

CALMING A BUSY MIND

Goal: Promote health, calm, and productivity.

1. Introduction

A busy mind can stem from trauma, ADHD, Bipolar Mood Disorder, stress, sleep problems, addictions, burnout and many more. A busy mind makes self-regulation difficult and can affect all aspects in your life — the mental, emotional, physical, spiritual, and social self. It increases daily stress and chips away at a positive sense of self. It interferes with self-care and makes it hard to keep healthy habits.

2. Don't try to stop your thoughts during meditation

Don't expect to and don't even try to stop your thoughts. Trying to stop your thoughts is not really possible and it often leads to frustration. Frustration that might make you doubt your ability to meditate. Rather work on changing your relationship to your thoughts. Rather get an image of your thoughts or your busy mind such a roller-coaster or an animal or a type of car.

3. Exercise 1

- 1. Find a comfortable position, either seated in a chair or on a cushion on the floor.** Allow your posture to be upright and tall, but not stiff or uncomfortable. Notice the sensation of your feet resting against the floor. Notice the feel of your hands resting in your lap. See if you can feel the places where your body makes contact with your chair or cushion.
- 2. Bring your awareness to the sensation of the flow of your breath as it moves in and out of your body.** See if you can discover the place in your body

where you most clearly experience the sensation of your breath. Perhaps you notice it most clearly at the tip of your nose as the air moves in and out, or perhaps you notice it most clearly in the rise and fall of your chest or belly. It doesn't really matter. You're just trying to discover where in this moment you can most clearly make contact with the feel of your breath, as it moves in and out. Let your awareness be open and relaxed, not tight, constricted, or forced.

3. **Fairly soon you'll probably notice that your mind has wandered, and other thoughts have intruded.** Planning something, wondering about something. This very moment you notice that your mind has wandered and your attention is no longer on your breath, is a moment of perfect mindfulness, as you see clearly what your mind is doing in that moment. Once you notice, simply turn your attention back to your breath, again anchoring yourself in the present moment by following the flow of the in and out of your breath.
4. **You may find that you wonder off, over and over and over.** Every time you notice it, and return your attention to your breath, you are building your capacity to be mindful and to be present.
5. **As you, with curiosity and patience, watch the flow of your thoughts, practice letting go of any judgments or criticisms that might arise.** It's natural for your mind to wander. You're just practicing noticing it.
6. **Where is your mind now?** Simply notice, "thinking," and then rediscover the sensation of your breath.
7. **Keep on focusing on your breathing.**

4. Exercise 2

4.1 Walking Meditation

Sam Harris walking meditation

- Practice walking meditation indoors or outdoors.

- Start walking with your eyes open.
- Attend to the sensation of lifting, move and placing each foot (Lift, move, place – mental note).
- Find a comfortable pace.
- If your mind wanders off, come back to the focusing on walking.
- Become aware of the walking sensations.

Resource:

https://emea01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fdynamic.wakingup.com%2Fcourse%2FCO6524327%3Fsource%3Dcontent%2520share%26share_id%3D919610E9%26pack%3Dp7f1a9%26code%3DSC456EFC3&data=05%7C01%7C%7Cc9c8f747ce9147cf21e608dbb8e56bc2%7C84df9e7fe9f640afb435aaaaaaaaaaaa%7C1%7C0%7C638307067724364122%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWljiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLCJBTiI6Ikl1haWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=yAMiFbclupHMouQsmyVK4V1HEvw5sfTKSXdmt8Bq%2Bqk%3D&reserved=0

4.2 A Guided Walking Meditation to Notice the Beauty Around Us—Kazumi Igus

1. **Let's start with taking deep breaths.**
2. **As we begin, I want to bring your attention to how you are moving** if you're walking from one place to another. How fast are you moving? How are you walking? What's your pace? Do you have a destination and a timeframe? Or do you have some space? Wherever you are, slow it down just a little bit.
3. **Bring your attention to how you are walking—your balance.** Are you taking a step? Start to notice the small changes, the muscles involved. And whatever you're thinking, all of it is okay. You're just noticing where you are in this space right now.
4. **Then, acknowledging that our minds sometimes race** and we have a lot of things going on in our lives, just take a deep breath and bring your attention back to each step. Start to settle into a rhythm. Notice every muscle that's involved with creating this motion to propel you forward and shift your weight.

