

Mental Health

# self care

## take a *Mindful Minute*

If you're feeling overwhelmed and anxiety is building, one way you can calm your mind is to practice some mindfulness techniques.

Mindfulness helps you focus on the present moment. Research has shown that mindfulness can help reduce anxiety and depression.

Mindfulness involves learning to respond to stress with increased awareness of what is happening in the present moment...not worrying about the future or overthinking the past, but focusing your thoughts and awareness on this present moment.

One way you can do that is by “taking a mindful minute” and focusing on your 5 senses:

what do you SEE right now, FEEL right now, HEAR right now, SMELL right now, and even TASTE right now?

Incorporating deep breathing exercises along with mindfulness exercises like this can help reduce anxiety and calm your mind and body in times of stress.

This is just another tool for your mental health self-care toolbox.

Print it out and hang it on your bathroom mirror, tuck it in your bedside drawer, put it in your classroom or tack it above your desk to remind you to take a “mindful minute” throughout your day.

2

THINGS  
YOU CAN

*smell*



3

THINGS  
YOU CAN

*hear*



TAKE A  
*mindful  
minute*

take some deep breaths  
and focus on:

1

THING  
YOU CAN

*taste*



4

THINGS  
YOU CAN

*feel*



5

THINGS  
YOU CAN

*see*



Mental Health

# self care

art print

Mental health is not only as important as physical health... mental health is physical health.

Taking care of your brain and your mind is a critical part of caring for your overall health.

The design on the following page is not only a colorful & framable piece of art, but it is filled with ideas to help you when you're feeling anxious, stressed, overwhelmed, afraid, or down. Print it out and hang it on your bathroom mirror, tuck it in your bedside drawer, put it in your classroom or tack it above your desk to inspire you to make your mental health a priority every day.

A little note: obviously, the things on these prints are not meant to be all-inclusive and are not offered as a “cure” in any way. There are *many* factors that affect mental health, some of which are not within the realm of your control, especially for those with diagnosed mental health conditions. The things on these prints are simply meant to act as a starting point to get you thinking about your mental health and give you ideas to help you take some actionable steps, things that *are* within your control, to help improve your overall mental & physical health.

Challenge yourself to do even just one thing today to care for your mental health.

drink  
WATER



be kind  
TO YOURSELF



eat  
LESS SUGAR



journal  
ABOUT  
YOUR FEELINGS



GO FOR A  
walk



MAKE YOUR  
**Mental health**  
A  
**priority**

go  
outside  
GET SOME  
SUNSHINE



talk  
TO A THERAPIST



breathe  
DEEPLY



establish  
A BEDTIME  
ROUTINE



MAKE A  
gratitude  
LIST



meditate  
ON THE TRUTH:

God's Promise:

You will have suffering in this world,  
but I have overcome the world.

(John 16:33)

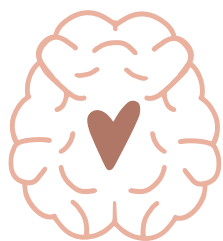
put down  
YOUR  
PHONE



# mental health

## SELF-CARE CHALLENGE

MAKE A <i>gratitude</i> LIST	<i>ask</i> FOR HELP	<i>breathe</i> DEEPLY	<i>drink</i> WATER	<i>establish</i> A BEDTIME ROUTINE
<i>Create</i> SOMETHING	<i>go to bed</i> EARLY	<i>journal</i> ABOUT YOUR DAY	<i>read</i> A BOOK	<i>pray</i> & TELL GOD YOUR FEARS
<i>Cuddle</i> UNDER A SOFT OR WEIGHTED BLANKET	<i>eat</i> LESS SUGAR	<i>help</i> SOMEONE	<i>declutter</i> SOMETHING	GO FOR A <i>walk</i>
TAKE A <i>nap</i>	<i>go</i> <i>outside</i> GET 20 MIN OF SUNSHINE	<i>listen</i> TO MUSIC	<i>sip</i> A HOT CUP OF <i>Tea</i>	<i>put down</i> YOUR PHONE
<i>diffuse</i> ESSENTIAL OILS	<i>pick/buy</i> YOURSELF FLOWERS	<i>celebrate</i> A SMALL ACHIEVEMENT	<i>relax</i> IN A WARM BATH OR SHOWER	WORK ON A <i>puzzle</i>
<i>write</i> POSITIVE AFFIRMATIONS	<i>be kind</i> TO YOURSELF	<i>say no</i> TO SOMETHING	<i>watch</i> A MOVIE	<i>talk</i> TO A FRIEND



# mental health check

HOW AM I REALLY DOING TODAY?

HOW AM I *feeling mentally*?

HOW AM I *feeling physically*?

WHEN DID I LAST  
*eat a whole meal?*

WHEN DID I LAST  
*drink water?*

WHEN DID I LAST  
*breathe deeply?*

AM I *tired*?

HOW LONG HAVE I SPENT *on my phone* TODAY?

WHEN DID I LAST *talk to someone* ABOUT MY FEELINGS?

WHAT DO I *need* RIGHT NOW?

WHEN DID I LAST  
*take a shower?*

WHEN DID I LAST  
*go outside?*

WHAT IS TAKING UP MOST OF MY *headspace*?

WHAT CAN I DO THAT WILL  
*bring me joy?*

WHEN DID I LAST DO A  
*kind thing*  
FOR SOMEONE ELSE?

IS THERE SOMETHING I CAN *celebrate* TODAY?

WHAT *promise of God* DO I NEED TO *meditate* ON TODAY?

