



Self-Care Activity

A. 4-7-8 Breathing Exercise

1. Exhale completely through your mouth, making a “woosh” sound.
2. Close your mouth and inhale quietly through your nose to a mental count of four.
3. Hold your breath for a count of seven.
4. Exhale completely through your mouth, making a “woosh” sound to a count of eight.
5. Reflect on this experience and share it with someone!

B. Grounding Exercise

1. Inhale through your nose as you keep your mouth close.
2. Exhale completely through your mouth and nose.
3. Continue with inhaling and exhaling to a mental count of ten.
4. Asked yourself two grounding questions:
 - i. “Where am I right NOW” (e.g., I am in my bedroom).
 - ii. “What do I see in my physical environment right NOW” (Quickly scan what you see in your physical environment. Just note what you see without making any judgment. For example, if you were in your bedroom, just note what you see such as clock; chair bunk bed; table; curtains; windows; etc.)
5. This grounding exercise will help you stay in the present moment!

C. Mindfulness Walking

As you begin, walk at a natural pace. Place your hands wherever comfortable: on your belly, behind your back, or at your sides.

- If you find it useful, you can count steps up to 10, and then start back at one again. If you’re in a small space, as you reach ten, pause, and with intention, choose a moment to turn around.
- With each step, pay attention to the lifting and falling of your foot. Notice movement in your legs and the rest of your body. Notice any shifting of your body from side to side.
- Whatever else captures your attention, come back to the sensation of walking. Your mind will wander, so without frustration, guide it back again as many times as you need.
- Particularly outdoors, maintain a larger sense of the environment around you, taking it all in, staying safe and aware.
- **Now for a few minutes, expand your attention to sounds.** Whether you’re indoors, in the woods, or in a city, pay attention to sounds without labeling or naming, or getting caught up in whether you find them pleasant or unpleasant. Notice sounds as nothing more or less than sound.

- **Shift your awareness to your sense of smell.** Again, simply notice. Don't push or force yourself to feel anything at all, just bring attention to the sense of smell, whatever you discover.
- **Now, move to vision:** colors and objects and whatever else you see. Patiently coming back each time something grabs your attention, or even if something needs addressing, like avoiding an obstacle. Staying natural, not overly rigid, not daydreaming and drifting, but with sustained awareness.
- **Keep this open awareness of everything around you,** wherever you are. Nothing to do, nothing to fix, nothing to change. Fully aware, and walking.
- **In the last moments, come back to awareness of the physical sensations** of walking, wherever else your mind found itself throughout the practice. Notice your feet again touching the ground. Notice again the movements in your body with each step.

When you're ready to end your walking meditation, stand still for a moment again. Pausing, choose a moment to end the practice. As you finish, consider how you might bring this kind of awareness into the rest of your day.

Resources from <https://www.mindful.org/daily-mindful-walking-practice/>