes

Practice: Guided Meditation

'I invite you to sit quietly and comfortably with your spine lengthened, feeling space between each vertebra. With your head aligned, keep your feet planted on the floor and your arms softly in your lap. If you feel comfortable, gently close your eyes or lower your gaze.

As you begin to listen to the music, ignore any judgements and allow yourself to be immersed in the song. This music is neither good nor bad, it just is.

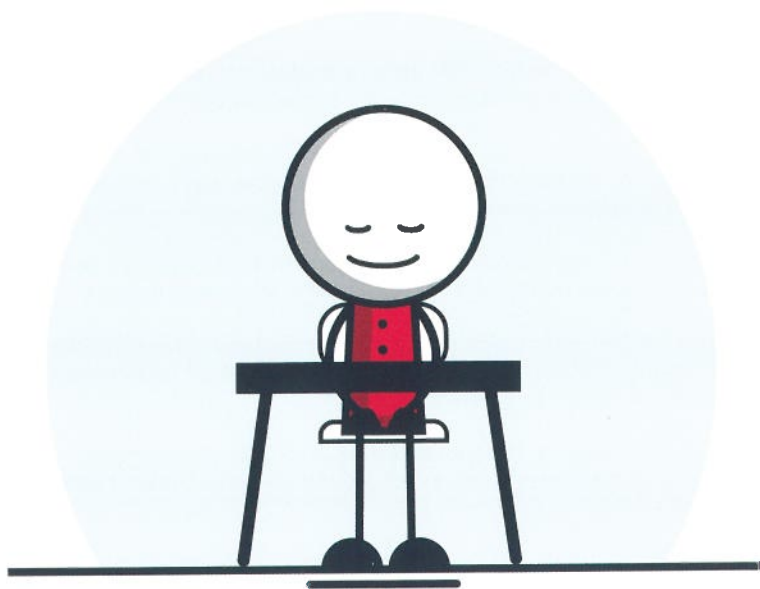
Notice the pace of the music, its rhythm. Observe whether or not you are aware of feeling the music in any particular part of your body – your feet, your belly, your heart space, your mind.

If you begin to notice thoughts drifting into your mind, do not judge yourself. This is normal. Just redirect your attention back to the present moment.

Bring your awareness to the dynamics of each instrument. What part does it play in creating the song? Are the notes high or low in pitch? Long or short in duration? Loud or soft in dynamics?

Begin to notice any emotions that are stirred as you listen to this music. Reflect, without judgement, on how you feel. Are you tense? Tired? Peaceful? Relaxed?

Take a long, slow breath and allow yourself to be. The moments ahead are full of possibilities. Imagine your strengths as the instruments you can choose to play, to create your own symphony.'



18. Loving-Kindness Meditation

Equipment: None

Duration: 4 minutes

Practice: Guided Meditation

'I invite you to sit quietly and comfortably with your spine lengthened, feeling space between each vertebra. With your head aligned, keep your feet planted on the floor and your arms softly in your lap. If you feel comfortable, gently close your eyes or lower your gaze.

Bring to mind someone you love and respect. It could be someone from the past or in the present. Imagine them in front of you sending you their love. Feel the warmth and comfort of their love and kindness. As you picture this person, silently repeat to yourself:

"May you be healthy, may you be happy, may you live with ease."

Now, think of an acquaintance, someone you don't know very well and have no particular feelings toward. It could be a neighbour, fellow student, or someone else you see around but don't know well. As you picture them, silently repeat to yourself:

"May you be healthy, may you be happy, may you live with ease."

Bring to mind someone with whom you have difficulty. It could be someone from the past or in the present. Imagine they are standing in the same room. Allow yourself to let go of any hurt, bitterness or irritation that you are holding, and let the love in your heart radiate toward this person. As you picture them, silently repeat to yourself:

"May you be healthy, may you be happy, may you live with ease."

Now, imagine yourself. Release any sense of expectation or judgement. Visualise yourself with love radiating forth from your heart, enveloping your entire body. As you picture yourself, embrace a sense of loving-kindness and silently repeat to yourself:

"May you be healthy, may you be happy, may you live with ease."

Gently bring your awareness back to your breath and your space within the room. May you walk forth today in loving-kindness, living at peace with yourself and others.'

Breathing Mindful Moments

These practices are designed to calm the body and the mind.



19. Belly Breathing

Equipment: None

Duration: 3 minutes

Practice: Breath awareness

This anchor breathing technique has calmative benefits.

