

MONKEY TAP (I.E., BUTTERFLY HUG)

In nature, primates cross their arms over their chest and tap their shoulders in an alternating manner to self-soothe. In this exercise, we will duplicate this experience with mindful intent as a way of being gentle with ourselves and practicing self-soothing.

- Cross your arms over your chest.
- Begin tapping your hands against your body in a slow, deliberate, alternating fashion...
- Find a pace that for you is slow, soothing or grounding. Tapping quickly can induce anxiety so you may want to spend a set or two finding this ideal pace.
- Tap for about a minute and then return your hands to your lap or the table and breathe. Repeat as many sets as needed for grounding, rest, or relaxation. Notice what happens when you can embrace this tapping like its own mindful meditation experience, using the taps as your point of focus.



Modification and Application:

- Tapping on the knees, tapping the feet, or making “OK” signs with the index finger to thumb are all appropriate alternatives to Monkey/Butterfly tapping.
- Although this exercise can be mindful and calming in and of itself by simply, mindfully focusing on the tapping, pairing the tapping with a calming scent, a pleasant thought, a positive cognition, or any other positive experience can be sensory paradise!

MULTI-SENSORY GROUNDING EXERCISE

- Look around the room that we are in right now. Start naming the different things that you see. I encourage you to be as specific as possible, like, “I see the carpet below my feet. The carpet is blue with some bits of brown in the thread.... I see the lamp on the desk. The base of the lamp is brown glass and the shade is beige.” Keep going for as long as you need, until you are secure in the knowing that you are here and now, in this space, in this time.
- Move on to the other senses: What are you hearing (or not hearing) in this moment, in this room? Observe and describe. What are you smelling? What are you tasting? Then, I invite you to use your hands and either touch your clothes or make contact with the chair or the table. Observe and describe touch sensation.

Simple Grounding Exercise

- Take a look around the room that we are in right now. Start naming the different things that you see. I encourage you to be as specific as possible, like, “I see the carpet below my feet. The carpet is blue with some bits of brown in the thread....I see the lamp on the desk. The base of the lamp is brown glass and the shade is beige.” Keep going for as long as you need.
- When you are ready, I encourage you to make contact with my eyes.

CLENCH & RELEASE (MODIFIED PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION)

Have you ever been so angry or stressed you just want to make fists and hit something? In this exercise, you'll be able to make those fists...and then practice mindfully letting go!

Make fists.

Feel your fingernails make contact with your skin if possible.

Whenever it feels too uncomfortable for you to keep holding on, know that you can slowly, mindfully let go at any time.

Notice your fingers uncurling, and feel the trickle of letting go all through your arms, up to your shoulders.

Simply observe the sensation of letting go.

Modifications and Applications:

- Any muscle group can be clenched and released, especially if clenching the fists is too painful or not possible due to context or physical limitations. Clenching and releasing the stomach and feet are other popular choices.
- You can clench and release bilaterally (e.g., first time on right side, next time on left side); this is also a great way to introduce bilateral stimulation as a concept.
- Add a relaxing sound (e.g., nature sound, music) in the background, or use an aromatherapy diffuser if you are using this exercise for sleep.
- For help with sleep and deeper relaxation, clench and release one muscle group at a time (holding each clench 20-30 seconds and then slowly releasing). The entire exercise should take about 20 minutes.
- If working with dissociation or complex trauma, it is generally wise to teach this exercise first, before breathing or guided visualization exercises. Because this exercise works directly with body sensation, it serves as an excellent anchor should any of those other exercises prove problematic.

MINDFULNESS OF FEELING TONE

Buddha suggested that all sensations, emotions and thoughts could be tracked to be within one of three categories: Pleasant, unpleasant or neutral. This meditation allows us to begin that process of simplifying our relationship to our mind's constant opinions about our experience.

