

Attentive Walking Exercise

This handout offers information on how to do the Attentive Walking exercise.

This exercise will help you:

- Relax
- Calm and quiet your mind
- Exercise to strengthen your body
- Think about the present moment (the here and now) instead of focusing on what was or what could be.

It is normal for you to think about worries or concerns you have. During this exercise, you are not thinking about how to fix or solve your worries or concerns. It is important to think about your worries or concerns for only a few moments. After that, don't think about them. Keep thinking about the present moment.

To practice Attentive Walking, go for a moderately paced walk. You can choose to walk anywhere and at any time of the day. Walk alone and in silence. This will let you pay attention to what is going on in your body and around you. Don't think of it as just exercise. Think of it as moving your body.

How you will do this exercise:

1. Plan to walk alone for 20 minutes each day.
2. Think about your breathing as you walk.
3. Pay attention to what is happening to your body. What's your walking stride like? Do you move freely and easily? Where do you feel pain, tightness or discomfort?
4. Pay attention to the sounds, colours and smells around you as you walk.
5. Notice any feelings you have as you do this.
6. Continue to think about the present moment whenever you start thinking about your worries or concerns.

(Adapted from the book: Picking Up the Pieces: Moving Forward After Surviving Cancer by Sherri Magee & Kathy Scalzo, 2006)