

Mindfulness 8  
Everyday noticing

*This is an exercise that you can use during everyday activities (e.g. washing up, walking, cleaning your teeth, drinking a cup of tea, sitting in the garden) to bring us back into the present moment, focusing on the here and now. Once you become familiar with the exercise, it can be practiced for as short or as long a time as you want it to be. Once you become familiar with it, you may notice that you find it easier to focus on some of the senses than others and you can adapt this exercise to go through all of them, or just focus on one or a couple of them.*

*Focusing on senses can sometimes evoke strong associations for individuals. If, whilst you're going through this exercise, you find focusing on a particular sensation uncomfortable or difficult, that's fine, just re-focus your attention on your breathing or something that you find more comfortable, until the exercise moves on.*

Start by taking two, slow deep and comfortable breaths in your own time, focusing on the breath as it goes in and out of your body.....now bring your attention to the sounds around you.....notice how many different sounds you can hear.....those that are close by and further away.....try to see if you can switch your attention between different sounds.....just focus on this for a little while. When your mind inevitably wanders off, try to notice that it has wandered as best as you can and gently guide your focus of attention back to the sounds you can here.

Next start to focus on what you can see around you... focus on the colours... the shapes... textures... things close by and in the distance... areas of light and shadow... whether things are moving or still... again when your thoughts wander, gently bring your focus of attention back to what you can see.

Now turn your focus of attention to any sensations you can feel... are you warm or cool?... if you're outside, is there a breeze?...if you're sat down, what are you sat on, what does that feel like?... if you're stood up or walking, how does that feel underfoot?... so just trying, as best as you can, to really focus on what you can feel in this very moment.

Next, turn your attention to what you can smell... as best as you can try to focus on whether there are any scents in the here and now... is there a pleasant scent... or an unpleasant one... as best as you can, try to focus on what scents you can smell in this moment... again, bringing your focus of attention back to this sensation whenever your mind wanders off.

Lastly, focus your attention on any tastes that you are experiencing... try to focus in on what this taste is like, right now...

As we now draw this exercise to a close, start to re-focus your attention on your breathing... and when you're reading, make a conscious decision to end this exercise and continue with your day.