The possible learning and teaching benefits of short mind-calming exercises in undergraduate courses

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Midway survey – This practice is inappropriate and should be stopped immediately

Final survey – Exercises are useful to some students, but are not course-related material and therefore are inappropriate within class time
a) The mind-calmimg exercise is enjoyable and relaxing

b) I look forward to the mind-calming exercise
c) The exercise is a valuable use of lecture time because I feel it enhances deep learning

d) This exercise has introduced me to a valuable perspective that is useful outside the course in learning how to achieve calm/balance in my life
My USAT results for the 3rd year course since 2005:
Some survey comments:

“I like this exercise as it allows me to take a moment to breathe deeply and take my mind away from stressors. It helps when slowly moving into an engaging lesson as it almost allows for a ‘fresh mind’.”

“Learning in a university setting has become more and more focused on output in terms of assignments and tests, and less focused on the value of actually learning. Many students are simply looking for the easiest way to get a good mark while learning the least possible amount of material. I found the mind-calming exercise not only helped me learn better, but reminded me that the purpose of being in university is to learn as deeply as possible”

References/Acknowledgements:
Paula Gardner and Jill Grose, Brock University. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LQBqvuxWQsk
Barbezat and Bush (2014) Contemplative Practices in Higher Education