This practice can be completed while lying on the floor with legs slightly bent, knees resting in against each other and feet against the floor. Young children could place a folded paper boat or soft toy on their stomach, watching it rise and fall with each breath. Alternatively, you could complete the breathing exercise while seated. One hand should be placed on your diaphragm and one resting gently on your chest.

Students breathe in slowly through the nose, feeling the stomach push against the hand, or watching the object rise toward the ceiling, as air fills the deepest point in their lungs. Students are to keep their chest as still as possible. They then exhale through tensed lips while tightening their abdominal muscles, letting them fall inward.

TIP: For young children, the analogy of an ocean could be used, as they watch the boat on their belly rise and fall in the 'waves' of their breath.



20. Scarf Breathing

Equipment: Scarves or tissues

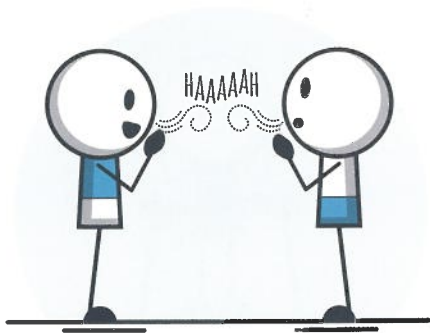
Duration: 3 minutes

Practice: Breath awareness

This activity can be used to bring awareness to the breath. Younger students might enjoy using the scarves as a part of a flow meditation, imagining the scarves are breath, waves or seaweed.

Students are given a lightweight scarf or tissue. They raise the scarf or tissue into the air as they breathe in through the nose, then allow the item to float gently to the ground as they breathe out through the mouth.

Students could practise the technique by sitting in a circle and holding a corner of the scarf or tissue with each hand. They breathe in through the nose, lifting the scarf up, then breathe out through the mouth, letting the scarf fall.



21. Ocean Breathing

Equipment: None

Duration: 3 minutes

Practice: Breathing

Ocean breathing can help to release tension, calming the mind and the body.

This breath first fills the lower belly followed by the lower rib cage, then into the upper chest and throat.

Both inhalation and exhalation are through the nose. An 'ocean' sound is created when breathing out, by narrowing the throat passage. This narrows the airway and limits the passage of air, creating an oceanic sound as the breath travels over the vocal cords and across the back of the throat. However, the breath should never be strained or forced. The length and speed of the breath is controlled by the diaphragm and should be equal in length.

TIP: To help younger students make the sound, encourage them to place their open palm a few centimetres in front of their mouth and release the breath with an open mouth, making a 'haaaaah' sound as though they are trying to fog a mirror. You could even call it a 'Darth Vader' breath!



22. Bee Breathing

Equipment: None

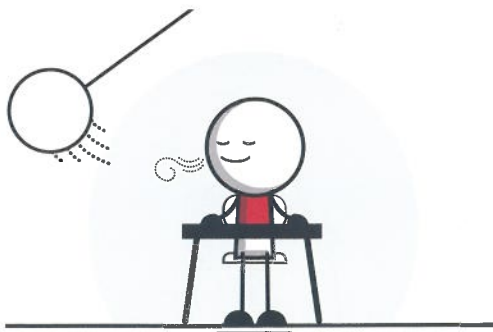
Duration: 3 minutes

Practice: Breathing

This practice can have a calming effect. Students might like to complete the exercise with eyes closed.

Students sit comfortably and use their index fingers to gently press the cartilage between their cheek and ear to block their ears. Start by taking a deep breath in through the nose, feeling lungs and belly expand. As they breathe out, students make a long 'humming' sound, feeling the tone resonate on their lips and teeth until they need to inhale again. Students should be prompted to inhale whenever necessary, rather than trying to match a certain speed. This could be repeated 3-4 times.

TIP: Encourage students to try to make their lips tingle by releasing the sound at the front of the mouth.



23. Pendulum Breathing

Equipment: None

Duration: 3 minutes

Practice: Breathing

This exercise can encourage a sense of peace and balance.

Students relax the mind and body, and breathe slowly with eyes closed. They should visualise a large pendulum swinging slowly through the air, matching their breath to the movement of the pendulum. Students might like to imagine a wave of relaxation spreading throughout their body as they exhale. There should not be any pauses between breathing in and breathing out, rather it should be a smooth movement.



