



Wellbeing Guide

Reduce Stress, Recharge & Build Resilience

Scientifically proven mindfulness tools
and tips



Get Grounded

Engaging your five senses can help anchor you in the present. This is especially useful if your thoughts are drawn to the past or hurtling off into the future. To fully engage in your environment, try focusing your awareness on what you can see, hear, touch, smell and taste. To get started:

5. Name five things you can see in your immediate surroundings. Give some description to each one, noticing its size, shape and colour. Is there something you like about it or something you don't like?
4. Next, close your eyes and identify four sounds. Closing your eyes helps sharpen your hearing as you listen for noises close by, and then extend your hearing outward, listening for sounds in the distance. Note the pitch and volume of each. Are the sounds constant, or do they come and go?
3. Now move to three things you can feel. This could be stroking a pet or noticing the fabric of your clothing. What is its texture? Does it feel hard? Soft? Smooth? What temperature is it?
2. Shift your awareness to your sense of smell, seeking out two distinct scents. If you're outside, can you smell flowers or rain? Inside, you might detect the aroma of brewing coffee or notice the fragrance of your clothing or hair products.
1. Finally, focus on one thing you can taste. If you're not eating or drinking at that moment, then try to recall your last meal or a favourite drink. Is it sweet or sour? Hot or cold? Crunchy or smooth?

Try engaging your senses to become fully aware of your environment and guide your thoughts firmly into the present.

Combat Overwhelm & Distress

When overwhelmed, distressed, and faced with many challenges it is hard to be aware of what is actually and concretely going on around us. During or after busy times, it is difficult to unwind due to the high level of stress in the body. Research also shows that periods of too little stress, low expectations and too few challenges will have the same effect of making it difficult to unwind. Too few stressors are as taxing on the body as too many stressors. These exercises will help you unwind and regulate the negative effects of too little or too much stress in body and mind.

Awareness of Here & Now

Being able to bring your attention back to here and now is a very useful skill when being overwhelmed. The thinking mind tends to be stressed and will almost automatically endlessly go over what happened or will constantly plan ahead. Others will focus non-stop on everything that can go wrong, which will only increase the worries and raise the level of agitation.

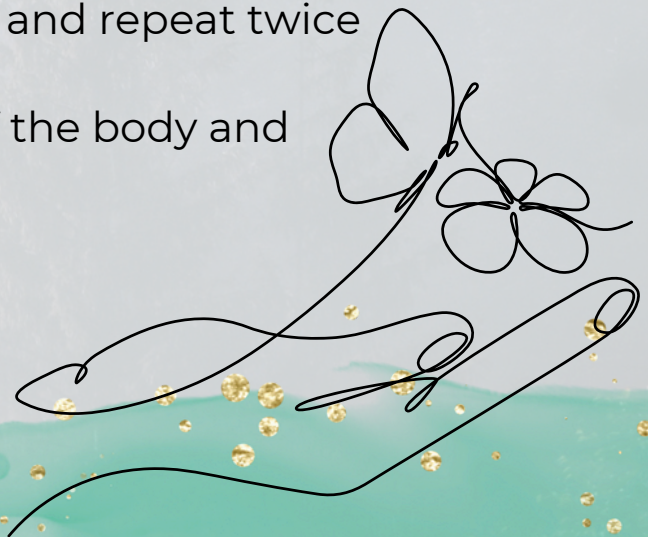
Practice focusing the attention on the here and now by using the senses. Mentally tell yourself what you see, hear, smell and sense in your body: *"Right now I am noticing a sound far away..."*, *"This moment I notice my hands touching..."*, *"Now I notice seeing the colours of..."* or *"I am now aware of the smell of..."*. Go on noticing what you are aware of in each present moment as you become aware of sensorial inputs - sights, sounds, smells, tastes, sensations on your skin or in your body. Do this whether walking, standing, lying, or sitting.



