

Getting to Present

Techniques to Help You to Be Present

Exercises to Help You “Breathe in the Belly”

- Lie down, close your eyes, allow your jaw to drop open and put your hands on your belly around your navel.
- Feel the natural rhythm of the breath in the belly for 3 to 5 breaths.
- Try a sigh of relief (a bigger breath), and notice how the breath goes up into the chest.
- Try a sigh again, but keep the breath in the belly.
- Try breathing in through your nose to feel the breath in the belly.
- Try breathing as if sucking a straw to feel the breath in the belly.

How to Remember to Breathe in the Belly

- Place your hand on the belly and apply gentle pressure. Remember that as you take a breath in the belly, it inflates like a balloon. As you breathe out, the belly deflates.
- To remember this technique, it may help if you breathe in through the nose and out through the mouth or imagine sucking the air in through a straw and then releasing it.

Physical Exercises to Release Tension

Tense and Release

- Close your eyes.
- Tense your right foot, hold for 3 counts, let it go with a small sigh.
- Tense your left foot, hold for 3 counts, let it go with a small sigh.
- Tense your right leg, hold for 3 counts, let it go with a small sigh.
- Tense your left leg, hold for 3 counts, let it go with a small sigh.
- Tense your belly and buttocks, hold for 5 counts, let it go with a small sigh.
- Tense your shoulders by bringing them up to your ears, hold for 5 counts, let it go with a small sigh.
- Tense your hands into fists, hold for 5 counts, let it go with a small sigh.
- Squeeze your face into a prune, hold for five counts, and let go with a small sigh.
- Open your face very wide, including your eyes and mouth, hold for five counts, and let it go with a small sigh.
- Close your eyes again. Scan your body mentally, and wherever you find tension, practice tensing and then releasing that area.
- Open your eyes.

Getting to Present *continued*

Head Drop and Roll

- Standing or sitting down, close your eyes.
- Feel the balance of your head and neck on your shoulders.
- Let the head drop slowly for five counts into a full forward position—you will feel some pull on your shoulders.
- Let your head hang for five counts.
- Let your head come up all the way for five counts.
- Let your head fall back slowly in five counts, and let your jaw hang open.
- Let your head hang back for five counts.
- Slowly bring it forward for five counts.
- Slowly roll the head around to the right for 10 counts.
- Slowly roll the head around to the left for 10 counts.

Shoulder Release

- Sitting or standing, bring your shoulders up and release down.
- Slowly roll them around from front to back five times.

Spinal Twist

- Sit up in your chair.
- Turn to your right (without turning the chair).
- Bring both your left and right hands around to hold onto the right side or back of chair.
- Gently apply pressure with hands to allow your spine to twist to the right and hold for five counts.
- Turn back to center slowly.
- Turn to your left and repeat above to the other side.

The most precious gift
we can offer others is
our presence. When
mindfulness embraces
those we love, they
will bloom like
flowers.

Thich Nhat Hanh

Audience, Goal, Benefit Worksheet

Context

What is the context/background for this conversation/presentation/meeting? What organizational priority/issue is connected to this situation? What is at stake?

Which of your values is/are involved in this situation? Why is this important to you?

Audience, Goal, Benefit Worksheet *continued*

Your Audience (put yourself in their shoes)

Who is your audience? Describe their presence or style of communicating (so someone else can play them).

What is your role in relationship to them?

What do they know about the topic/issue?

What are they concerned about?

What do they need from you and why?

How are you similar to them? How are you different?

Audience, Goal, Benefit Worksheet *continued*

Your Goal

What action do you want your audience to take?

What do you want them to do, think, feel, or understand? (What is your Passionate Purpose?)

Ideally, when you are finished, the other people will...

The Benefit

What is the benefit your listeners will gain from taking the “action” you propose? What’s in it for them personally?

Presence Goal

What do you want to focus on in terms of your presence (taking a breath, using a metaphor, listening for strengths and values, etc.)?
