

## Breathing Practice - 5 minutes

1. Intention.  
Start with setting an intention. For the next 5 minutes I am only going to attend to my breath.
2. Posture.
  - Sit comfortably with the spine as vertical and straight as comfortable.
  - Hands are palms down on the thighs or any other place that is comfortable.
  - Optional, if it feels OK and does not take too much effort or create a distraction:*
  - The tips of the thumb and index finger gently touching.
  - The tip of the tongue gently touching the roof of the mouth just slightly above the front teeth.
3. Start with a symbolic action. Here are some possible ideas to choose one from:
  - Put the palms of the hands together in front of the heart in the prayer position and gently bow the head.
  - Ring a small bell.
  - Light a candle.
  - Touch a special stone or object.
4. Attend to the breath.
  - Breathe through the nose if possible.
  - Focus on the openings of the nostrils.
  - Pay attention to the air entering and exiting the opening to the nostrils.
  - Slight pause between the inhale and exhale.
  - The breath should be a normal, natural breath. Do not try to hold the breath or make it a really deep breath, or make it a shallow breath.
5. Dealing with the thoughts that arise.
  - When you notice you are thinking again, just remember your intention. Until the 5 minutes are up, you are not going to indulge in any thoughts.
  - Let the thought go (just for this moment). If it is really important you can go back to it at the end of the 5 minutes.
  - Go back to focusing on the breath as it enters and leaves your nostrils.
6. End the practice with the symbolic act you started it with.
  - Put the palms of the hands together in front of the heart in the prayer position and gently bow the head.
  - Ring a small bell.
  - Blow out the candle.
  - Touch a special stone or object.