I will not leave you or abandon you. (Josh. 1:5)

I will be with you always. (Matt. 28:20)

I will give you a future & a hope. (Jer. 29:11)

I will provide for you. (Ps. 23:1, Matt. 6:33)

I will give you peace & rest. (Matt. 11:28)

I will bring goodness from every broken thing. (Rom. 8:28)

You will have suffering in this world, but I have overcome the world. (John 16:33)

# Breath prayers

Breath prayers combine deep breathing exercises with prayers of meditation on God's Word to help calm your body and focus your mind on truth.

## Why breath prayers?

When you are feeling anxious or panicky, the sympathetic nervous system kicks in, increasing your heart rate and triggering rapid, shallow breathing that can lead to hyperventilating. Deep breathing exercises help engage the parasympathetic nervous system, slowing your heart rate and breathing, and helping you to calm down. Breathing is the bridge between the brain and the body. Your breathing is in part dictated by your thinking. Focusing on negative thoughts and worries can increase anxiety, but by turning your thoughts to Truth, you can calm your mind, shift your focus and "let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think." (Romans 12:2)

## How to do breath prayers:

Inhale & exhale very slowly as you recite the words of each prayer to yourself.  
Breathe in deeply & slowly through your nose & feel your lungs fill completely.  
Try to focus on filling your lower lungs (your diaphragm) so that your stomach expands while your upper chest remains still.  
Then slowly breathe out. The exhale should be the longest.  
Empty your lungs slowly & fully.  
Meditate on the words of the prayer as you breathe.  
Repeat at least 10 times.

*Optional: hold your breath for a count of 3 between the inhale and exhale.  
Try this breathing pattern: Inhale for a count of 4, Hold for 4, Exhale for 8*



## Breath Prayer Cards

Cut out these prayer cards to tuck into your bag, your Bible, your pocket...  
wherever you can easily get to them when you're feeling anxious.

breath prayer

PSALM 119:94

*Inhale:*  
I am Yours

*Exhale:*  
save me

breath prayer

PSALM 119:153

*Inhale:*  
Consider my affliction

*Exhale:*  
and deliver me.

breath prayer

MATTHEW 6:8

*Inhale:*  
Father you know

*Exhale:*  
what I need

breath prayer

PSALM 121:2

*Inhale:*  
My help

*Exhale:*  
comes from the Lord



## Breath Prayer Cards

Cut out these prayer cards to tuck into your bag, your Bible, your pocket...  
wherever you can easily get to them when you're feeling anxious.

breath prayer

2 CORINTHIANS 12:10

*Inhale:*  
When I am weak

*Exhale:*  
then I am strong

breath prayer

PSALM 23:1

*Inhale:*  
The Lord is my shepherd

*Exhale:*  
I have all that I need

breath prayer

ISAIAH 40:31

*Inhale:*  
I trust in the Lord

*Exhale:*  
He renews my strength

breath prayer

PSALM 56:3

*Inhale:*  
When I am afraid

*Exhale:*  
I put my trust in you

## Breath Prayer Cards

Cut out these prayer cards to tuck into your bag, your Bible, your pocket...  
wherever you can easily get to them when you're feeling anxious.

breath prayer

PSALM 23:4

*Inhale:*  
I will fear no evil

*Exhale:*  
for you are with me

breath prayer

MARK 5:36

*Inhale:*  
Don't be afraid

*Exhale:*  
just believe

breath prayer

PSALM 27:14

*Inhale:*  
Wait for the Lord

*Exhale:*  
be strong and take heart

breath prayer

PSALM 42:5

*Inhale:*  
Hope in God

*Exhale:*  
wait expectantly for Him

## Breath Prayer Cards

Cut out these prayer cards to tuck into your bag, your Bible, your pocket...  
wherever you can easily get to them when you're feeling anxious.

breath prayer

PSALM 71:14

*Inhale:*  
I will hope continually

*Exhale:*  
and praise you more & more

breath prayer

1 PETER 5:7

*Inhale:*  
I cast my anxiety on Him

*Exhale:*  
for He cares for me.

breath prayer

PSALM 3:3

*Inhale:* You, Lord, are

*Exhale:* a shield around me,

*Inhale:* my glory, and the one

*Exhale:* who lifts my head high

breath prayer

JOSHUA 1:9

*Inhale:* Be strong and courageous

*Exhale:* Do not be afraid

*Inhale:* for the Lord my God is

*Exhale:* with me wherever I go

## Breath Prayer Cards

Cut out these prayer cards to tuck into your bag, your Bible, your pocket...  
wherever you can easily get to them when you're feeling anxious.

### breath prayer

PSALM 46:1

*Inhale:* God is my refuge

*Exhale:* and my strength

*Inhale:* my ever-present help

*Exhale:* in times of trouble

### breath prayer

ZEPHANIAH 3:17

*Inhale:* With His love

*Exhale:* He will calm all my fears

*Inhale:* He will rejoice over me

*Exhale:* with joyful songs

### breath prayer

PROVERBS 3:5

*Inhale:* I will trust in the Lord

*Exhale:* with all my heart

*Inhale:* I will not lean on

*Exhale:* my own understanding

### breath prayer

MATTHEW 26:39

*Inhale:* If it is possible

*Exhale:* let this cup pass from me

*Inhale:* nevertheless, not as I will

*Exhale:* but as You will

## Try Your Own

Use the prompts on these cards to pray your own breath prayers to God.

### breath prayer

#### PROMPT

*Inhale*  
seeking the Lord's guidance...

*Exhale*  
stress and hurry

### breath prayer

#### PROMPT

*Inhale*  
the peace of Christ

*Exhale*  
worry, anger, guilt or shame.

### breath prayer

#### PROMPT

*Inhale*  
entrusting yourself to Jesus

*Exhale*  
to let go of fear

### breath prayer

#### PROMPT

*Inhale*  
the Father's presence & love

*Exhale*  
to stop trying to control or worry  
about \_\_\_\_\_.