



The Breathing Space

These suggestions can be helpful when you are feeling overwhelmed. They can be used when you are driving, when you are at work, or even when sitting in an airplane. All you need in order to use these techniques is your own willingness to focus on following the instructions.

When you are troubled in thoughts or feelings:

1. Awareness

Observe—bring the focus of awareness to your inner experience and notice what is happening in your thoughts, feelings, and bodily sensations

Describe, acknowledge, identify—put experiences into words, for example, say in your mind, “A feeling of anger is arising” or “Self-critical thoughts are here.”

2. Redirecting Attention

Gently *Redirect* your full attention to the breath.

Follow the breath all the way in and all the way out.

Try noting in the back of your mind, “Breathing in...breathing out” or counting, “inhaling, 1...exhaling, 1; inhaling, 2...etc.”

3. Expanding Attention

Allow your attention to expand to the whole body—especially to any sense of discomfort, tension, or resistance.

If these sensations are there, then take your awareness there by “breathing into them” on the in breath. Then, breathe out from those sensations, softening and opening with the out breath.

Say to yourself on the out breath, “It’s OK. Whatever it is, it’s OK. Let me feel it.”

Become aware of and adjust your posture and facial expression.

As best you can, bring this expanded awareness to the next moments of your day.