

Grounding Exercise: 5 Mindful Minutes

Aim: The aim is to take a few deep breaths and create a moment to pause. This exercise can help you focus on what's important in the present moment if things feel out of control.

- Relax** Sit in a comfortable upright position with your feet planted firmly on the ground. Rest your hands on your thighs.
- Breath** Just breathe. Refreshing, comfortable and even breaths. Don't worry about technique, just allow relaxing breaths to enter deeply and exhale fully.
- Engage** It's time to engage each of your senses, one at a time, for at least one minute each. The point is to focus on the present moment and how each sense is being activated in that moment.
- Hearing** Begin to relax by noticing all the sounds around you. Give yourself permission to suspend your judgment of the sounds. They are not good or bad, they just are. Are you now hearing more than you were before you started? Subtle sounds may have previously gone unnoticed. Are you hearing them now? Remember your steady breaths while you are listening.
- Smells** Now shift your concentration to the smells in your environment. Is somebody cooking somewhere in the building? Is there fresh air coming through the window? Flowers or the plants outside? Close your eyes and try to focus on the subtlest scents.
- Sight** If you closed your eyes a moment ago, open them and notice the colour, shapes and textures of your surroundings. If you really look, you'll notice that everything has colour variations and texture that may have gone unnoticed. How many shades of red or yellow? Any colours missing?
- Taste** You can do this regardless of whether or not you have food to put in your mouth. Just notice your tongue in your mouth, your saliva, and your breath as you breathe out. Most of us have tastes in our mouths at all times. Run your tongue over your lips and your teeth. What do you notice? Keep breathing.
- Touch** Last one. Where did you place your hands at the start of this exercise? Notice the sensation of where your hands meet something solid like the fabric of your clothes or your skin. Notice the pressure between your feet and the floor. Try feeling the textures that you noticed by sight a moment ago. To fully ground yourself in a room and bring the exercise to a close, touch the chair you are sitting on and then stand up to bring energy and sensation to all parts of your body.
- Time is up** Even when there are distractions during this five minute exercise, you can gently bring yourself back to each of your senses. No need to get frustrated when this happens, because a distraction is just the engagement of another sense. Incorporate it into the exercise.