- Settle into your posture. Scan around the points of contact: Your back on the chair if you have chosen that option, your seat, the backs of your legs, feet on the floor, where the hands and arms meet the body. See if any of these points feels more grounded than the others. If you are not feeling particularly grounded at this moment, see if you can just notice that lack of grounded feeling with as little judgment as possible.
- If you feel your grounding to be stronger at one or more contact points, go ahead and lean into that grounding. Let yourself have that ground.
- After a minute or so, turn your attention toward your breath. Find the spot either just outside or just inside the nostrils, or notice the rising and falling of the belly. Any one of these is a great place to note the sensation of the breath going in and out. It's not important which you choose, though it is wise to choose one for the length of this sitting.
- Begin to more carefully track general body sensations, thoughts and feelings. If you notice a physical sensation, rate it on the scale of pleasant, unpleasant or neutral. As you continue to track physical sensations you might wander toward feelings, thoughts, sounds, and other sensory stimuli. Have a goal of beginning to find the rhythm of pleasant, unpleasant or neutral being the one thought you are having in each moment.
- It is the nature of the mind to think. When (not if) your mind begins to wander, just notice that it is happening. In this meditation, we can notice if this wandering is in fact pleasant, unpleasant or neutral. Then continue to find your way back to the rating system as you begin tracking your experience again.
- Set a timer, and continue this practice for a time scale that feels appropriate and sustainable for your current level of practice. Five minutes a day to start is generally recommended. Five minutes a day is better than 30 minutes on Saturday. One minute is better than no minutes. The development of a practice is key.

DIAPHRAGMATIC BREATHING (I.E., BELLY BREATHING)

Have you ever watched an infant breathe? If so, you will notice that babies naturally breathe with their bellies...somewhere along the way we seem to lose this natural tendency and develop rapid, shallow breathing that originates in the chest. Like with all elements of mindfulness, belly breathing takes practice!

- Put one or both hands on the upper area of your stomach so that you can really pay attention to the motions you are engaging with your diaphragm.
- As you inhale with your nose, allow your belly to expand as far as it will go.
- Exhale with your mouth, allowing the belly to pull back in.
- Continue this inhale-exhale pattern at your own pace, giving it at least 6-7 repetitions to find a rhythm and style that work for you...curiosity and non-judgment are key.
- After finding your rhythm, consider puckering your mouth and really exaggerating your exhale, striving to make it somewhat longer than your inhale. This ought to help you relax even more.

Modifications and Applications:

- If you feel awkward or in any way out of control with this suggested pattern, consider starting with an exhale instead of the inhale.
- If paying attention to the breath on its own is not working for you, consider adding a count to it (e.g., “In 1, out 1; In 2, out 2; go as high as 10 and then begin again at 1). You can also add a word or a special phrase (e.g., “Satnam;” “Amen,” “Help me”). The possibilities are endless.
- You can really engage children in this practice by having them put something like a Beanie Baby or a flatter type of stuffed animal on their stomach so they have a focus point while they observe the rise and fall of the belly.
- Once again, eyes do not have to be closed. You can also go very slowly. For clients who struggle with dissociation or getting relaxed, one full breath can be a major achievement to start. Consider having dissociation-prone clients hold onto a hard-textured element like a rock, a marble, or a stone for further grounding. Even stuffed animals or other soft textures can work for grounding if that is their established intention.

UJJAYI BREATHING (I.E., OCEAN-SOUNDING VICTORY BREATH OR DARTH VADER BREATH)

So many of the therapeutically beneficial breaths that we learn in mindfulness are in through the nose, out through the mouth. Ocean breath is fundamentally different because it is in through the nose, out through the nose. If you make a certain formation with your mouth and throat, you can create the sound of the ocean, right within yourself! Or, you may like to think of this sound as the infamous character, Darth Vader. This breath is excellent for endurance of stress, physical or mental.

- Pucker your mouth like you're sucking through a straw or about to kiss someone. Attempt to contract the back of your throat slightly closed.
- Inhale with your nose; allow the belly to expand with this motion.
- Exhale with your nose; although air may flow out of your mouth, think about doing the work with your nose.
- If your mouth is puckered and throat is contracted, you ought to be hearing the sound of the ocean within you.
- Attempt to keep the inhaled and exhaled even, especially when you're first learning the breath.
- Do not attempt more than five full repetitions during your first attempt if you are new to this breath.
- It is completely normal if you feel somewhat light headed, but it should be a "good" light-headed. If it does not feel good, chances are you tried too many too soon, or the inhaled and exhaled were uneven.

Modifications and Applications:

- You can envision many different characters with this breath, like Darth Vader, or a charging bull "huffing and puffing."
- Get a mirror and see the steam of your breath on the surface (young people like this especially), attuning you to the idea of your breath as "the Force."
- You can visualize, on any breath, that you are breathing in a calming or soothing color and breathing out a color that represents stress.

