

Active Pause: Washing our Hands

These “Active Pauses” give us an opportunity to clear the mental clutter, even if just for a moment. Use these frequent activities to serve as cues to reset and begin again.

1. As you approach the sink, think about taking a deep breath. Be aware of yourself breathing. This seems simple. HOW are you breathing? Is it tight? Shallow? In this time at the sink, can you intentionally take a deep breath? Focus of feeling the air go in your nose, and then out as you exhale. Take another one! Keep taking intentional breaths until you are ready to walk away from the sink. As you walk away, how do you feel? Were you able to change your focus for just those few moments? Do you feel less stressed? Remember, this is a task we do many times over in a day. By the end of the day, see how you feel. Did it make a difference for you?
2. As you approach the sink, focus on what you see, hear, and feel. *See*: the flow of the water as it runs from the faucet over your hands and down the drain. *Hear*: can you hear the sound of the water both as it leaves the faucet AND as it goes down the drain. *Feel*: feel your hand as it touches the faucet AND as the water flows over your skin. Refocusing your attention, even if just for moments, can help us reset. How do you feel walking away from the sink?
3. As you approach the sink, ‘what are you thinking?’ Is it helpful? Stressful? Negative? Can you redirect those thoughts and think of something that brings you peace or calmness? What kind word or words can you speak to yourself in these moments of washing your hands?