

Mindfulness exercises you can try

Consider trying these mindfulness exercises to see which ones feel right for you.

MINDFUL EATING

This involves paying attention to the taste, sight and textures of what you eat. Try this when drinking a cup of tea or coffee, for example. You could focus on the temperature, how the liquid feels on your tongue, how sweet it tastes, or watch the steam that it gives off.

MINDFUL MOVEMENT

While exercising, try focusing on the feeling of your body moving. If you go for a mindful walk, you might notice the breeze against your skin, the feeling of your feet or hands against different textures, and the different smells around you. Some people find mindful movement activities such as yoga or tai chi helpful for their mental wellbeing – perhaps see if there are any groups locally to you, or start by doing guided videos at home on YouTube.

BODY SCANNING/PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION

This is where you move your attention slowly through different parts of your body. Start from the top of your head and move all the way down to the end of your toes. You could focus on feelings of warmth, tension, tingling or relaxation of different parts of your body. There are some helpful guided body scans and 'progressive muscle relaxation' videos on YouTube.

MINDFUL COLOURING AND DRAWING

Rather than trying to draw something in particular, focus on the colours and the sensation of your pencil against the paper. You could use a mindfulness colouring book, or download mindfulness colouring images from the internet. Lots of websites offer them for free.

MINDFUL MEDITATION

This involves sitting quietly to focus on your breathing, thoughts, sensations in your body or things you can sense around you. Try to bring your attention back to the present if your mind starts to wander. There are breathing exercises which can help with this gentle focus of attention – perhaps try one on the next page. Here is a beginner's guide to meditation: <https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-wellbeing-tips/how-to-meditate-for-beginners/>

Video: How to meditate for beginners

In this step-by-step video guide, mindfulness and meditation expert Dr. Becky Spelman explains how you can give meditation a go and the benefits it can bring.



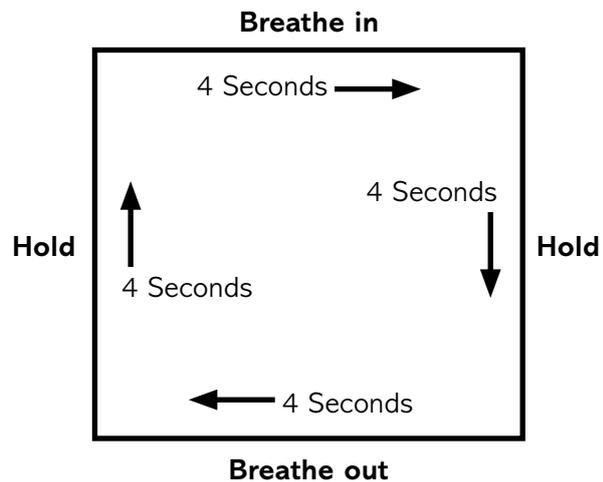
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You might like to explore one of these mindful exercises and see how they feel for you.

BOX BREATHING

Box breathing is a simple breathing exercise which can help calm your nervous system.

- To try it, find a comfortable position sitting tall with relaxed shoulders.
- Inhale for 4 seconds, hold for 4 seconds, exhale for 4 seconds, hold for 4 seconds, and repeat at least 3 times, or until you feel calmer.



5-4-3-2-1 GROUNDING TECHNIQUE

When you notice stress building, you might like to try a grounding tool like the 5-4-3-2-1 exercise. Take a moment to focus on each of your senses and try and come up with the following number of things you notice.

5

Things you can see

(e.g. birds, trees, a spot on the ceiling, pictures on the wall)

4

Things you can feel

(e.g. your hair, your hands, the chair you are sitting on)

3

Things you can hear

(e.g. a clock ticking, a car, a dog barking)

2

Things you can smell

(e.g. soap, your clothes, air freshener)

1

Things you can taste

(e.g. chewing gum, coffee)