



# Take moments to be mindful

## Me whai wā ki te whai whakaaro

### Why does being mindful matter?

Being mindful / whai whakaaro means giving our full attention to something. It's a tool that can very quickly help us to calm / mārū our mind and body if things around us get a little busy or we feel tired / ngēngē or out of sorts / hōhā

### What can I do to be mindful?

You could;

- simply sit / noho quietly for a few moments and focus on your breathing,
- take a walk outside and notice the birds flying or the trees moving,
- listen to your favourite song,
- play your favourite game,
- spend some time with someone who makes you feel good, like your parents or best friend.



All these things can calm your mind and body as well as improve your energy/ngoi.

Taking moments to be mindful / whai whakaaro is useful for all of us, so teach your family too!



### Belly breathe to calm yourself

Our nervous system controls how we react to certain things that happen to us. When we get a fright or feel nervous about something, our body can react as if there is actually a lion staring at us and make us feel like we want to fight, run away or freeze.

Most often this is not the case, and we can calm ourselves and activate the parasympathetic part of our nervous system by taking deep and slow breaths into our belly.

When this happens, a signal is sent to the brain to tell anxiety that we are in fact, safe. This lowers the fight, flight, or freeze response and allows your brain to think more clearly.

- Start off in a comfortable position, either by lying on your back or by sitting up straight.
- With one hand on the chest and one on the abdomen, breathe normally. Which hand moves more as you breathe?
- Take a deep breath and feel the air fill your chest and go all the way to your belly which will rise as you do this.
- Hold your breath for four seconds if you can.
- Slowly exhale all the air out. Repeat this several times and notice as you start to feel more relaxed.

You can do this to help you get to sleep at night, and any situation where you feel a little uncertain (but do know that you are safe) and feel yourself become more calm.



## Do you think you can use mindfulness to help you feel more calm?