

**SPEAKER:** This is an exercise in mindful breathing. Just practicing paying attention to the breath. So begin by finding a comfortable position. If you're sitting upright and a dignified, but not stiff posture. Closing the eyes if that's comfortable. Or gazing softly at a point in front.

And begin by just noticing the body. What's the state of the body? As we begin the session. Is it relaxed? Or tense? We're not trying to change the state of the body or make it anything different than what it is. We're just taking time to notice, to pay attention. Just checking in.

And now bring your attention to your breathing. Placing the attention at the nostrils if you're breathing through the nose. Or at the lips if you're breathing through the mouth. And just noticing what the breath feels like as it flows in and out. There is cooler air as you breathe in and warmer and moister air as you breathe out.

As we do this, we're not trying to change the breath or change our rate of breathing. We're not trying to breathe any deeper or shallower than usual. We're just noticing our breathing. Noticing the flow of the breath as it moves in and out of the body.

And as we practice paying attention to the breath, the mind may wander. So when you find that the mind has wandered, what you're thinking about what you need to do next, or going over something that you've already done, as soon as you notice this, just detach from the thought, let the thought go, and return the attention to either the nostrils or the lips where you were following the breath before.

In formal mindfulness practice, we do this over and over again. We focus our attention on our breathing. The mind wanders. We recognize that the mind has wandered. We detach from the thought or from whatever the other focus of attention has become, and we turn our attention back to our breathing. Following the waves of the breath as they move in and out of the body.

One breath after another. Returning our attention over and over. Not needing to fix anything or change anything. We're not trying to make our breathing any different than what it is. A simple experience of air moving in and out of the body over and over.

Bringing the attention back to hair moving across the nostrils, through the lips if the attention has wandered. Once again, feeling the movement of the air. In and out. We can now move the attention to the chest. Another place it's possible to focus on breathing. Feeling the rise and fall of the chest as air moves in and out of the lungs.

And if the mind wanders, again, letting go of the thoughts. Or if the attention happens to have settled on some discomfort in the body, letting go of that as well and just bringing the attention back through the chest and the rise and fall of the chest. Whatever thoughts we might have, whatever attraction they hold for us now, they'll be there later. We can always return to them after we're done with this.

So we just detach from them, let them go, and bring the attention back to our breathing. Over and over, noticing the rise and fall of the chest, the movement of air in and out of the lungs. Over and over, returning our attention to our breathing.

It's not good or bad when the mind wanders. That's just what the mind does. So we don't need to judge it. We just notice, let go of the thoughts, and we turn our attention to our breathing. And as we end this session now, you can bring your attention back to the room, opening your eyes if they have been closed. Taking stock again of your surroundings as we end this session of mindful breathing.