



PAUSE WHERE YOU ARE

STROLLS FOR WELL-BEING AT ISU: *Press Pause & Take a Break...*

One of the keys to a successful mindfulness practice is flexibility and a variety of experiences, but many people do not have time to go somewhere for a formal 10-minute practice. This list of Pause Where You Are offers a few options that you can explore when you are stressed, overwhelmed or simply need a break. They are designed to be done in a few minutes, or a few seconds, and can be done at work, home, in a parking lot, waiting in line or anywhere you can Pause Where You Are.

Energy release: Rub your hands together, clap and shake out your hands. Immediately you release built up tension.

***Close your eyes:** You can usually close your eyes without anyone noticing. Try it now. The outside world retreats as you go within. You can almost instantly regain a sense of balance and relaxation.

Step outside: Step away from your office space and go outside to take a few deep breaths of fresh air. If you can't get outside, turn your chair and look out a window. Find your favorite tree. Take a few deep breaths. Connecting with nature allows you to improve your overall health.

Box breath: Trace a box in your mind as you inhale for count of 4, hold count of 4, exhale count of 4, hold for count of 4. Repeat a few times. You will have more focus to continue with your day.

Gentle stretch: *Listen to your body and do only what feels comfortable.*

Position yourself relaxed and attentive in a chair.

Place both hands on your knees and close your eyes or soften your gaze.

Take in two slow deep breaths.

Turn to your right side and place your hands on the side of your right thigh. Twist into a comfortable stretch while breathing in. Then release the breath and come back to center. Repeat on the other side.

To end, return to center and do two or three grounding deep breaths.

***Be grateful:** Bring your attention to what you are grateful for at this moment. Mentally make a list of five or ten people, places, things and/or experiences you're grateful for.

Purposeful pause: While waiting for an elevator, your documents to print or your computer to warm up, focus your attention on your breath instead of reaching for your phone. Take a deep breath in through your nose, then let it out through your nose. Pause for two seconds and repeat. This brings a healthy pause to your day.

***Slow it down:** Do one thing at a time, just a little slower. Get up from your chair more deliberately, walk a bit slower, drink a bit slower. You'll find that slowing down helps bring you back to the present moment and relaxes you.

***Excuse yourself:** If you're unhappy in the moment, or if you're around people who are unhappy, the discomfort can be contagious. Whenever you notice signals of stress in your body, simply excuse yourself by saying, "I've got to get back to a project," and walk away. That project is your inner peace! Go outside, back to your desk or head to the bathroom. Recognizing and following through on your self care is important.

*Peacefinder Practices (TM). Adapted from Sarah McLean's book, *Simple, Easy, Every, Day (SEED) Meditation Method*

