3-Minute Breathing Space

Bring yourself into the present moment by deliberately adopting an erect and dignified posture. If possible, close your eyes, then ask:

**Awareness**

“What is my experience right now … in thoughts … in feelings … and in bodily sensations?

Acknowledge and register your experience, even if it is unwanted.

**Gathering**

Then, gently re-direct full attention to breathing, to each in-breath, and to each out-breath as they follow, one after the other.

Your breath can function as an anchor to bring you into the present and help you tune into a state of awareness and stillness.

**Expanding**

Expand the field of your awareness around your breathing, so that it includes a sense of the body as a whole, your posture, and facial expression.

The breathing space provides a way to step out of automatic pilot mode and reconnect with the present moment.

The key skill is to maintain awareness in the moment. Nothing else.

from Segal, Williams, and Teasdale Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy for Depression (2002)

"Only the present moment is real and available to us. The peace we desire is not in some distant future, but it is something we can realize in the present moment…. By living deeply in the present moment we can understand the past better and we can prepare for a better future.”

Thich Nhat Hahn, "Interbeing"
Stop

...instruct yourself to stop what you’re doing, for 30 secs...

Notice

...your breathing, body sensations, thoughts, and feelings...

Breathe IN

...a little more slowly, with awareness...

Breathe OUT

...and Release

...a little muscle tension, thoughts, any strong emotions, any unnecessary tension you notice, with each exhalation....

“How we stay in the middle between indulging and repressing is by acknowledging whatever arises without judgment, letting the thoughts simply dissolve, and then going back to the openness of this very moment. That’s what we’re actually doing in meditation.

Up come all these thoughts, but rather than squelch them or obsess with them, we acknowledge them and let them go. Then we come back to just being here.

After a while, that’s how we relate with hope and fear in our daily lives. Out of nowhere, we stop struggling and relax. We see our story line, drop it, and come back to the freshness of the present moment.”

Pema Chodron, *Comfortable with Uncertainty*

“Watching our breath is a wonderful practice, but it is not enough; for transformation to take place, we have to practice mindfulness all day long, not just on our meditation cushion. …Do not lose yourself in the past. Do not lose yourself in the future. Do not get caught in your anger, worries or fears. Come back to the present moment, and touch life deeply. This is mindfulness….

When mindfulness embraces our joy, our sadness, and all other mental formations, sooner or later, we will see their deep roots. With every mindful step and every mindful breath, we see the roots of our mental formations. Mindfulness shines its light upon them and helps them to transform.”

Thich Nhat Hanh
"Can you be in the moment later?"