

You might like to explore using these extended instructions:

Using the Breathing Space: Extra Guidance

You have been practicing the breathing space, regularly three times a day and whenever you need it. Now we suggest that whenever you feel troubled in body or mind, the first step is always to take a breathing space. Here is some extra guidance that may help at these times.

1. Awareness

You have already practiced bringing the focus of awareness to your inner experience and noticing what is happening in your thoughts, feelings, and bodily sensations.

Now you may also find it helpful to describe, and identify, what is arising - put experiences into words, such as saying in your mind, "A feeling of anger is arising" or...."Self-critical thoughts are here."

2. Redirecting Attention

You have already practiced gently redirecting your full attention to the breath, following the breath all the way in and all the way out.

In addition: Explore noting "at the back of your mind": "Breathing in... Breathing out" or counting breaths from one to five and then starting over again: "Inhaling, one...Exhaling, one; Inhaling, two...etc."

3. Expanding Attention

You have already practiced allowing the attention to expand to the whole body. So now also become aware of your posture and facial expression, holding in awareness all the sensations in your body right now, just as they are.....

Now extend this step if you choose, especially if there is any sense of discomfort, tension, or resistance. If these sensations are here, bring your awareness to them by "breathing into them" on the in-breath. Then breathe out from the sensations, softening and opening with the out-breath. Say to yourself on the out-breath "It's okay... whatever it is, it's already here: let me feel it."

As best you can, bring this expanded awareness to the next moments of your day.