

Mindfulness Techniques for Adolescents

Using Breath

Direct Aim: To quiet the mind; to bring the mind to one point of focus; to take the mind from activity to stillness.

Indirect Aim: To respond with reflectiveness, openness, and calmness in all situations; to achieve, maintain, and preserve health and prevent disease in both mind and body.

Procedure:

1. Sit quietly, out of sunlight, in a comfortable seated position.
2. Close your eyes.
3. Start to focus on your breath and breathe lightly and easily through your nostrils.
4. Notice your breath as you breathe in and out.
5. Follow the flow of your breath as the air moves in through your nostrils.
6. As you exhale, follow the flow of your breath as it comes from the bottom of your lungs up and out of your nostrils.
7. Keep your attention on your breath pattern for at least 5 minutes.
8. If your mind wanders, without judgment, bring your focus/awareness back to the inflow and outflow of your breath.
9. After practicing this Mindfulness Technique for a week, try and increase the number of minutes in your Mindfulness practice; you may want to add one minute at a time until you can sit for 10 minutes.
10. Mindfulness practice is best done daily.

Extensions:

Following the procedure as per above, you may choose to add a mantra to your focus on the breath. **So Hum** is a Sanskrit mantra (Mantra is a Sanskrit word for vehicle of the mind), which is often used when doing mindful awareness on the breath. On each inhale think, quietly in your mind, **So** and on the exhale of your

breath think, quietly in your mind, *Hum*. Continue using the mantra as you keep your awareness on your breath for between 5 and 10 minutes.

Middle and High Schoolers:

Both groups of students will need to have this lesson explained and guided for the first few times. Once they have experienced this form of mindfulness for several times, they will be able to do it on their own time.

Make sure that there is space in the day for students to practice Mindfulness techniques.

This type of Mindfulness experience may be done for several minutes before a test, presentation or any other challenging situation in which you want to quiet your mind and help reduce stress.