



MINDFULNESS FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

This program will introduce the concept of mindfulness, which will help manage the stress that you may be experiencing at work and in your personal life.

Written by

Dr Kinjal Doshi

Principal Clinical Psychologist

Singapore General Hospital

in collaboration with

SingHealth Duke-NUS Institute for Patient Safety & Quality

CONTENT



01

BREATH PRACTICE

PAGES | 1-5



02

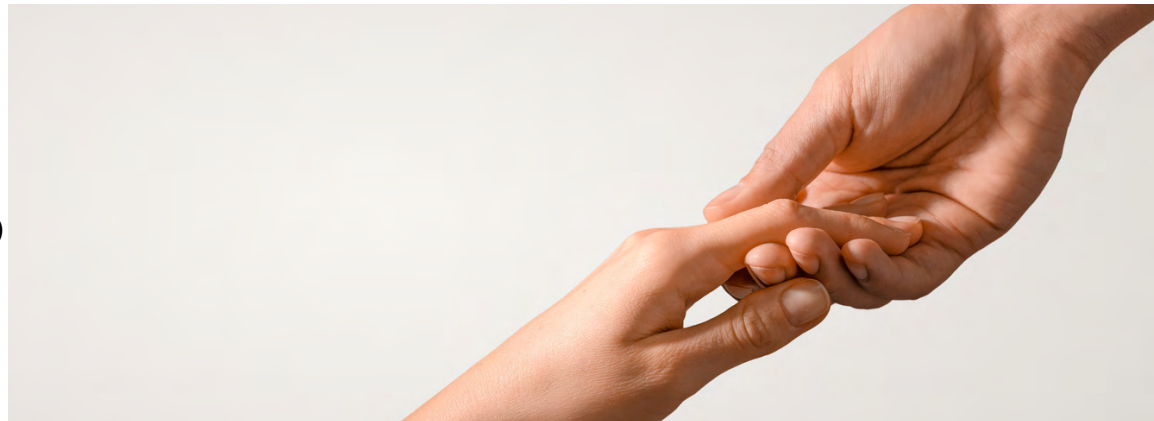
MINDFULNESS OF BODY AND MOVEMENT (BODY SCAN)

PAGES | 6-8

03

EMPATHY AND COMPASSION

PAGES | 9-13



04

BRINGING MINDFULNESS INTO THE EVERYDAY

PAGES | 13-16

© SingHealth Duke-NUS Institute for Patient Safety & Quality (IPSQ), 2021

Second Edition / 13 September 2023

Title: Mindfulness Practice Facilitator's Guide

Editorial Team

Editor:

Professor Tan Kok Hian

Associate Editors:

Zann Foo

Tang Joo Ying

Assistant Editors:

Lucas Ng

Nurhuda Ishak

Main Author:

Dr Kinjal Doshi

Designed by:

Lucas Ng

PREFACE

The SingHealth Duke-NUS Institute for Patient Safety and Quality (IPSQ) is established to integrate cluster-wide efforts in patient safety and quality within the SingHealth Duke-NUS Academic Medical Centre (AMC). IPSQ aims to develop both healthcare professionals and patients to become advocates and leaders in patient safety and quality improvement to enhance capacity in improving patient safety.

IPSQ has developed a suite of programs aimed at upskilling and uplifting the Patient Safety, Quality and Innovation capabilities of staff under its Academic Medicine – Enhancing Performance, Improving Care (AM-EPIC) Framework. The AM-EPIC Framework is an education and professional development framework that comprises a portfolio of programs in 6 identified competency domains namely Improvement Sciences, Patient Safety, Innovation & System Design, Clinical Governance & Risk, Patient Centeredness & Advocacy, and Staff Resilience & Care Support.

To further enhance the learning experience of our learners beyond the classroom-based teachings, IPSQ is always seeking new innovative approaches outside of the classroom.

This Mindfulness Practice Facilitator's Guide is designed and intended to serve as a handy guide for you to facilitate the practice of four mindfulness techniques, as well as provide tips on how to engage and facilitate the discussion and Q&A segment during the mindfulness session.



