

Be Present with Mindful Movement

A great way to cultivate awareness, focus, and attention in the present is movement. Mindful movement can decrease stress and anxiety, and increase calm, relaxation, and happiness -- helping create conditions for learning. Coordinating one's breath with these simple stretches is a great activity to do before diving into academic content, or when students need a brain break to integrate their new learning. This is also a great activity to practice outside.



What You Need:

- Just your body (make modifications based on ability)
- [Practice Mindful Movement worksheet](#)

What You Do:

1. Explain that you will spend some time getting into the right space for learning through some mindful movement.
2. Share that we will be practicing six mindful movements.
3. Explain that when you coordinate your breathing with movement it helps you calm, de-stress, and get into the present moment which is essential for paying attention so you can learn.
4. **Movement #1: Grounding Into the Earth.** Plant feet firmly on the ground just as a tree roots go into the earth. Have your feet shoulder width apart. Breathe deeply three times placing your hand on your belly or chest.
5. **Movement # 2: Hands In the Sky.** Breathing in, raise your arms towards the sky. Breathing out, lower your arms towards your sides. Repeat three times.
6. **Movement # 3: Blooming Flower.** Start with your fingers touching your shoulders with your elbows pointed up. Breathing in, open your arms to each side with your palms facing up like a flower blooming and taking in the sun. Breathing out, fold your arms in and touch your shoulders again. Repeat three times.
7. **Movement # 4: Arm Circles.** Place your palms together at your chest. Breathing in, lift your arms up in a circle above your head. Breathing out, complete the circle towards the front. Repeat 3 times.
8. **Movement # 5: Hands to Toes.** Bend at the waist to reach toward your toes. Breathing in, raise your hands towards the sky. Breathing out, lower your hands to reach for your toes. Repeat 3 times.
9. **Movement #6: Choice.** Have students decide how they want to move and make up their own movement based on what their body needs, the only requirement is that they coordinate their breathing with the movement. It's helpful to inhale as your body expands and exhale as it contracts.
10. Complete the reflection questions at the end of the Practice Mindful Movement worksheet.

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