

Mindfulness Tips and Techniques

Invite a child/young person to sit comfortably, in a chair or on the floor. If they find it helpful they could place their hand on their stomach. Be mindful of pacing, trying not to read too fast:

We are going to focus on our breathing.

See if you can pay attention to absolutely everything about your breath.

Where in your body do you feel your breath the most?

Near your nose? Near your chest? Near your belly?

Is it fast?.... Is it slow?.... Is it cool?.... Is it warm? Is it smooth?

Or rough?

Does anything happen in between the in and the out breath? Or between the out and in breaths?

See if you can notice the beginning and the end of each in-breath and outbreath....and the pauses in between.

See if you can notice the very first moment of your next breath. What does the first moment feel like?

Do you notice your breath moving?

Can you follow the movement?

Can you notice as the breath moves through the body?

Noticing as it comes in... where it goes in the body... and as it comes out?

There are many variations on this activity, and this can be as playful as the child/young person wants it to be.

There are lots of other breathing exercises:

- Breathing to a count (breathe in for 5, out for 7)
- Breathing with one hand on your chest and the other on your stomach, making different hands rise and fall
- Breathing in continuously for as long as you can
- Momentarily stopping breathing altogether (only for a few seconds)
- Breathing with a feather / malteaser (similar to pinwheel)
- Conducting breath; ask a young person to breathe in when you raise your arm and out when you lower your arm, you can control the pace of breath.

Throughout all of the exercises, young people are invited to notice their breathing, and the effects on their bodies, their thoughts, their mood. The activities should be relaxed and playful.