

Mindfulness Exercises

Mindfulness is our ability to be fully present in the moment, without overwhelm or stress. The exercises below are designed to help you become more mindful and manage difficult thoughts and emotions.

1. The raisin

This exercise can be done with any object or food that has got an unusual taste or texture. Now please pay attention to:

- What the raisin looks like?
- How it feels on your skin?
- What might it taste like?
- What does it smell like?

Use this exercise to focus your entire attention on one object and to bring you back in the present moment when you're experiencing stress or anxious feelings.

2. The 5 senses

This exercise can be used when you have limited time and can be done virtually anywhere as it involves noticing things you can see. Look around you and try to notice:

- 5 things you can see
- 4 things you can feel
- 3 things you can hear
- 2 things you can smell
- 1 thing you can taste

3. Body scan

You can start this exercise by closing your eyes and listening to your breathing in a quiet room while sitting in a comfortable position. It's important to remain completely still.

Notice the rhythm, sound and sensation of each inhale and exhale without trying to change the way you breathe. Keep doing this for 60 seconds.

- Now notice your body. How does your body feel? Are any parts of the body warmer than others? How does your clothing feel on your body?
- The next step is to gently “scan” your body, starting with your toes. Notice how each part of your body feels, slowly moving upwards towards your feet, legs, knees.
- Moving upwards, notice how your abdomen feels, your arms, chest and shoulders.
- Slowly start noticing your neck, jaw, lips.
- Moving upwards, notice how your nose and eyes feel, how your ears feel.
- Towards the end, move upwards to the top of your head and notice how it feels.

Use this exercise to create a moment of mindfulness and re-connect with your body when feeling anxious or stressed.

4. Bringing you back into the present

This means being in the moment, fully, without thinking or focusing on the past or future. This can help with worries and anxious thoughts.

You can do this by completing the following phrases in your mind:

- Right now I see
- Right now I hear
- Right now I am touching
- Right now I smell
- Right now I feel