WELCOME

Mindfulness is a state of being in the present moment where one is choosing to pay attention to their internal experiences, such as your thoughts, emotions and bodily sensations, and external experiences, such as your interactions with others and your environment, that are happening in the present moment [not in the past or the future] More importantly, being mindful of these experiences is to observe these experiences with kindness, curiosity and without being judgmental.

By not being judgmental, simply notice the experience we are having in the moment without trying to determine if it is good or bad, and more importantly, not being too hard on ourselves for the experience.

In this guide, there are four mindfulness exercises, and hope you will find at least one or two of amenable to practice on your own.



INTRODUCTION TO BREATH PRACTICE

Definitions aside, the best way to appreciate being mindful is by practicing mindfulness. For the first practice, we are going to pay attention to our breathing.

Why the breath?

The breath grounds us to our body in the present moment. Unlike our mind and our thoughts, which can be of the past or about the future, we can only pay attention to the breath we are breathing in the present moment.

The breath is considered neutral – paying attention to our breath does not bring up positive or negative thoughts or feelings; thus, it is easy to stay on the breath for the duration of the practice.

The breath is something we have with us always – we cannot “forget” our breath, and so, it allows us to practice this exercise anytime anywhere.

BREATH PRACTICE

[START]

Let's all take a slow, deep breath, and observe where you are able to notice it most easily: is it at the nose where the air enters and leaves? Is it with your body that rises and falls as you breathe in and out? Take a poll – ask participants to raise their hands. Did anyone else notice their breath somewhere else?

Now that you have located your breath, I want you to bring your attention there and notice the feeling of breathing in and out naturally, without trying to change how you breathe. Now I want you to sit comfortably, as upright as possible, with both feet firmly on the floor. I will ask you to now close your eyes so you can focus only on the feeling of breathing in and out. [pause]

If you notice that your attention has wandered away from your breath, perhaps to a thought, an emotion or another bodily sensation, this is normal. Allow yourself to note the distraction then let it be and gently return the attention to that feeling at your nose or your body as you breathe in and out. [pause]

You may notice that the air you breathe in is cool when it enters and a little warmer when it leaves. Or you may feel how your body rises and expands as you breathe in, and falls as you breathe out. [pause]

If you notice that your attention is no longer on your breath, that is okay. Note the distraction, let it be and gently return your attention to your breath where you find it most easily. [pause]

Now, slowly, bring your attention to the feeling of your feet on the floor. [short pause] Return your attention back into this room, and when you are ready, gently open your eyes.

Repeat the mindfulness of the breath practice.

[END]



BREATH PRACTICE
(VIDEO)



LINK:
[HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/BREATHPRACTICE1](https://tinyurl.com/breathpractice1)

PLEASE SCAN THE
QR CODE OR THE
LINK TO ACCESS
THE BREATH
PRACTICE VIDEO



INQUIRY AND DISCUSSION

What did you notice from doing this practice?

What did you notice from doing this practice the second time around?

How is it the same/different from when you did it the first time?



FAQS

If you feel like you were about to fall asleep, or fell asleep, while doing this practice, it demonstrates how tired you must be...

Here, as facilitator, you can inquire gently about their sleep, and encourage them to take care of themselves - remind them NOT to use this practice to help them sleep but they can do it during the day to help them regain alertness.

If participants noted feeling relaxed, as facilitator you can share "paying attention to the breath will relax you as it triggers a physiological response known as the "relaxation response" - your body realizes there is no threat (hence you can notice your breathing), and therefore, relaxes."



MINDFULNESS IN DAILY LIFE

For mindfulness to become a state of being, we need to practice being mindful on a daily basis. This is to help our brains become trained at noticing when we are distracted, bringing our attention back to our object of interest (e.g. breath) and sustaining our focus on this object.

The nature of human's mind is for it to wander, but with training, we will notice when it wanders faster and it will be easier to bring our attention back to what we want to focus on in the moment.

