

Assertive Exercise: "Pause, Observe, Engage"

This exercise is designed to help you utilize mindfulness techniques assertively in daily life, making intentional choices rather than reacting impulsively. Dedicate 10–15 minutes to practice this activity each day.

Step 1: Pause (1–2 minutes)

- When you feel overwhelmed, agitated, or uncertain, stop whatever you are doing.
- Take a deep breath, in through the nose for 4 seconds, hold for 2 seconds, and exhale through the mouth for 6 seconds. Repeat three times.

Affirmation:

Silently say to yourself, *"I choose to respond with clarity, not react with haste."*

Step 2: Observe (5 minutes)

- Take stock of your inner and outer environment.
 - **Inner:** Notice your thoughts, emotions, and physical sensations. Ask, *What am I feeling? Why might I feel this way?*
 - **Outer:** Tune into the sights, sounds, and smells around you. Be curious, not judgmental.
- Acknowledge everything without labeling it as good or bad.

Mindful Statement:

"This moment is my teacher; I'm learning to see things as they are."

Step 3: Engage (5–10 minutes)

- After observing, decide your next step intentionally.
 - **If solving a problem:** Write down one small action to address the issue.
 - **If processing emotions:** Name the emotion and let it pass, reminding yourself, *"This is temporary."*
 - **If staying present:** Focus fully on one task (e.g., drinking water, typing an email) with complete attention.

Check-in:

Ask yourself, *"Does this action reflect the person I want to be?"*

Bonus Challenge:

Set a timer at random intervals during the day to repeat this exercise, anchoring yourself to the present moment. Over time, this practice will become second nature.