

MINDFULNESS AT THE BEACH



Combine a lovely time at the beach with comfortable exercises for wellbeing and increased presence. Practicing mindfulness has a scientifically proven positive effect on our health.

Health benefits: Can lead to increased attention, improved emotional balance and body awareness. **Where:** On the beach. **Duration:** 30 minutes.

Preparation: You can do this activity by yourself or in a group. If you are doing this activity in a group, make sure you keep a distance between each other, and do not talk to each other until the end of the activity. Try to find a spot free of distractions on the beach. Dress comfortably, with several layers and according to the weather. Feel free to bring a towel that you can sit and lie on. Wear sunscreen and a cap or hat to protect against solar radiation.

How to begin: Set all goals and expectations aside and turn off your phone and other electronic devices so you can be fully present in the moment.



THIS IS HOW YOU DO IT:

1. Breath as an anchor. Sit down on your towel, in a comfortable position with your back straight and where you can feel your tailbone down against the ground. Make sure you are relaxed with your shoulders down. Close your eyes and focus on your breathing, feel how the air flows in through the nose, down to the stomach expanding and then turns upwards again with the exhalation. Keep repeating the breathing cycle in full awareness. When thoughts come and make you lose focus, gently return your attention to your breathing again.

2. Body scan. Lie straight on your towel, with outstretched arms and legs. Close your eyes and use your awareness to scan your body, from your feet up to your head. Focus on one spot at a time and work your way up. Feel how it feels in your cells, muscles, and bone structure. If it is stiff or hurts somewhere, breathe through this part of the body, by focusing on that particular spot when you breathe. Note if any emotions arise and, in that case, just leave them there, so that they can be released from the body. If you lose focus, you gently return your attention to the body again.

3. Conscious walking. Start walking barefoot and at a leisurely pace, in or near the water's edge. Sense how the sand feels between your toes, and under the soles of your feet. Is the water hot or cold? Can you feel present in your whole body, right down to your toes? Feel the gap between each time you lower the soles of your feet again to take a new step. Keep walking this way, consciously and presently. Feel with the body rather than with the mind. If you lose focus, gently return your attention to your walk and feet again.

Tips:

- Spend approximately the same amount of time on each exercise.
- Note how you feel in body, mind and soul both before and after your mindfulness exercises.
- If you use a timer, make sure that the sound is harmonious so that you can finish the exercise carefully.
- If you cannot be at the beach, it is good to do the exercises for example on a lawn, in the forest, at home in the living room, or in another peaceful place.

