

# Mindfulness Practices

provided to you by Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)



Practices to help when you feel anxiety, panic or have difficulty focusing. Below are resources that can be used at the beginning of class or a meeting to help with focus, ease panic, stress and anxiety and shift gears, if needed.

## Box Breathing

1. Breathe in, counting to four slowly. Feel the air enter your lungs.
2. Hold your breath for 4 seconds. Try to avoid inhaling or exhaling for 4 seconds.
3. Slowly exhale through your mouth for 4 seconds.
4. Repeat steps 1 to 3 until you feel re-centered.

## Connect with bilateral movement

Passing an object or a grounding item (i.e. rock in hand) from left hand to right can be a soothing way to regulate ourselves by integrating our right and left hemispheres of the brain.

## 5-4-3-2-1 Technique

Using the 5-4-3-2-1 technique, you will purposefully take in the details of your surroundings using each of your senses. Strive to notice small details that your mind would usually tune out, such as distant sounds or the texture of an ordinary object.



What are 5 things you can see? Look for small details such as a pattern on the ceiling, the way light reflects off a surface or an object you never noticed.



What are 4 things you can feel? Notice the sensation of clothing on your body, the sun on your skin or the feeling of the chair you are sitting in. Pick up an object and examine its weight, texture and other physical qualities.



What are 3 things you can hear? Pay special attention to the sounds your mind has tuned out, such as a ticking clock, distant traffic or trees blowing in the wind.



What are 2 things you can smell? Try to notice smells in the air around you, like an air freshener or freshly mowed grass. You may also look around for something that has a scent, such as a flower or an unlit candle.



What is 1 thing you can taste? Carry gum, candy or small snacks for this step. Pop one in your mouth and focus your attention closely on the flavors.

## **ADDITIONAL EXERCISES**

### **Body Awareness**

The body awareness technique will bring you into the here-and-now by directing your focus to sensations in the body. Follow any of these steps and pay special attention to the physical sensations.

- Take 5 long, deep breaths through your nose, and exhale through puckered lips.
- Place both feet flat on the floor. Wiggle your toes. Curl and uncurl your toes several times. Spend a moment noticing the sensations in your feet.
- Clench your hands into fists, then release the tension. Repeat this 10 times.
- Press your palms together. Press them harder and hold this pose for 15 seconds. Pay attention to the feeling of tension in your hands and arms.
- Rub your palms together briskly. Notice the sound and the feeling of warmth.
- Reach your hands over your head like you're trying to reach the sky. Stretch like this for 5 seconds. Bring your arms down and let them relax at your sides.

### **Categories**

Choose a category, any category, and name as many items as you can in each one. Spend a few minutes to come up with as many items as possible. (Examples of categories: animals, movies, famous people, countries, etc.)

### **Social Resilience: 2 minutes sharing with a partner**

Complete the sentence: I enjoy/ I enjoy doing... OR I am grateful for...

Set a timer for a student to share with another student. When the 2 minute timer goes off, the other person shares.

An alternative is giving students two minutes to write... I enjoy... or I am grateful for...

### **Grounding Techniques**

[www.therapistaid.com/therapy-article/grounding-techniques-article](http://www.therapistaid.com/therapy-article/grounding-techniques-article)

## **VIDEO**

[One-Moment Meditation: How to Meditate in a Moment](#)