

UCO HEALTH PROMOTION

Mindful Masking Practice

Source: <https://www.mindful.org/a-mindfulness-practice-for-wearing-a-mask/>

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"Focusing on the breath can become overwhelming, rather than self-compassionate. How do we recognize and honor the spectrum of experiences surrounding the breath and the masked breath?"

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1. With washed hands, fold the mask in half so that the side that touches your face is on the inside, the two halves meeting each other, while the outside remains on the outside for you to touch.

2. Notice the appearance of the mask. Color? Any designs? Other adjectives used to perceive the mask with your eyes?

3. Notice the feel of the mask. Can you rub the outsides of the mask between your fingers and notice the sensations? The texture?

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4. Hold the mask up to your ear and notice sounds when you rub the mask between your fingers. What do you hear?

5. Slowly, with intention, tie the mask around your head, or place one ear loop on, guiding the mask over your mouth and nose. Then guide the other ear loop on the other ear (or tie the mask to your face).

6. Notice sensations where the mask touches your face. What do you smell?

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7. Notice the breath at the nostrils while masked. Noticing perhaps a warmer sensation of the exhale breath as it spreads inside your mask.

8. Any other body sensations, emotions, thoughts coming up for you?

9. Take a breath through the nose as if you were smelling roses, and exhale through the mouth as if you were blowing out birthday candles. See if you can lengthen the duration of the exhale more than two times longer than the inhale. Repeat this three times.

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10. Notice the breath once again at the nostrils, this time not trying to change the breath, simply noticing.

11. What body sensations, emotions, thoughts are coming up for you now?

12. With intention, carefully removing the ear loops or ties, folding the mask again in half, inside half touching the other inside half, placing it in a place where it can be kept clean.

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"The mask can simultaneously be perhaps uncomfortable for the wearer, and yet be a simple act of compassion for others. We can hold space for the gratitude of being able to breathe, even if the sensations of breathing have changed with a mask. We can choose to see the mask as a protector, as a sign of common humanity, as a sign of respect, that we are all vulnerable to communicable diseases. We can mask and protect together."

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Anxious about the semester?

Center for Counseling and Well-Being

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(virtual appointments)