

“Mindful Moments”

1) Mindfulness of the body

These are good for quick “mindful moments,” especially if you are in a public setting.

“Mindfulness of the Breath”: Breathe normally, but focus on how it feels to inhale, exhale, and repeat. Feel your breath falling down to the bottom of your lungs and filling them up, and notice how it feels to gently expel breath from your nose or mouth.

“Body Scan”: starting with your feet, focus your attention on how each body part feels. Do you notice any pain, numbness, muscle ache, stiffness, hot/cold, etc.? You can do both halves of the body at once or just do one half and then the other (right foot, left foot). Go all the way up to your forehead/face, isolating each body part in turn.

2) Mindfulness of the senses

A quick way to do this is to stop what you are doing and notice what you can detect with your eyes, ears, nose, mouth and skin, focusing on your immediate surroundings. However, you can also do more prolonged mindfulness that focuses on just one sense at a time:

- Go to an art museum
- Listen to a piece of classical music
- Light your favorite candle
- Hold a piece of candy in your mouth
- Take a hot bath or sit in front of a fan

The key here is not just to notice the details of whatever you are experiencing in the present moment, but also to notice what emotions and sensations it brings up for you.

3) Mindfulness involving nature

I like to find nature sounds on Spotify/Pandora and listen to them while I do these. They are particularly good for when you are feeling swept up by your everyday stressors.

“Big Sky Meditation”: Imagine the expansive sky above you. Notice how the clouds drift by, and the weather changes, and yet the sky remains the same, unbroken. See yourself as the sky, remaining calm and unmoved as the weather of life changes around you.

“Mountain Mindfulness”: The mountain stays rooted in the ground in spite of changing weather or conditions (e.g., hikers climbing on it). Imagine yourself as the mountain.

“Leaves on a Stream”: Imagine you are sitting by a peaceful forest stream. There are leaves drifting by in the water. As a stressful thought enters your mind, gently place it on a leaf and watch it drift away down the river. Separate yourself from these thoughts.