

What is 5 Senses Mindfulness?

Sometimes we feel like we're caught in a current of water and are unable to reach solid ground. This exercise is an easy way to find your grounding and feel more centered on a difficult day. During this exercise, you bring awareness to your 5 senses in a calming and soothing way.

How do I practice the 5 senses?

You can do this exercise anywhere: at home, on vacation, a busy street, a quiet place in nature or at a park. You just need 5 minutes available to yourself to practice this exercise.



Step 1: Take a few minutes to sit quietly and tune into your body.

Take a few relaxing, deep breaths, noticing the air as it passes through your nose and mouth.

Step 2: You can choose to participate in all 5 senses, or just focus on one. Below are some examples of how to focus your energy on one sense at a time.

Sight:

Shift your concentration to noticing the world around you. Notice colors, changes in light, textures, and movement. Look at the nature around you, look at a picture on the wall, or notice the edge of a table or the pattern in the carpet. Pay attention to your surroundings and look for things you haven't noticed before.

Sound:

Close your eyes and notice all the things you can hear. Listen to music, pay attention to the sounds of nature, the wind in the trees, or water dripping. Be mindful of any sounds that come your way, letting them go in one ear and out the other.

Smell:

Now, shift your concentration to noticing the smells of your environment. Is somebody cooking nearby? Are you able to notice the smell of perfume, flowers, or laundry? Mindfully breathe in the scents around you. Smell an orange, chocolate, or your favorite scented oils.

Taste:

Find something such as a small chocolate or fruit and really taste the food, noticing the flavor and intensity. Sip a drink slowly, savoring the taste. Try new foods, especially if they are sweet, sour, or bitter. Instead of judging the food as good or bad, simply notice how your taste buds respond.

Touch:

Notice your hands and where they are placed. Notice the pressure between your feet and the floor. Run your fingertips gently up the inside of your arm. Feel the air across your skin. Walk barefoot on grass, sand, or water, noticing how your feet feel. Pet your cat or dog, have a massage, or hug someone. Hot, cold, sharp, hard, soft—there are many textures to experience.

When you are finished, breathe full and deep. Acknowledge your remarkable body that allows you to see, hear, smell, taste, and touch.

For more information:

- University of Michigan Depression Center
- 1-800-475-MICH or 734-936-4400
- <http://www.depressioncenter.org/toolkit>

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