

Mindfulness Exercises

You don't need to spend a long time on mindfulness for it to be effective. All you need is just 5 - 10 minutes. Teaching mindful activities provides students with life long skills.

Mindful Breathing

Students can stand or sit for this activity and be instructed to put their hands on their bellies, then close their eyes or look down at their hands to limit distractions.

- Guide students in taking three slow deep breaths in and out to see if they can feel their hands being moved.
- You can count '1.2.3' for each breath in and '1,2,3' for each breath out, pausing slightly at the end of each exhale.
- Encourage students to think about how the breath feels, answering the following questions silently, in their minds:
 - What is moving your hands? Is it the air filling your lungs?
 - Can you feel the air moving in through your nose?
 - Can you feel it moving out through your nose?
 - Does the air feel a little colder on the way in and warmer on the way out?
 - Can you hear your breath?
 - What does it sound like?

Body Scan

This is a fantastic activity that students can "take home" with them. Doing a body scan to help relax before sleep can be particularly useful.

- Students can lay on the floor or sit in a chair with their eyes closed if they are comfortable
- Encourage students to pay attention to their feet for 5 or 10 seconds
- Move on to their toes, then ankles, then calves and knees. Continue body part by body part until you reach the head.
- Question how each part of the body feels to bring students' awareness to their body in the moment.
- If there is tightness or stress, imagine breathing the stress out of that part of the body with each exhale.

Here are some questions to ask during the body scan:

- How does this body part feel?
- Is it cold or warm?
- Does it feel relaxed or tight?
- Is all of part of that body part touching the floor of the chair?
- What does that feel like?