



mindful hub

well-being, right now.

## Increasing Joy, Decreasing Judgement

*A mindfulness exercise to help quiet criticism and boost acceptance*

**First**, take a few deep breaths, to clear your mind and reset your nervous system. Focus on elongating your exhales. Simply by slowing down your breathing, your body will get the message that you are safe. This will help you start to recognize judgmental, unproductive thoughts.

**Next**, think of a time when you were judging and being critical of a situation, another person, or yourself. What are the sensations that fill your body when you picture this scenario? Oftentimes when we are in judging mode we will begin to feel a sense of disconnection to others. This separateness can make us feel lonely, isolated, even fearful. We may feel a sense of heaviness and seriousness that makes it hard for us to feel any sense of joy or well-being. Take a few more breaths to identify the mind/body reactions to judging.

**Now**, think of a time when you felt open to your experience - a time when you felt accepting of a situation, another person or yourself. You may feel a sensation of lightness and childlike joy. What are the sensations that come up in your body when you picture this scenario? When we remain open and accepting to a situation, we often feel calm and relaxed. We feel connected to other people. This sense of community sends a message to the body that we are safe, creating a positive feedback loop as our thoughts continue to soften. We may even feel a connection to something more eternal and a feeling of trust in the world. Take a few more breaths to identify the mind/body reactions to acceptance and joy.

**Finally**, take a look around you, breathing into the present moment, holding on to this sense of lightness and childlike curiosity. Take in a few moments of self-acceptance. If you are in a group, notice the space between you and others. Can you feel a sense of connection to yourself and others through the space, or possibly a connection to something eternal and a trust in unfolding of events? Take a few more breaths to identify the present moment mind/body reactions to acceptance and joy.

**Practice** this exercise once a day for the next week. You will start to experience more frequent feelings of acceptance, well-being, and joy. Give us your feedback at [mindfulhub.com](http://mindfulhub.com).

***We wish you twenty minutes of mindfulness every day!***