Research shows for this practice to have an impact, we need to practice daily (at least 6 out of 7 days) for a minimum of 15 minutes.

Allow yourself to treat each practice as a new practice, to not expect that the next time you do this practice for the experience to be the same.

NOTES

(a) Preferably to stick to the same time of the day each day and encourage to do it in the morning or during the day (as oppose to during the evening and definitely not before sleep or in bed; at least 2 to 3 hours before bed).

(b) To identify a quiet space (not the bed or bedroom) and highlight that they can do it sitting on a chair, cross-legged or lying down on a yoga mat [if their space is not quiet, they can invest in earplugs).

(c) Highlight that they can do it together if they wish.

(d) Participants can use the stopwatch function (as oppose to timer function) to estimate the amount of time they practised.

(e) If 15 minutes is too daunting or difficult, they may consider breaking it up into smaller chunks of time that are more manageable – it is more important to practise at least once consistently the next few days.

(f) If you are feeling sleepy/ tired, it may be an indication that you are not getting enough sleep. We would recommend not to fight sleep to keep awake, maybe stop the practice and to continue at a later time.



BODY SCAN EXERCISE [30 MINUTES]

The body scan exercise is an important exercise for bringing awareness to the body and its individual body parts. During this exercise, we will bring attention to different parts of our body, one after another. As we pay attention, we may notice sensations, which you may find pleasant or not pleasant. Or we may notice no sensation. Whether we experience sensation or not, during this exercise, we shall observe them without trying to alter or change them, then slowly letting go of that part of the body and bring attention to the next part of the body.

While we do this exercise, you may observe and experience unpleasant sensations, such as tensions and/or pain. When you come across any tension or pain, you can do one of two things. You may stay with the tension and pain, and observe the experience. If it is overwhelming, you may return your attention to your breath and pay attention to the sensation of the in-breath and out-breath; you may return to the body scan with the next body part.

INSTRUCTION FOR BODY SCAN EXCERCISE

Begin by having all participants sit comfortably in the chair.

Each participant is guided through a brief mindfulness practice focus on the breath.

Lead participants to bring attention to each part of the body – the body scan.

Instruct participants to become aware of each part of the body, noticing the presence of sensation (or not) without judgement (not changing the experience).

When attention wanders from that part of the body, encourage participants to note their mind has wandered and to gently bring attention back to the part of the body being scanned in that moment.



BODY SCAN EXCERCISE (VIDEO)



LINK:
[HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/BODYSCANMOVEMENT1](https://tinyurl.com/bodyscanmovement1)

PLEASE SCAN THE
QR CODE TO
ACCESS THE BODY
SCAN PRACTICE
VIDEO



INQUIRY AND DISCUSSION

What did you notice about your experience doing the practice today?

What were some of the difficulties you observed while doing this practice?

How is doing this practice different from your experience being mindful of your breath?

Why the body?

Just like the breath, paying attention to the body grounds us to our present moment.

The body scan is not only about becoming more attentive to our body and how it feels physically. The body scan also serves to develop awareness of emotions. A greater awareness of the body is important in learning how to deal more effectively with emotions. Specific sensations in the body may at times signal the presence of emotions which we are not fully aware. Feedback on how the body feels helps us learn how to recognize and better manage emotions and stress.





EMPATHY AND COMPASSION

Introduction to Compassion

We may experience situations that are distressing, and in that moment, we have an opportunity to provide ourselves with comfort. Recognizing our distress, and providing ourselves comfort to alleviate it, is compassion.

Compassion is defined as recognizing distress (suffering) in a person with a wish to alleviate it; self-compassion, therefore, is defined as acknowledging distress (suffering) in oneself with a wish to alleviate it. As with empathy where the better we are at observing and noticing our own emotions, the better we are at noticing another's emotion, the more compassionate we are able to be towards others, the more able we are to be compassionate towards others. Compassion for others begins with being compassionate towards our own selves.

What are some examples / events when we feel distress?

