# Mindfulness Exercises

Mindfulness means living in the present moment and being intentionally more focused on what is happening in your surroundings – without judgement. Mindfulness encourages slowing down and letting negative thoughts pass before responding to situations. When you give yourself time to pause, you likely will notice a sense of calm and a greater awareness of your emotions. Mindfulness as a tool is beneficial for overall wellness and can be utilized at any time with noticeable results. Like anything new, it takes practice to become efficient at using mindfulness in times of need.

## Mindfulness Exercise # 2: Deep Breathing

Mindfulness can be as simple as breathing! One of the easiest ways to experience mindfulness, which can be done as you go about your daily activities (convenient for those who feel they do not have time to meditate), is to focus on your breathing. When engaging in breathing practice, try to breathe from your belly rather than from your chest. Inhale through your nose and exhale through your mouth. Focusing on the sound and rhythm of your breath, especially when you are upset or emotional, can have a calming effect and help you stay grounded in the present moment. Once you have mastered this basic deep breathing technique – from your belly, in through your nose, out through your mouth – try making your exhale twice as long as your inhale. While you exhale, shift your attention to the sensations in your body. Adjust this exercise as needed, but try to maintain your focus on your breath, allowing your thoughts to just come and go.

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