24. 7-11 Breathing

Equipment: None

Duration: 3 minutes

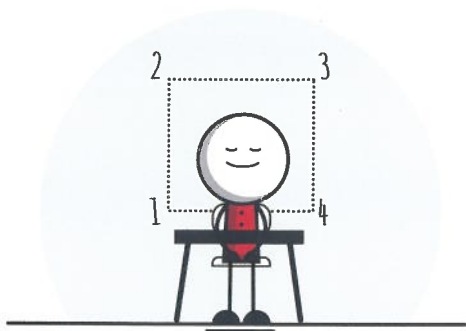
Practice: Seated

As with other controlled breathing techniques, this exercise can promote a sense of peace and relaxation.

When engaging in 7-11 breathing, focus on taking slow breaths that expand the diaphragm.

Students stay in a seated position with hands relaxed in their laps. Alternatively, they could place one hand on their diaphragm and rest the other hand gently on their chest. Begin by breathing in through the nose for a count of seven then out through the nose for a count of eleven. This process should be repeated.

TIP: If students feel as though it is too difficult to breathe for a count of 7 or 11, they could reduce the count to breathing in for 3 and out for 5. The main idea is that the out-breath is longer than the in-breath.



25. Square Breathing

Equipment: None

Duration: 3 minutes

Practice: Breathing

This exercise can be used to relieve stress or anxiety. The key to square breathing is to focus on taking slow breaths that expand the diaphragm.

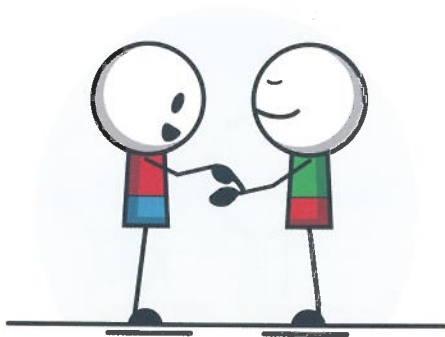
Students should be encouraged to stay in a seated position with hands relaxed in their laps. Begin by breathing in through the nose for a count of four, then holding the breath for a count of four. Breathe out through the nose for a count of four and then hold for a count of four. This process should be repeated.

Encourage students to visualise the square while they are breathing – each breath and each pause is a side of the square.

TIP: Younger students might like to trace their finger on a desk or table in the shape of a square, while they are breathing, or to slowly walk in a large square marked on the floor.

Partner Mindful Moments

The following practices are designed to be engaging activities that encourage attention and focus, while revitalising positive emotions and connections.



26. Forearm Tickles

Equipment: None

Duration: 4 minutes

Practice: Partner

Students partner with a friend and one person in each pair gently closes their eyes. The other student gently tickles the inside of their partner's forearm from the wrist up toward the elbow crease until the person with their eyes closed believes they have reached the elbow crease. Then, with eyes opened, they can observe whether this point has been reached, swap roles and repeat the process.



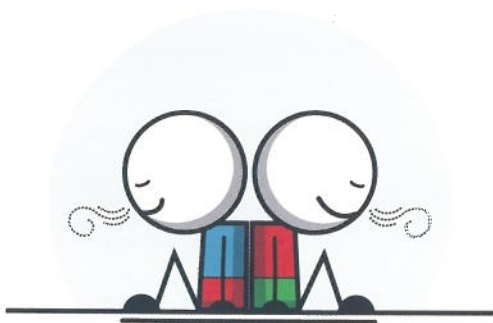
27. Back Drawing

Equipment: None

Duration: 4 minutes

Practice: Partner

Students partner with a friend – one sits behind the other, facing their partner’s back. Encourage students to gently breathe slowly and deeply as the student behind them gently draws a shape on their back. Encourage students to concentrate on the shape being drawn on their back, bringing their awareness to this sensation. Students then swap roles, continuing to take slow, deep breaths throughout.



28. Back-to-Back Breathing

Equipment: None

Duration: 4 minutes

Practice: Partner

Students partner with a friend and sit back-to-back on the floor. Students breathe slowly and gently as they bring their awareness to the movement of their partner's breath. Prompt them to note the sensation of their partner's lungs expanding and contracting. Students can become aware of whether their partner's breaths are slow or fast, deep or shallow, and whether they can feel their partner's back moving as they breathe.

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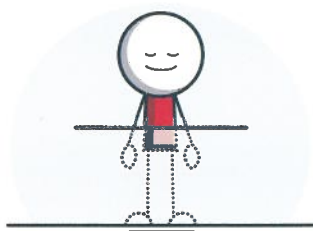
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'The most precious gift
we can offer others is our
presence. When mindfulness
embraces those we love,
they will bloom like flowers.'

Thich Nhat Hanh





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