ALTERNATE NOSTRIL BREATHING (I.E., NADHI SHODNAN PRANAYAMA)

- If you are willing, this is one of the best breaths we can cover to start teaching you about bilateral stimulation/dual attention stimulus and how it can be used to balance the brain. The Sanskrit name for the breath that yogis use translates as *energy cleansing breath*.
- Use your right thumb to plug off your right nostril at the side. Take a moment to notice this and make sure it's not too uncomfortable.
- Inhale with the left side of your nostril using a diaphragmatic or complete breath.
- Hold the breath for a moment, then use your right pinky to plug off the left nostril at the side. Many hand positions are possible to help you with this rotation; see the video on www.traumamadesimple.com for other options.
- Exhale through the right nostril.
- Inhale again through the right nostril and repeat this alternating process as long as is comfortable.

Modifications and Applications:

- This is an amazing breath for orienting clients to bilateral stimulation if they are willing to follow it.
- Like with all of the breaths, eyes do not have to be closed. You can also go very slowly. For clients who struggle with dissociation or getting relaxed, one full breath can be a major achievement to start. Consider having dissociation-prone clients hold onto a hard-textured element like a rock, a marble, or a stone for further grounding.
- This breath may be too triggering at first for clients with complex trauma or dissociation—any breath that promotes a conscious holding of the breath may be. Just be advised and modify as needed.

NOODLING

Haven't you ever envied a cooked noodle? The way it just slithers freely and easily, without stress, is an admirable quality that can teach us how to practice the attitude of letting go. Think of how fun, and potentially beneficial, it could be, to take on the role of a noodle.

- For optimal benefit, come to your feet (although you can also do this sitting or lying down).
- With your next breath, think of taking on the role of a noodle...it's suggested that you begin in your shoulders and then let the 'noodling' move through the rest of your body.
- Keep noodling, in a mindful way, practicing beginner's mind, non-judgment, and non-striving for at least three minutes.
- When you've completed one round, allow yourself to be still for a few moments longer (standing, sitting, or lying down)...notice how it feels!
- Repeat as many times as necessary.

Modifications and Applications:

- Although you can do this in silence, it is lots of fun if you put on some music that can bring out your inner noodle! Adding in the music may help anchor in the present if a client tends to dissociate.
- This exercise can be fun with props like scarves or ribbons...excellent for children!
- To further orient the bilateral stimulation/dual attention stimulus idea, invite the person to noodle on the right side, then the left, and keep alternating.

WALKING MEDITATION

Walking meditation represents one of the primary teachings of Buddha regarding mindfulness. This practice helps individuals to have the direct experience that Buddha had, which was that human beings can practice in any posture, not just sitting.

- Find a comfortable standing position. Map out a pathway in front of you from six to eight feet long with no obstructions. You will simply be walking back and forth in this path.
- Begin your stride, which can be in super slow motion, or a regular gait, or something in between. Something in between may mimic the bilateral stimulation speed used in EMDR therapy.
- You may simply notice your walking, or you can use anchoring phrases such as lifting, moving, placing, shifting.... Either way, keep your eyes downcast at a 45 degree angle. The goal is not to look around, which might promote the wandering mind. We are focused on the act of walking, perhaps our breathing and the accompanying body sensations.
- After a minute or so, turn your attention toward your breath. Find the spot either just outside or just inside the nostrils, or notice the rising and falling of the belly. Any one of these is a great place to note the sensation of the breath going in and out. It's not important which you choose, though it is wise to choose one for this walking meditation.
- Continue to walk back and forth on this path for the time you allot for the meditation.
- It is the nature of the mind to think. When (not if) your mind begins to wander, just notice that it is happening. The return to your body and its practice of walking.
- Set a timer, and continue this practice for a time period that feels appropriate and sustainable for your current level of practice.

CIRCLE OF FIGURES

To go further, you can imagine a circle of support, people who are spiritual entities, fictional entities from who we've drawn great strength. Historical figures and those who have passed away (from whose tales we draw great inspiration) can also be part of your circle. You can also bring people who are in your life right now into your circle, as long as they feel like a primarily positive resource.

