

Mindful Self-Regulation Exercises

to use in the Moment

Breathing

Intentional breathing is a helpful way to bring us to the present.

Three Conscious Breaths:

1. Breathe in deeply.
2. Hold your breath for 3-4 seconds.
3. Slowly exhale.
4. Repeat for three full breathes.

Deep Breathing:

1. Breathe in deeply.
2. Notice the cold air in your nostrils and on you breath.
3. Breathe slowly out.

Breathing to Calm Self:

1. Breathe in for count of 4.
2. Breathe out for count of 7.

Breathing to Activate Self:

1. Breathe in to count of 7.
2. Breathe out to count to 4.

Grounding

Becoming aware of our senses can be helpful in bringing us back to the present.

Simple Grounding Technique

1. Place both feet flat on the floor
2. Lean back into your chair, and make note of the feeling of the chair under you and against your back.
3. Place your hands in your lap.
4. Notice the way your feet feel in your shoes, and your shoes feel on the floor.
5. Notice the way your hands feel in your lap. Tap your thighs, and notice the way this feels, if you'd like.
6. Recognize yourself as reoriented to the "here and now."

Four Senses Grounding Exercise

1. In your mind, notice 1 thing you see in the room.
2. In your mind, notice 1 thing you can feel ("my feet on the floor" or "the air in my nose").
3. In your mind, notice 1 thing you hear ("traffic outside").
4. In your mind, notice 1 thing you can smell.

Imagery

Snow Globe

1. Visualize a snow-globe in your mind.
2. Imagine the snow-globe is shaken up, and the swirling snowflakes symbolize your stress and state of dysregulation.
3. Imagine the snowflakes gently settling and the snow-globe becoming clear.
4. As the snow-globe becomes clearer in your mind, imagine your stress and dysregulation settling and visualize clarity and peace of mind.

Wheat Field

1. Visualize a field with long blades of wheat blowing on a clear, sunny day.
2. Imagine you are sitting in the field. Feel the breeze and the sun on your skin.
3. Visualize the peace and tranquility that the field represents.
4. Bring yourself back to present, carrying with you feelings of tranquility and peace.

Self Talk

Positive Self Talk is communicating with yourself in a way that helps you to feel more present, regulated, and accepting.

Example self talk phrases:

- I accept the things I cannot control.
- I am here to listen.
- I always give my best effort and that is good enough.
- I can keep asking questions.
- I am smart, confident, and capable.
- I see the best in other people.
- I accept this situation for what it is.
- I can slow down and observe before reacting.
- I am organized and know what I need to do.
- I accept the choices of other people.
- I am learning and growing.

Add your own:

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