

# Mindfulness

## Introduction

Mindfulness means focusing attention on the present moment, not on the past or future. The aim is to remain in the present moment. Attention is focused on perceptions, bodily sensations, thoughts and feelings present in the current moment and free from any judgment. Mindfulness exercises can help to distance oneself from threatening thoughts and overwhelming feelings and reduce physical and psychological stress. In the meantime, there are a variety of different mindfulness exercises. In the following, we will present an exercise that can be practiced almost anywhere (and above all, unnoticed).

## Instruction

Explore your surroundings with one of your five senses. Select a modality that particularly appeals to you and follow the attached short instruction. Take as much or as little time as you like. When you have sufficiently explored your environment with one sense, you can turn to another sense modality as needed.

### Focus: Seeing

Focus your attention on your immediate surroundings and concentrate on what you see (e.g. objects in the home, pictures on the wall, trees outside the front door, clouds). Try to look at the selected objects with as much concentration as possible and notice details such as shapes, colors, or movements.

### Focus: Listening

Focus your attention on the sounds around you. It is best to close your eyes and concentrate on the acoustic perceptions (e.g. ticking of the clock, voices in or in front of the house, passing cars, birds singing).

### Focus: Sensing

Focus your attention on the physical sensations that occur when parts of your body come into contact with other objects (e.g., touching a stuffed animal with your hands, brushing your hair, walking barefoot on grass, taking a shower). Try to focus on selected tactile sensations and also notice details such as surface textures, edges, and temperatures.

### Focus: Smell

Focus your attention on the smells in your immediate environment or of specific objects or items (e.g., fruit, ground coffee, flowers, freshly cut grass, the air after a rainstorm).

### Focus: Tasting

Focus your attention on the taste sensations that occur when you taste different foods (e.g., candy, chocolate, spices, tea). Take your time and try to focus on tasting.