CLINICA
family health

Awareness of Breath

This guided meditation on the breath will help you learn to simply be and to look within yourself with mindfulness and equanimity. Allow yourself to switch from the usual mode of doing to a mode of non-doing. Of simply being. Sitting in an erect posture, either on a straight back chair or on a cushion. As you allow your body to become still, bring your attention to the fact that you are breathing. And become aware of the movement of your breath as it comes into your body and as it leaves your body. Not manipulating the breath in any way or trying to change it. Simply being aware of it and of the feelings associated with breathing. And observing the breath deep down in your belly. Feeling the abdomen as it expands gently on the inbreath, and as it falls back towards your spine on the outbreath. Being totally here in each moment with each breath. Not trying to do anything, not trying to get any place, simply being with your breath. Giving full care and attention to each inbreath and to each outbreath. As they follow one after the other in a never ending cycle and flow.

You will find that from time to time your mind will wander off into thoughts. When you notice that your attention is no longer here and no longer with your breathing, and without judging yourself, bring your attention back to your breathing and ride the waves of your breathing, fully conscious of the duration of each breath from moment to moment. Every time you find your mind wandering off the breath, gently bringing it back to the present, back to the moment-to-moment observing of the flow of your breathing. Using your breath as an anchor to focus your attention, to bring you back to the present whenever you notice that your mind is becoming absorbed or reactive. Using your breath to help you tune into a state of relaxed awareness and stillness.

Now as you observe your breathing, you may find from time to time that you are becoming aware of sensations in your body. As you maintain awareness of your breathing, see if it is possible to expand the field of your awareness so that it includes a sense of your body as a whole as you sit here. Feeling your body, from head to toe, and becoming aware of all the sensations in your body. So that now you are observing not only the flow of breathing, but the sense of your body as a whole.

Being here with whatever feelings and sensations come up in any moment without judging them, without reacting to them, just being fully here, fully aware. Totally present with whatever your feelings are and with your breath and a sense of your body as a whole. And again whenever you notice that your mind wandering off, just bringing it back to your breathing and your body as you sit here not going anywhere, not doing anything just simply being, simply sitting. Moment to moment, being fully present, fully with yourself.

Reference: Mindfulness Meditation, CD Series 1, Jon Kabat-Zinn

Reestablishing your awareness on the body as a whole and on the breath as it moves in and out of your body. Coming back to a sense of fullness of each inbreath, and the fullness of each outbreath. If you find yourself at any point drawn into a stream of thinking and you notice that you are no longer observing the breath, just using your breathing and the sense of your body to anchor you and stabilize you in the present.

Just being with your breathing from moment to moment, just sitting in stillness, looking for nothing and being present to all. Just as it is, just as it unfolds. Just being right here, right now. Complete. Human. Whole.

As the practice comes to an end, you might give yourself credit for having spent this time nourishing yourself in a deep way by dwelling in this state of non-doing, in this state of being. For having intentionally made time for yourself to simply be who you are. And as you move back into the world, allow the benefits of this practice to expand into every aspect of your life.

Reference: Mindfulness Meditation, CD Series 1, Jon Kabat-Zinn