

Practicing Mindfulness: The Body Scan and Pause

The **body scan** is an internal practice designed to train your mind to be more present. Though there are many approaches to the body scan, these videos — offered as a [3-minute](#), [5-minute](#), or [10-minute](#) practice by renowned mindfulness author, Elisha Goldstein — will lead you through this exercise.

Taking a brief pause throughout the day can help us re-center ourselves and calm our minds. Strategic, purposeful pauses can be especially helpful when we are feeling drained of energy or feeling unsettled or anxious. In short, pauses help us to refocus and provide clarity to help guide us to act intentionally, rather than reactively. Pauses give us time to step back from our “fixing mode” and instead shift our senses and thoughts to the present.



One means of taking a “pause” is to focus on your breath by doing the following:

1. Find a comfortable posture with your feet on the floor and your back erect. You may sit or stand and close your eyes or look at the ground;
2. Now find your breath, typically most apparent in your nose, chest or stomach. Give your attention to your breathing and attune to it with curiosity;
3. Do not worry about your mind wandering, just gently bring it back to focus on the sensation of breathing, like you are redirecting a puppy that has wandered off;
4. Notice how breathing nourishes your body even when you are not paying attention to it;
5. Feel your whole body breathe, gently moving with the rise and fall of your breath. Try to pay attention to at least 5 breathing cycles;
6. Now, release your breath and allow everything that comes into awareness to just be as it is.

Adapted from Lubar Solvang, S. (2017, April). The Pause. School Community Partnership for Mental Health newsletter.

There are a number of other, easy ways to practice mindfulness throughout your day. Here are just a few you can try in less than 10 minutes:

[Raisin Meditation](#) (1-5 minutes)

[Walking Meditation](#) (5-10 minutes)

[Guided Loving-Kindness Meditation](#) (5 minutes)