[to help participants understand what distress means for themselves]

- School or work-related stressors
- Dealing with a difficult family member



LOVING-KINDNESS PRACTICE

As with empathy, we can foster our ability to be compassionate to ourselves and others. One exercise to help us develop our compassion is the loving-kindness practice. For this practice we need to think of **THREE WISHES** that we would like to wish for ourselves as well as for the people that we love. Let us take a moment to think of **ONE WISH** that we would like to remind ourselves.

Go around the circle, and have each participant share **ONE WISH**. Once each and every participant has shared, narrow it to **THREE** of the most common wishes.

Now that we have our three wishes, I will walk you through the practice. We will begin with a short practice of the breath, and then I will ask you to bring to your mind the image of a loved one – it could be one person, a few people, even animals. The important thing is that the loved one is someone you love or who you know loves you unconditionally. As we think of our loved one, we notice the emotion and sensations we associate with the loved one. And it is with this feeling, we share our wishes to ourselves, to them and others. During the practice, I will recite these wishes, and when I do, I would like you to say them out aloud after me.

LOVING-KINDNESS PRACTICE

[START]

Sit comfortably, as upright as possible, with both feet firmly on the floor. Gently close your eyes and bring your attention to the feeling of breathing in and out.

[pause]

Bring to your mind a loved one – it could be one person, a few people, even pets and animals – a loved one is one that you love and who loves your unconditionally. [pause]

Connect with the feeling of warmth, joy, kindness and love that you are experiencing in your body. [pause]

From this place of warmth, we will first offer these wishes to ourselves:

May I be happy

May I be healthy

May I be free from suffering [you may add one of the other wishes]

State these wishes three times [pause]

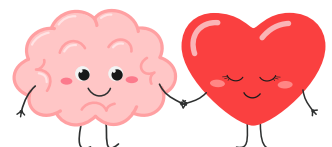
From this place of warmth, love and kindness, we will now offer these wishes to our loved ones:

May you be happy

May you be healthy

May you be free from suffering [you may add one of the other wishes]

State these wishes three times [pause]



LOVING-KINDNESS PRACTICE (CONT..)

Now I want you to bring to mind as many people you interact with in your daily life – your colleagues, neighbours, the people who serve you, the people you serve, and we will offer these wishes to them:

May you be happy
May you be healthy
May you be free from suffering [you may add one of the other wishes]

State these wishes three times [pause]

Now, recall someone who you find difficult – thinking of this person just makes you upset – this could be a difficult family member, a colleague at work, or anyone that you believe causes you distress; with this person in mind, we will offer these wishes to them:

May you be happy
May you be healthy
May you be free from suffering [you may add one of the other wishes]

State these wishes three times [pause]

Finally, we will bring to our mind all the people who are here – in this room, in this building, in this hospital, and offer these wishes to them:

May you be happy
May you be healthy
May you be free from suffering [you may add one of the other wishes]

State these wishes three times [pause]

Let's take this moment now to sit with this feeling of loving-kindness, returning our attention gently to our breath – to notice this feeling of breathing in and out of these body filled with loving-kindness. [pause] Slowly, bring your attention to the feeling of your feet on the floor. [short pause] Return your attention back into this room, and when you are ready, gently open your eyes.



LOVING-KINDNESS
PRACTICE (VIDEO)



LINK:

[HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/EMPATHYCOMPASSION1](https://tinyurl.com/empathycompassion1)

PLEASE SCAN THE
QR CODE TO
ACCESS THE
LOVING-KINDNESS
VIDEO



INQUIRY AND DISCUSSION

What did you notice about your experience doing the practice today?

What was your experience offering yourself these wishes? What was your experience offering these wishes to your loved ones?

What was your experience offering these wishes to the “difficult” person?

What were, if any, difficulties you had with this practice?



NOTES

To learn how to and recognize our capacity for kindness for ourselves and others.

What makes it difficult to offer ourselves kindness? What makes it easier to offer others kindness?

To tackle concepts of selfishness, the misunderstanding of putting ourselves first before others, etc.