- Imagine who is surrounding you. Who constitutes your circle of support?
- Maybe there's only one additional figure, maybe there are several. Maybe each figure takes on a different quality. Perhaps you have a protector figure, a sacred figure, a cheerleading figure, a nurturing figure.
- Notice what do you most need in your life today, or in your life in general, and who are some figures that you can ally to present you with those qualities? Take a moment here to see what comes into focus.
- Think of a situation coming up in your life in the next few days, in the next week, that may present a particular challenge. When that's come into your awareness, notice it. Notice what that would feel like, what that would look like, and notice your response as you imagine your circle of support taking you into this challenge. Keep breathing.

PROTECTOR FIGURES

In EMDR therapy, anything with a positive or adaptive connection can be strengthened. These resources may include people (real or imagined), spiritual entities, or even fictional characters to whom you have a special attachment can be used. Precautions must be taken, especially if you are using people who are still alive or may qualify as a mixed resource, in that they possess some adaptive and some maladaptive qualities. The exercise is written to go slowly and be adapted to the specific person.

Single Figure

- Let's start by working with just a single figure. You can choose if you want to use an adjective like protector figure, sacred figure, maybe a word like cheerleader, nurturer, works better for the intention that you're setting today.
- Try to stay away from real people at first. Think of the spiritual realm, or even fictional characters, or an entity that you create using the power of your imagination.
- Sense in, breathe and notice. Does this figure you chose have a name? What do they look like? What are they wearing? If they have a face, what do you observe on their face?
- Notice what this figure is doing, or where they are in relation to you in this meditation. Maybe they're literally sitting beside you. Maybe you imagine them putting their hands on your shoulders in support. Maybe you're engaging in an activity with them. Notice whatever you notice.
- And then notice the qualities that this figure you've selected brings to you. How do they make you feel about yourself? What are you noticing in your thoughts, your feelings, your experiences when you're in their presence?
- Is there a certain bodily sensation that you may be noticing, the deeper you engage or notice this figure of yours? Keep breathing.
- To go further: is there a challenging situation that may be coming up in your life the next few days or weeks. What would it look like, or what would it feel like, if you imagined bringing this protector figure with you?

LOVING KINDNESS MEDITATION

Loving Kindness meditation has become one of the most used meditative practices of the 21st century, thanks to the work of Sharon Salzberg (who brought the practice to the United States from Burma) and other teachers in the Insight Tradition of meditation. What follows is a version of loving kindness meditation based on the work of all these teachers.

- Settle into your posture. Scan around the points of contact... your back on the chair if you have chosen that option, your seat, the backs of your legs, feet on the floor, where the hands and arms meet the body. See if any of these points feels more grounded than the others. If you are not feeling particularly grounded at this moment, see if you can just notice that lack of grounded feeling with as little judgment as possible.
- After a minute or so, turn your attention toward your breath. Find the spot either just outside or just inside the nostrils, or notice the rising and falling of the belly. Any one of these is a great place to note the sensation of the breath going in and out. It's not important which you choose, though it is wise to choose one for the length of this sitting.
- Begin to silently say the Loving Kindness phrases, first toward yourself. "May I be free from fear, May I be healthy, May I be happy, May I be at ease." Send the phrases to yourself a few times. Then move on to someone whom it is extremely easy for you to send the phrases to, someone where unconditional love flows in one direction or both. Then send it to a neutral person, someone for whom you have no particular positive or negative charge. Then, send loving kindness to the difficult person, who doesn't have to be the worst person in the world, just someone difficult to send the phrases to. Then radiate it out in all directions, proceeding as slowly or as quickly as you wish... slowly would be to everyone on my block... my city... my state... my country... my hemisphere... the world... all sentient beings in the world... all sentient beings in all known and unknown universes. Finally, land with one last round toward ourselves.
- It is the nature of the mind to think. When (not if) your mind begins to wander, just notice that it is happening. The return to the phrases, noticing any discomfort or resistance. These become part of our process.
- Set a timer, and continue this practice for a time period that feels appropriate and sustainable for your current level of practice.

ENERGETIC MASSAGE

- Do you ever feel, quite literally like your brain hurts? Wouldn't it be great if you could give your brain a massage? With a simple mindfulness exercise that harnesses the power of your own tactile energy, you can!
- Rub your hands together for at least thirty seconds (you can go longer if you want). Really work up some heat!
- Pull your hands apart and bring them to your forehead...there are many variations. You can close your eyes and place the base of your palms over your eyes; let the rest of your hands curl over your forehead to the top of the forehead. Or you can rest the base of your palms on your cheeks and go around your eyes.
- Settle in, feel the energy you generated in your hands move into your brain. Let the energy work in you and practice non-striving.
- Hold as long as you like.

