

GUIDING FRIENDLY FOCUSING: FINDING HELPFUL BREATH-BASED FOCUSING ANCHORS

SET UP

Explore comfortable way of noticing the breath – perhaps initially in a conversational way. Explore this possibly avoiding use of the words ‘breath’/‘breathe’ – at least initially.

3 areas:

- Hands on belly – on belly button or just above is ideal. Or the arms resting on belly. Then explore sensations in hands/arms, temperature (check if warm before), movement, spreading warmth, feeling of body lifting and lowering, letting go on out-breath. Sensations of surface of body moving across clothing, contact points. Can explore muscles of the belly softening, releasing. Once the feeling of the breath in the belly has been contacted, the person may wish to allow the hands to remain there or move to another position – on lap, by sides etc.
- Breath in the back – contact with the chair. = Feel rhythm of breath, body gently shifting - check wave and water metaphors. Letting go on out-breath. Can explore this initially with hands resting on back to feel movement.
- Breath at nostrils and / or lips – warm out cool in, delicate sensation movement, sound of the breath. Letting go on out-breath

BREATHING PRACTICE GUIDANCE

1. Invitation to find a comfortable position, knowing can move, eyes open or closed. If closed open any time.
2. Notice body – contact points. Give up weight to contact points. Move/adjust position if help to be more comfortable.
3. As maintain awareness of body, notice what draws your attention in the environment: - environment – sounds, (sights if eyes open) temperature. Invitation to allow what is there to be there as it is, do what it is doing, acknowledge and allow to drift into the background give it room or space--- as return attention back to body,
4. Explore sensations in chosen breath anchor.
 - a. Initially exploring what sensations are present in body. Aim to be specific – naming specific sensations: lifting, lowering, expanding, releasing, skin moving against clothing, one area body shifting against another; feelings of the flow of air, cooling, warming. Where? Noticing if vivid, inviting, neutral or comfortable.
 - b. Then inviting exploration of rhythm; possibly pauses between inbreath/outbreath.
 - c. All this framed in general approach to working with the Attention Cycle.
5. Ending –Noticing whole body, making gentle movements, stretching, if eyes closed slowly opening. [Ensure client doesn’t rush into standing – risks fainting, stumbling.]