To learn that by being kind to ourselves, we will have a greater capacity of being kind to others.

Recognize that it may be difficult to be kind to a “difficult” person at this moment, but to continue to practice – if necessary, to identify what we need to wish for ourselves to be kind to this “difficult” person (e.g. brave to create boundary).



BRINGING MINDFULNESS INTO THE EVERYDAY

This is the last session of the program. Until now, we have been learning and practicing mindfulness exercises that require us to set aside time – these exercises are called formal exercises. However, mindfulness is not restricted to the time we spend during these exercises; rather, we can practise being mindful in each and every moment in our everyday – informally.

One way to bring mindfulness into our everyday is by bringing attention to our experiences through our five senses. At this point, you may ask participants to name the five senses.

We will now do a practice to help us appreciate bringing attention to our senses; for this practice, we will focus on 3 of the senses: touch, hearing and smell.

MINDFULNESS OF THE SENSES

Let's sit comfortably, as upright as possible, with both feet firmly on the floor. We will start this practice by taking in a deep breath, and then just allowing the breath to flow into its natural rhythm. I will ask you to now close your eyes so you can focus only on the feeling of breathing in and out. [pause]

Feeling the weight of your body in your seat, settling in to the space and sounds around you. Gently bring your attention to notice how the body feels in this moment, as you scan downwards and become more aware of the physical sensations. Not trying to change the experience, just gently noticing the feeling of your breath in and out. Be it in your stomach, or your chest as it rises and falls. If you have noticed that the mind has wandered just take a moment to note that as "Oh that's thinking, ok" and just gently bring your attention back to notice the object of your focus.

We will begin with bringing our attention to our sense of touch. Notice the sensations that accompany your sense of touch – the feeling of your feet on the floor, your body in the chair, the clothes that you are wearing, even the air against your skin. Without judging the experience, notice the qualities of these objects in contact through your sense of touch: hard or soft, cool or warm, smooth or rough... and any other quality [pause]

Gently focus your attention to your sense of hearing. Slowly observe all the sounds that are around you, near and far. Again, not trying to judge the experience, simply observe the qualities of the sounds that you are able to hear: soft or loud, consistent or changing... and any other quality. [pause]

Now bring your awareness to your breath. As you breathe in and out, you are taking the smells that surround you. Observe the qualities of these smells without judging the experience: faint or strong, lingering or fading, pungent or sweet... and any other quality. [short pause]

If you are not able to smell anything, use this opportunity to bring your attention to your breath and focus on the sensations that come with breathing in and out. [short pause]

Slowly, bring your attention back to your breath, allowing yourself to feel the air as it enter and as it leaves. [pause] Gently return your attention to the room, and when you are ready you may open your eyes.

MINDFULNESS OF THE SENSES



LINK:
[HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/MINDFULESENSES1](https://tinyurl.com/mindfulesenses1)

PLEASE SCAN THE
QR CODE TO
ACCESS THE
MINDFULNESS OF
THE SENSES VIDEO



INQUIRY AND DISCUSSION



What was your experience of this practice?

Which of these 3 senses was the easiest for you to focus your attention?

Bringing mindfulness into our everyday is not about achieving something, but this is about how we change our relationship with the world around us and in this particular instance how we change our relationship with food with the next mindful eating exercise. Because unless we are aware of the thoughts that drive our habits and our behaviour and our eating, we do not really give ourselves the opportunity to change. The most important thing is awareness. And to train the mind in awareness during the day as well. We can use a technique called noting with this exercise. Noticing when you are getting caught up in a particular stream of thinking, see it and let it go, a really useful way for stepping out of a habitual behaviour.

INFORMAL PRACTICE

Ask participants to identify ONE activity they do every day to incorporate the senses practice and to bring in mindfulness.

Discuss ways to continue with mindfulness beyond this program. Identify resources to aid them with their practice.



END

© SingHealth Duke-NUS Institute for Patient Safety & Quality (IPSQ), 2021

page 21