Modifications and Applications:

- You can bring the energy from your hands to any part of your body that is feeling tense or anxious. Think about bringing the heat energy from your hands to your chest or stomach if you are noticing any tension or pain.
- The 'cranial hold' position is an option after generating the energy. To achieve this, horizontally bring one hand to your forehead and the other hand to the back of your head.
- Consider adding another sense into the process for optimal relaxation, like meditative music, or an aromatherapy oil of your choice.
- Also an excellent exercise for introducing dual attention stimulus since you are using a bilateral motion to generate the energy.

LION BREATHING

- Although taking on the full character of a lion is optional with this exercise, allowing yourself to make the face of a lion with this breath can help you with letting go of negative energy.
- Begin with a healthy inhale (what you learned in complete breathing).
- Exhale vigorously, allowing the tongue to hang out as far as it will go. Feel the jaw and cheeks loosen. Open the eyes widely to help with this release.
- Try at least 5 full repetitions, although you can continue with this breath as long as is physically comfortable for you.

Modifications and Applications:

- This is a wonderful exercise to teach to children (or adults who aren't too self-conscious to try it). You can think of making this face when ugly thoughts about trauma or stress come up...think about embodying the strength of a lion in the wake of a painful trigger!
- Like with all breaths, eyes do not have to be closed. You can also go very slowly. For clients who struggle with dissociation or getting relaxed, one full breath can be a major achievement to start. Consider having dissociation-prone clients hold onto a hard-textured element like a rock, a marble, or a stone for further grounding.

COMPLETE BREATHING (I.E., THREE-PART OR DIRGHA BREATH)

Think of a complete breath as a three-part breath, with the diaphragmatic part of the breath being the first step. In essence, complete breath, as the name suggests, is a fuller breath.

- Begin with a diaphragmatic breath but continue the inhale into the ribs and then the chest. You can put a hand on the chest to help with your awareness.
- At the top of the inhale, hold the breath in your awareness for a moment. If it causes you pain or distress to hold the breath like this, even for a moment, you can release right into the exhale.
- Gradually release the breath with your exhale, allowing the chest, the ribs, and the belly to pull back in.
- Continue this inhale-exhale pattern at your own pace, giving it at least 6-7 repetitions to find a rhythm and style that work for you...curiosity and non-judgment are key, like with any other breath.

Modifications and Applications:

- The standard pattern with exhales is to keep them slow and deliberate. However, a very powerful variation is to do a fast, dramatic exhale, like a “sigh of relief.”
- Feel free to get as dramatic as you want on the exhale, perhaps bringing the hand to the forehead like a stereotypical “drama queen.” Think of this breath as a chance to practice letting go of negative energy.
- When you expand your chest on the inhale, you can bring up “superhero” imagery (especially fun to do with kids) to further the empowering motion.
- Once again, eyes do not have to be closed. You can also go very slowly. For clients who struggle with dissociation or getting relaxed, one full breath can be a major achievement to start. Consider having dissociation-prone clients hold onto a hard-textured element like a rock, a marble, or a stone for further grounding. Even stuffed animals or other soft textures can work for grounding if that is their established intention.

BREATH AWARENESS

This exercise is like the general practicing awareness exercise, only this time the focus will be on paying total attention to our breath.

- Shift around in your chair a little bit, or in a seated position on the ground, until you find a position that, for you, signifies paying attention.
- Be careful not to slouch your shoulders, but also be aware not to sit so straight up that it hurts you to be in this sitting posture.
- Spend some time paying attention to your breath and just notice the experience; notice the natural rise and fall of your chest or stomach. See if you can keep your attention fully on your breath.
- If your mind starts to wander or you feel that you've stopped paying attention, that's okay! Even if your mind wanders 10 times in a minute, you can always bring the attention back to the breath—the exercise is in noticing it wander.
- Work up to practicing this in three-minute increments. If all you can start with is 30 seconds--1 minute, that is fine. It's about practicing patience with the process and yourself.

