

The Three Step (or Three Minute) Breathing Space

Basic Instructions

1. Awareness

Bring yourself to the present moment by deliberately adopting an erect and dignified posture. If possible, close your eyes. Then ask:

“What is my experience right now? In bodily sensations? In feelings? And in thoughts?”

Acknowledge and register your experience, even if it is unwanted.

2. Gathering

Then gently redirect full attention to breathing, to each in-breath and each out-breath as they follow one after another.

Your breath can function as an anchor to bring you into the present and to help you tune into a state of stillness and awareness.

3. Expanding

Expand the whole field of your awareness around your breathing so that it includes a sense of the body as a whole, your posture and facial expression.

The breathing space provides a way to step out of automatic pilot mode and reconnect with the present moment. The key skill in using Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) is to maintain awareness in the present moment. Nothing else!