Self-soothing for Calm

When needing to de-stress emotionally, take a few moments to collect and hold yourself together by using your hands and arms. Many have found the calming hug useful when facing an overwhelming situation as for example before giving a presentation, taking a call in a call centre, or moving into the world again after a lockdown. Before or during an overwhelming situation, do this exercise to help yourself to be ready:

- Stand or sit upright with your feet solidly planted on the ground.
- Notice the support from the ground against your feet.
- Take a deep breath and breathe out slowly and consciously.
- Place your right hand, palm turning inwards, in your left armpit and
- the left hand on your upper arm below the shoulder.
- Press inwards with both hands and hold the firm grip for some
- seconds giving yourself a solid hug.
- Release the grip for five seconds and repeat twice more.
- Let the arms drop to the sides of the body and move on in daily life.



Thoughts in a box

Experiencing invading thoughts are common when feeling overwhelmed and stressed. Intrusive thoughts visit the mind as uninvited guests, even if one just wants to be left alone. It is important to learn how to place those unwanted thoughts aside. In your imagination create a beautiful and sturdy box.

You have the freedom to visualise this box in a nice material with as many beautiful colors and decorations as you like. Add a solid lock to the box. Place every intrusive thought into the box and lock the box securely.

Visualising the box can help release the uninvited thoughts from our head.

It is a simple exercise for children as well, as it helps keep the mind clear in chaotic times. Before going to bed it is also an option to imagine placing the box outside of the bedroom, leaving the thoughts there till the next morning.



Cultivating Calm

In general, when body and mind are well balanced nine to twelve deep breaths per minute are all that is needed. The deep breathing gives new energy to the entire body, stimulates the immune system, and activates the lymphatic system. A deep refreshing breath also promotes a feeling of harmony and inner peace.

Sit comfortably, upright with relaxed shoulders, hands lying on a table or in your lap. Breath in and out through the nose. Relax your lips and jaws for at least a full minute while counting the number of breath cycles – in and out - within this time span.

Sit for a moment quietly and repeat the one-minute breathing and counting. Use the exercise often, for example two to three times per week if you want to improve your well-being over time.



Resource-full

From time to time, it is useful to reflect on your resources. To do so is to be reminded of and be mindful of your resilience. This exercise is for those who could use a mental boost and a reminder of what motivates you in your daily life. You need paper and pen for the exercise.

Draw four circles on a piece of paper.

- Write **I HAVE** in one and list people, images, places, animals you can rely on for support.
- Write **I AM** in another and add traits you are proud of: strong, smart, dependable, etc.
- Write **I CAN** in the third circle and list skills, abilities and activities that you engage in
- Write **I WILL** in the last circle and lists things you will do to bring comfort to yourself when times are hard.



Gratitude is an attitude

Gratitude is a powerful feeling that will also help you build resilience. Focusing on what you are grateful for also has a positive impact on your physical and mental health. It is a simple yet powerful exercise that celebrates the positive things in life. It is an important reminder to smile for the things you have, despite the challenges we all face in life. This exercise is also suitable for children.

Focusing on gratitude makes it easier to fall asleep and it has also been shown to improve mental health. A way to mentally detox at the end of the day, and to improve the mood over time, is to practice calling upon feelings of gratitude. Before going to sleep, take some time to think about the day that just passed. Pick three episodes, no matter how small or big, that made you grateful during the course of the day. Dwell on these good memories and notice how they fill you with pleasant feelings of being grateful. Allow the entire body to be filled with feelings of gratitude.



Conclusion

As you reach the end of this guide, remember that wellbeing is not about eliminating stress or anxiety altogether, but about learning how to meet life's challenges with greater calm, flexibility, and self-compassion.

The seven simple exercises you have explored are not quick fixes; they are practical tools you can return to again and again, especially in moments when life feels overwhelming. Even small, consistent practices can have a powerful cumulative effect.

Stress often pulls us into the future, while anxiety keeps us replaying the past. These exercises gently invite you back into the present moment, where choice, balance, and resilience live. By pausing to breathe, move, notice, or ground yourself, you give your nervous system permission to settle and reset.

Over time, this can help you feel more steady, focused, and able to respond rather than react.

More Info

find out more about our mental health first aid courses and free mindfulness resources

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