Breathing Awareness

Breathing awareness is a mindfulness practice that helps reduce stress, improve focus, and promote a sense of calm by directing attention to the breath. It can be practiced while walking or light exercise.

**Steps**

1. Find a Comfortable Position

* Sit upright in a chair with your feet flat on the ground, or lie down in a relaxed position.
* Rest your hands on your lap or at your sides, ensuring your body is at ease.

1. Settle Into the Present Moment

* Close your eyes, or keep them softly focused on a fixed point.
* Take a moment to notice how your body feels and release any tension in your shoulders, face, and jaw.

1. Begin Noticing Your Breath

* Bring your awareness to your natural breathing pattern.
* Observe how the air enters your nostrils, fills your lungs, and leaves your body.

1. Breathe Naturally

* Allow your breath to flow without forcing or controlling it.
* Simply observe its natural rhythm—whether deep or shallow, slow or fast.

1. Use an Anchor

* Focus on a specific aspect of your breath to help maintain attention:
* The coolness of air entering your nose.
* The rise and fall of your belly.

1. Redirect Wandering Thoughts

* If your mind drifts, gently acknowledge the distraction without judgment.
* Return your focus to your breath, using it as a steady point of awareness.

1. End with Awareness

* After a few minutes, slowly bring attention back to your surroundings.
* Open your eyes and take a deep, intentional breath before moving on with your day. Inhale through your nose and exhale slowly through your mouth.

**Tips for Practicing Breathing Awareness**

* Start Small: Begin with 3–5 minutes and gradually increase the duration.
* Be Consistent: Practice daily, before bed, or when feeling stressed.
* Pair with Other Activities: Try practicing while walking, stretching, or drinking tea.