Modifications and Applications:

- If three minutes simply can't be done, consider adding in another sensory element and practice paying attention to that element (e.g., a scent, like an oil, spice, or candle; a simple sound, like something from a nature sounds CD; a tactile sensation, like holding a rock, a marble, or a stuffed animal). Harder textures are recommended for working with dissociative clients.
- If sitting doesn't work, this same exercise can also be done standing up or lying down. Remember to keep the emphasis on that word 'awareness'...you can lie down with awareness!
- The eyes do not have to be closed—for these basic mindfulness exercises, it may work better for them to be open.

MODIFIED BODY SCAN & BODY CUING

Learning to pay attention to the messages that your body gives you is a vital part of wellness. Body cuing modifies the mindfulness practice of body scan. It helps you to pay better attention to your body and listen to what it needs in any given moment.

- Bring to mind something that stresses you out. It doesn't have to be a major trauma, a general stressor will suffice.
- Spend a few moments reflecting on that stressor. What does it look like? Does it have a sound or any other sensory qualities?
- Now, notice what is happening in your body. Does the stress seem to be felt in one part of your body, or maybe in one organ specifically? Or is the stressor all over your body?
- There are no right or wrong answers, just practice acceptance of what is going on in your body right now. Spend a few moments just sitting with the stressor, just noticing the body response, in a spirit of non-judgment.
- If you want, begin describing the presence of that stressor in your body: If it had a color, what color would it be? If it had a shape, what shape would it be? If it had a texture, what would that texture be? Are there any other qualities, like temperature, sound, or smell?
- Now ask yourself, what does my body need the most right now to help the presence of this body stress? Even if your gut-level answer doesn't seem to be the healthiest response, practice non-judgment, just notice what your body needs.

Modifications and Applications:

- Consider drawing the experience of stress in your body; young people may find this approach more appealing or accessible than having to describe it. Colored pencils, crayons, markers, or other crafting elements can be employed.

TREE GROUNDING VISUALIZATION

- Whether you are sitting or standing, notice the connection of your feet to the ground below you. Take a few moments here. Maybe pump your feet back and forth a few times and then let them come to stillness. Really notice the connection.
- If this works for you, imagine that roots are coming out of your feet and shooting into the earth below you, like the roots of a tree.
- Notice the roots moving deep, deep, deep into the earth, through all of the different layers. Take a moment to just be with this experience. Think of yourself being firmly rooted in the earth, in the here-and-now.

Modifications and Applications:

- For children or willing adults, have them name what kind of tree they are (e.g., an oak, a banyan, an elm, a pine).
- If you have earth elements around your office, such as essential oils like Cedarwood or Pine, or even a Mason jar full of dirt (try it, it smells like the “good earth”), consider bringing those in—it can add to the grounding experience.
- If you have a personal yoga practice and feel comfortable showing your client tree pose, this can be an excellent way to experience a greater sense of embodied connection to the skill.

PRACTICING AWARENESS

Too often in life we beat ourselves up with messages like, “I just can’t pay attention.” Rest assured, you are not alone...it takes practice. This exercise is a basic gateway for learning mindfulness and to begin *practicing* it.

- Shift around in your chair a little bit, or in a seated position on the ground, until you find a position that, for you, embodies paying attention.
- Be careful not to slouch your shoulders, but also be aware not to sit so straight up that it hurts you to be in this sitting posture.
- Spend some time paying attention to your body and make a mental note of what this posture of awareness feels like for you.
- If your mind starts to wander or you feel that you’ve stopped paying attention, that’s okay! It’s a chance to practice the mindfulness principles of non-judgment and beginner’s mind. When you catch yourself, just use this as a chance to bring your attention back to that body posture of awareness.
- Work up to practicing this in three-minute increments. If all you can start with is 30 seconds--1 minute, that is fine. It’s about practicing patience with the process and yourself.

Modification and Application:

- If three minutes simply can’t be done, consider adding in another sensory element and practice paying attention to that element (e.g., a scent, like an oil, spice, or candle; a simple sound, like something from a nature sounds CD; a tactile sensation, like holding a rock, a marble, or a stuffed animal).
- If sitting doesn’t work, this same exercise can also be done standing up or lying down. Remember to keep the emphasis on that word ‘awareness’...you can lie down with awareness!
- The eyes do not have to be closed—for this basic mindfulness exercise, it may work better for them to be open.