

Take Notice

Five Ways to Wellbeing



in a recovery context

- Paying more attention to the present moment – to your own thoughts and feelings, and to the world around you – can improve your mental wellbeing.
- Taking Notice is a step towards strengthening and widening your self-awareness. By developing a better connection to yourself (intrapersonal), where you are more aware of your own needs, values and interests, you can begin exploring and choosing behaviours that are consistent with these things.
- Focusing too much on past events and worrying about the future can have a negative impact on our mental health and wellbeing (Wang, 2016). Being present or practicing mindfulness can free you from the past and future, especially if you realise that, for several minutes, you have been ‘trapped’ in reliving past problems or ‘pre-living’ future worries.

“Mindfulness means knowing directly what is going on inside and outside ourselves, moment by moment..”

Mark Williams

How mindful are you?

We spend so much time inside our heads, thinking about what we've done, or have yet to do, worrying about things. It's easy to stop noticing the world around us. It's also easy to lose touch with the way our bodies are feeling and to end up living '*in our heads*' – caught up in our thoughts without stopping to notice how those thoughts are driving our emotions and behaviour.

Ask yourself:

- Do you find it difficult to stay focused on what's happening in the present?
- Do you tend to walk quickly to get to where you're going without paying attention?
- Does it seem as if you are running on automatic without much awareness of what you are doing?

Grounding techniques help you to stay “in the moment” and regain a sense of safety and control.

Mental grounding	Physical grounding
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Describe your environment in detail, using all your senses.• Play a categories game.• Say a safety or coping statement.• Say kind statements.• Remember the words to an inspiring song, quote or poem.• Visualise a place that is calming and safe.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Touch various objects around you: Notice textures, colours, materials, weight, temperature.• Dig your heels into the ground,• Carry a grounding object in your pocket.• Stretch.• Clench and release your fists.• Focus on your breathing, noticing each inhale and exhale.

Grounding Technique

5-4-3-2-1

Grounding techniques often use the five senses - sound, touch, smell, taste, and sight - to immediately connect you with the here and now.

- 5 things I can see** *(the colour red, beginning with the letter b etc.)*
- 4 things I can hear**
- 3 things I can feel or touch**
- 2 things I can smell**
- 1 slow deep breath**



If I...

sentence completion exercise

If I bring 15% more attention to my life today...

If I am more accepting of my emotions today...

- Slow down and stop. Savour the moment.
- Reflect on your experiences.
- Try to see things with ‘new eyes’. Adopt a curious approach to life.
- Look for beauty in everything.
- Try mindful photography
- Taste your food. Eat slow.
- Listen to a new piece of music. What instruments can you hear?
- Take a different route to places.
- Remember to look up!

“We know the world only through the window of our mind. When our mind is noisy, the world is as well. And when our mind is peaceful, the world is, too. Knowing our minds is just as important as trying to change the world.”

Haemin Sunim

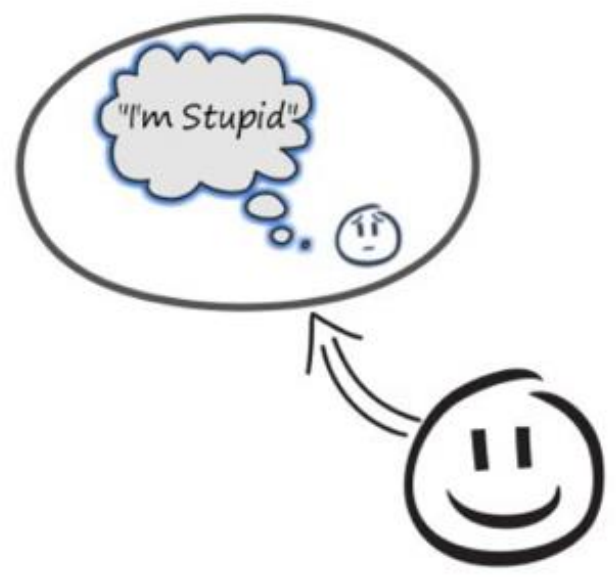
Thoughts: believe them, struggle with them, or simply notice them?



I am Stupid



I'm having the thought
"I'm Stupid"



I'm noticing
I'm having the thought
"I'm Stupid"

Defusion

Notice your thoughts while holding them lightly.



Cognitive Defusion involves distancing, disconnecting or seeing thoughts and feelings for what they are (streams of words, passing sensations), not what they say they are (dangers or facts).

To develop an awareness of thoughts and feelings:

- Use the mantra: STOP, STEP BACK, OBSERVE.
- Look *at* thoughts, rather than *from* thoughts.
- Notice thoughts, rather than being caught up in thoughts.
- See thoughts as what they are, not as what they seem to be. Don't believe everything you think!
- Silently name the unhelpful thought: "Here is the thought that I might fail that exam." Or, "Here is anxiety."
- Use metaphors to see things differently.

Metaphors to Facilitate Cognitive Defusion

Thoughts are like:

- Clouds floating, or birds flying, across the sky.
- Waves arising from the sea, then falling back in. You can watch the waves from the shore, without being swept away.
- Leaves and sticks floating down a stream. You don't have to dive in. You can watch from a bridge.
- A passing parade. You can watch the floats pass by. You don't have to climb on board.
- Trains coming and going while you stand watching from the platform.
- A waterfall. You're standing behind it, not under it.
- Guests entering a hotel. You can be like the doorman: you greet the guests but you don't follow them to their rooms.
- Suitcases dropping onto a conveyor belt at the airport. You can watch them pass by, without having to pick them up.
- People passing by you in the street. You can nod your head at them, but you don't have to stop and have a conversation.
- Wild horses running across the plains. You can admire them but no need to chase them.
- Bubbles rising in a champagne bottle. They rise to the surface and then disappear.
- Fish swimming in a tank. Watch them come and go.
- Actors on a stage. You can watch the play; you don't need to get on stage and perform.
- 'Pop-ups' on the internet.
- Junk e-mail. You can't stop it from coming in – but you don't have to read it!
- Text messages on your mobile phone.
- Luggage passing by on a conveyor belt.

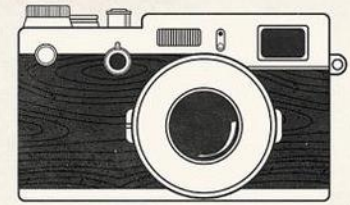
Leaves on a Stream

Imagine a beautiful slow-moving stream. The water flows over rocks, around trees, descends downhill, and travels through a valley. Once in a while, a big leaf drops into the stream and floats away down the river. Imagine you are sitting beside that stream on a warm, sunny day, watching the leaves float by.

Now become conscious of your thoughts. Each time a thought pops into your head, imagine that it is written on one of those leaves. If you think in words, put them on the leaf as words. If you think in images, put them on the leaf as an image. The goal is to stay beside the stream and allow the leaves on the stream to keep flowing by. Don't try to make the stream go faster or slower; don't try to change what shows up on the leaves in any way. If the leaves disappear, or if you mentally go somewhere else, or if you find that you are in the stream or on a leaf, just stop and notice what has happened. File that knowledge away and then once again return to the stream, watch a thought come into your mind, write it on a leaf, and let the leaf float away down stream.

“Take time to
NOTICE the things
that other people
are **OVERLOOKING.**”

collect
beautiful
moments



LIFE IS LIKE

a camera

Focus on what's important

**CAPTURE THE
GOOD TIMES**

Develop from the negatives

AND IF THINGS DON'T WORK OUT

take another

SHOT

Smile

Remember to look up at
the stars and not down
at your feet

Stephen Hawking

BE CURIOUS