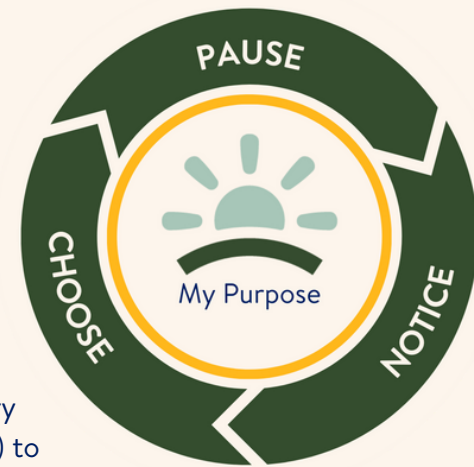


Pause. Notice. Choose.

Mindful Moment: PACE Breathing

Today, we're going to practice a pause, notice, and choose around breath. You can use your breath to regulate your nervous system. Contemplative practices have used this for centuries to calm the body and mind. The military and police also use breathing (referred to as tactical, paced or box breathing) to maintain optimal functioning in high-risk situation.



The basic technique is to slow your breathing to around 6 breaths per minute with a 4/6 ratio of inhalation to exhalation time. Breathing in this manner has been found to promote a harmonious state between your respiration and your heart.

Begin by turning your attention to your breathing, feeling your chest rise and fall and noticing the sensations of air moving in and out of your nostrils.

- Inhale for 4 seconds, breathing deeply so that your abdomen expands as if it was inflating like a balloon.
- Exhale for 6 seconds, slowing the flow of air by pursing your lips and making a swoosh sound.
- You may need to start with a shorter inhale to exhale ratio, for example 2/4 or 3/5, and work up to 4/6. Each person has to find the combination that works for them.
- If your mind wanders, gently redirect your focus back to the counting and breathing.
- Using a breathing app in the beginning can help serve as a breathing coach. Eventually, the paced breathing will become second nature.
- Start practicing with a couple of minutes of paced breathing two times a day, during times when you feel stressed, or before situations that you anticipate will cause stress.
- If you start to feel dizzy or experience tingling sensations, try breathing a little less deeply or shorten your breath cycle.

End of Mindful Moment.

Facilitator Asks a Few Questions for the Group

I would like to hear from a few of you:

What did you notice during that experience?

What did you like about it?

What did you find challenging?

Source: [Boston University](#)

Walton Family
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