

Instructions

- 1 Begin by finding a comfortable position to sit or lie down. Close your eyes or find an image or object to focus a soft gaze on.
- 2 Bring awareness to your body and feel the ground and air around you. Take a deep breath.
- 3 Relax your body, starting at the top of your head. Work your way down, relaxing your cheeks, jaw, neck, shoulders, back, stomach, hips, tops and bottoms of your legs, ankles, feet, and then toes.
- 4 Now focus your attention solely on your breath. Recite the words “in” on your inhale and “out” on your exhale for the next five cycles. 5. During this practice, your mind will likely wander. The challenge is not to empty your mind and achieve perfection, but rather practice noticing thinking and noticing your mind wandering.
- 5 When you notice your mind wander, recite the words “come back,” and imagine bringing your focus to the center of your forehead.
- 6 At the completion of five cycles, return to your natural rhythm of breath.
- 7 Next, bring awareness to your breathing by counting each inhale and exhale cycle until you reach 10.
- 8 Return to your natural breathing.
- 9 Notice how your body feels in the space around you.
- 10 If you like, place your hands on your heart and bow your head in gratitude for taking the time to practice focus and self-love.

Considerations for a meditation practice

Meditation can take on many forms, some of which work better for ADHD, especially when they involve anchor points for focus. You can even choose a mundane chore as a place to begin practicing; for example, mindfully washing the dishes, by noticing the feeling of the water on your skin, the weight of a glass in your hand, and the smell of the dish soap. Due to your ability to hyperfocus and your creative ADHD brain, you are more capable of immersing yourself into these tasks, and even a simple practice like this can help you build habits of intentional mindfulness.

Other options include:

- Progressive muscle relaxation
- Finding an image to focus on
- Guided meditations through apps such as Headspace or Insight Timer
- Recordings of binaural beats to increase concentration
- Counting or breath exercises
- Meditation groups

Unmasking and meditation

Use this meditation before engaging in interactions that normally increase your masking tendencies.

- 1 Begin in a comfortable position, sitting or lying down. If you like, close your eyes.
- 2 Take a deep, slow breath into the base of your belly. Hold for the count of four, and then slowly release the breath to the count of six.
- 3 Return to normal breathing and notice the natural rise and fall of your breath as you settle into your body.
- 4 Let go of the idea that you are here to empty your mind. Simply notice any thoughts that arise.
- 5 In your mind, imagine a time when you were masking.
- 6 Recognize any experiences within your body when thinking of this, and notice where you feel the most tension.
- 7 This area of tension is your masking center—it signals to you when you are masking. Mindfully breathe into that space until you feel the tension release even slightly.
- 8 Bring your attention to the muscles in your face. Feel the air against your cheeks, forehead, nose, and chin, and give yourself permission to let go of the tension in all these spaces.
- 9 On your next inhale, breathe into your masking center, and on each exhale, imagine the muscles of your face becoming more relaxed. (If the masking center is also your face, imagine breathing in the center of your forehead.) Do this for five full cycles of breath in and out.
- 10 Come back to the instance where you originally imagined masking and see how the tension feels in your body now. If it still feels intense, repeat the previous breath pattern (steps 7 through 9).
- 11 Finally, bring your attention to your heart center, and if you like, place your hands over your heart.
- 12 As you inhale and exhale into your heart center, begin repeating the phrase (either out loud or in your mind) “I love and accept myself.” Do this until you feel open to the message or soften to it.
- 13 Rest your hands in your lap and return to normal breathing. Scan your body for any tension, and breathe deeply into any spaces you need to further release.
- 14 Refocus on the space you are in. Notice the sounds, the light, and the feel of the air around you. When you are ready, gently open your eyes.
- 15 Take a moment to express gratitude to yourself for taking this time to unmask your ADHD.