



Mindfulness and Mindful Minutes

Mindfulness is noticing what is going on in and around you in the present moment. You notice how your body is feeling. You notice what you hear, smell, taste and feel. You notice your emotions (both positive and negative) and their accompanying sensations.

Studies have shown the benefits of mindfulness include: reduced stress and anxiety, improved sleep, better focus and awareness, improved impulse control, better problem solving, increased compassion and kindness, stronger relationships and even higher life satisfaction. With that list, why not give it a try?

Mindful Minutes are short and fun activities to help children focus on the present moment. It can be a great way to start or end the day or refocus children after a transition. Mindful Minutes are an excellent introduction to mindfulness for children.

Why not try the mindful minutes together as a family. Start with one a day & then build it up as you see fit! 😊

TENSE AND RELEASE

MUSCLE RELAXATION

- 1.** Starting at the feet, gently squeeze the muscles in the feet by tightening them, then slowly releasing.
- 2.** Next, squeeze the large muscles in the calves for 5 seconds, then gently release. Working your way up the body, squeeze the thigh muscles for 5 seconds then gently release.
- 3.** Continue moving up the body for more relaxation.



BALLOON BREATHING

Step 1: Inhale Fully

Place your hands on your belly. Breath in slowly through your nose to fill your lungs all the way to the top, as you feel your belly, abdomen and chest expanding out like a big balloon...



Step 2: Exhale Fully

Now open your mouth and slowly blow **all** of the air back out of your lungs, letting your belly sink down flat, as if deflating that imaginary balloon. Repeat, but the next time close your mouth and practice breathing in, and out, through your nose, as you feel your belly expanding and shrinking.

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CALM DOWN WITH TAKE 5 BREATHING



1. Stretch your hand out like a star.
2. Get the pointer finger of your other hand ready to trace your fingers up and down.
3. Slide up each finger slowly ~ slide down the other side.
4. Breathe in through your nose ~ out through your mouth.
5. Put it together and breathe in as you slide up and breathe out as you slide down.

Keep going until you have finished tracing your hand.

Breathe Like a Bee



Breathe like a bee!

cover your ears with
your thumbs and your
eyes with your fingers.

Keep your lips closed and
teeth slightly apart inside
your mouth. Inhale deeply
through your nose (1-2-3-4).

When you inhale, think about
closing your throat just
slightly so you can actually
hear your breath.

Exhale slowly through your
mouth (1-2-3-4) while making
a low humming sound. Repeat!

SQUEEZE & RELEASE

Sit comfortably in your chair or lay on your back on the floor (if space allows). Relax your shoulders. Close your eyes if you want.

Let's start by concentrating on our breathing.

Breathe with me.

Breathe in - 1, 2, 3. Hold - 1, 2.

Breathe out - 1, 2, 3.

(repeat 3 times)

It's time for the *Squeeze and Release Mindful Minute*. We are going to focus on one body part at a time. I will name a body part and we will squeeze that body part as tight as we can. Then we will release the body part and let it relax again.

Let's start with our toes.

Squeeze, squeeze, squeeze. Release.

Squeeze, squeeze, squeeze. Release.

How do your toes feel?

If you begin to think about something else, that's ok. Just put the thought in a bubble and let it float away. Focus your attention back on the body part.

*(Repeat with the following body parts:
legs, bottom, chest, arms, hands, shoulders, head. Ask
how it feels after each one.)*

FEEL THE BEAT

Stand up and make sure you have some room around you. Relax your shoulders, you can close your eyes if you like.

Let's start by concentrating on our breathing.

Breathe with me.

Breathe in - 1, 2, 3. Hold - 1, 2.

Breathe out - 1, 2, 3.

(repeat 3 times)

Open your eyes, it's time for our *Feel the Beat Mindful Minute*. Now get ready because we are going to run on the spot as fast as we can for 10 seconds. Ready, go! *(Count down from 10)*

Now put your hand on your heart.

What do you feel? How fast your heart is beating? How does your breath sound? How does your body feel?

If you begin to think about something else, that's ok. Just put the thought in a bubble and let it float away. Focus your attention back on your heart.

Let's try it again but this time let's run on the spot as fast as you can for 20 seconds! Ready, go!
(Count down from 20)

Now put your hand on your heart.

What do you feel? How fast your heart is beating now? Is it different than the first time? How does your breath sound?
How does your body feel?

Magnetic Hands



Magnetic hands!

Breathe in deeply through your nose (1-2-3-4).

Breathe out fully through your mouth (1-2-3-4).

Put your hands in front of you shoulder width apart and palms facing each other.

pretend there is a magnet that is slowly drawing your palms together.

Bring your palms very, very close until they almost touch. Then slowly bring your palms back out again.

Keep breathing. Repeat.

Dissolve a Thought



Dissolve a thought!

Breathe in deeply through
your nose (1-2-3-4).
Breathe out fully through
your mouth (1-2-3-4).

Imagine that each thought
you have is a cloud that
forms above your head.

As you breathe in (1-2-3-4)
notice this cloud.

As you breathe out (1-2-3-4)
let the cloud dissolve.

Repeat with a new thought.