

**Mindfulness Practices**

**What is Mindfulness?**

Mindfulness is the practice of paying attention to the present moment, without judgment. It helps to quiet racing thoughts, reduce stress, and bring a sense of calm. Research shows that mindfulness can improve focus, regulate emotions, and support both mental and physical wellbeing.

**Simple mindfulness practices**

**1. The 5 senses check-in**  
Pause and notice your surroundings. Name 5 things you can see, 4 you can touch, 3 you can hear, 2 you can smell, and 1 you can taste. This exercise grounds you in the present moment.

**2. Mindful breathing (Box breathing)**  
Inhale for 4 seconds, hold for 4, exhale for 4, hold for 4. Repeat for 1–2 minutes, focusing only on your breath.

**3. Mindful walking**  
Take a short walk. Notice the feel of your feet against the ground, the rhythm of your steps, and the sounds around you. Walk slowly and with intention.

**4. Body scan**  
Sit or lie down comfortably. Starting at your toes, slowly bring your attention to each part of your body, noticing sensations (warmth, tension, tingling) without trying to change them.

**5. Mindful eating**  
Choose a small piece of food. Observe its colour, shape, and texture. Take a slow bite, noticing taste, smell, and how it feels as you chew. Eating in this way helps you savour and slow down.

**6. Meditation and guided imagery**

To practice meditation and guided imagery, find a quiet space, close your eyes, focus on slow, steady breathing, and picture a calming scene, such as a beach or forest, while allowing yourself to fully imagine the sights, sounds, and sensations.

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