Maybe if you're in a wheelchair, you're using your arms. How are the hands involved? Are you holding something? Focus on really being present with your physical space, your physical body. Take a deep breath. As we move through our environment, we start to notice other things outside of ourselves.

5. **The first thing I want you to bring your attention to is the smell around you.** Depending on where you are, that can be pleasant or unpleasant. Breathing in, can you identify a particular smell? Maybe you're getting a lot of smells all at once. Maybe you notice the change in smells as you move past different areas. And as you experience these smells, notice what you're thinking.
6. **Then take a deep breath and shift your attention to sights.** What can you see? Start by focusing on a color that brings you joy. If it's something more earthy, like green or brown, you might start to notice it in nature—the trees and plants. Just pick your color and start noticing it on your journey.
7. **Taking another deep breath, we shift to looking at nature.** Let's look for the animals that exist in this environment.
8. **I'd like to bring your attention to the birds.** If you can hear birds, start to listen for the variations in their calls, maybe even a different species. If you can see the birds, notice their behaviors, and any other details that might pop out at you. Take a deep breath, noticing where the birds are.
9. **Take a moment to notice leaves** and if you can see any patterns in how those plants are growing. Are there any flowers? Maybe you can recognize a specific species. Can you name it? Take a deep breath. Experience being around plants and animals in nature.
10. **And as you continue moving keep noticing** your color, new plants, new animals. Notice what you're thinking and if you're telling yourself a story or if you're asking a lot of questions. And if you are, take a deep breath and then focus back on the details of the experience—the shape of the leaves, the color of the feathers. It's very important for us to be mindful of how our movement through the world affects the nature around us and how the nature around us can affect our experience. Take another deep breath.

11. **Be grateful and express some gratitude** that you are even able to experience it today. Taking a deep breath. Finding your walking rhythm. Slow but steady, or whatever works for you. Continuing to notice your color, plants, the animals. And continuing to take deep breaths.

<http://mindful.org>

5. **Exercise 3 - Neurosensory exercise**

Get comfortable in a relaxing spot.

Become aware of the feeling of resistance in your body

Breathing: Listen to your breath. Don't change it. Just listen and notice it.

Concentrate on your breathing. How are you breathing?

Notice how you are breathing.

Did you change your breathing focus on it?

Bring your awareness to your breathing

Focus how your breath in and out

Body awareness

Focus on Body awareness, focus on your **face**, Notice your jaw soften,

Touch your face

Bring attention to your feet

How are your feet connected to the environment?

Feel the pressure on the ground with your **feet**

Bring attention to your **hands**. Notice your hands.

Gently feel your skin and contours.

Focus to your **lower body**. Feel the lower body's strength and support.

Feel your **eyes, head and neck** and move very slowly.

Environment awareness

Get aware of your surroundings, Get orientated to your environment,

Notice things in your environment

Take notice of the ground, The sounds outside
Focus your attention on here
You can say out loud things you are experiencing
What do you see? Really look and notice things.
Move slowly your neck and head to look. Look to the sides, up and down.
Look at colors and textures.
Focus your contact with the environment and see the spaces around.
Notice your body
You can move your body
The focus must be your body connecting to your environment
Look and scan via your senses

RESOURCES

[Integrative Medicine for ADHD: Holistic Health and Wellness Guide](http://additudemag.com)
(additudemag.com)

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/hard-cold-research/202308/2-profound-benefits-nat>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aesU5CkXGB8>

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-roots-health/202111/the-healing-power-nature#>

K. Overbury, B. Conroy, and E. Marks. 2023. "Swimming in Nature: A Scoping Review of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Benefits of Open Water Swimming." *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, vol. 90, 102073, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jenvp.2023.102073>.

<http://www.mindfulness.org>