



Exercise 4

Practicing mindfulness



POWIATOWE CENTRUM
POMOCY RODZINIE W
OŚWIĘCIMIU



UK - Butterflies LTD



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Practicing mindfulness

Stress can be defined as the mental and physical reaction of the organism to internal or external factors called stressors.

Stressors are, among other things, negative thoughts associated with over thinking. What happened in the past or what might happen in the future? The essence of mindfulness practice is to return to the present time and observe what is happening without judging. Recognizing our feelings, naming them and accepting them can bring liberation, peace and balance.

With this exercise you will learn to focus your attention on the present and notice emotions without fighting and suppressing them. This allows you to calmly accept them and making them quicker and easier to release.

The following exercise consists of three steps:

1 Realize what happens.

Stop for a moment. Stand or sit. Close eyes if possible. Observe your thoughts, feelings in the body and simply stay with them. Do nothing. Be a neutral observer. Observe and adopt without control and judging.

2 Focus your attention on the breath.

Point your attention to the breath and notice how it is at that very moment. Observe consciously and feel each inhale and exhale. You can include visualization of your breathing. Imagine how the stream of the breath goes through the nose, spreads all over the body and comes out your mouth. If this is helpful to you you can give it a color. Your breath will help you anchor in the present.

3 Extend your attention to the whole body.

Scan each part slowly. Note; What do you feel in your feet, calf, knee, thighs, hips, abdomen, back, hands, neck and head. Check where the tensions are located and imagine how each breath is released. You can say **"I'm letting go"** in your thoughts or aloud.

You can perform this exercise anywhere. Not necessarily in emotionally difficult situations. The more you will practice your mindfulness in everyday situations, the easier you will use this technique in moments when negative emotions occur.

The technique described here can be a "rescue wheel" in situations of sudden flow of anxiety.