

USING THE SENSES

Help students practice using mindfulness with each of their five senses



HEARING

Close your eyes and listen to the sounds around you. What do you hear? Do you notice any sounds you usually miss? Listen to your favorite song as if you're hearing it for the first time. Does it sound different to you? Do you hear new words? New instruments? What emotions come up while you listen?



SIGHT

Pause and look around you. What do you see? Choose a color. Look around and notice everywhere you see that color. Look up from your device. What do you see around you? Bring your attention to a single object. Every time you lose focus and look away, remind yourself to return your attention to the object.



SMELL

(Bring in a variety of spices and herbs, or foods that have a distinct smell. Place each food in a cup.)

What do you smell? What food might the cup contain? Practice mindful eating. Start by holding a piece of food to your nose and smelling it.



TASTE

What do you taste in your mouth? Eat a bite of food, such as a raisin or orange, and notice what it tastes like. Extend this meditation to include all the senses. Hold the edible object in your hands. What does it feel like? How does it look? What does it smell like? Now eat the food slowly, noticing its flavor, texture, and temperature. Notice what it feels like to chew and swallow.



TOUCH

Close your eyes and touch an object. What does it feel like? Is it hard? Soft? Is it smooth or rough? How do you hold a pencil? Tight? Loose? Where are each of your fingers placed? Rise onto your toes, then flatten your feet. Repeat. How do your feet feel? How do your legs feel? Form a line and begin walking around the room. Move as slowly as your body can. Be aware of every muscle's movement. Focus on the sensation of opening and closing your hands.



Teachers: Remember to make time for reflection or closure after mindfulness exercises and deep conversations.

Gain access to a wide variety of mindfulness techniques for teachers and students in the laminated guide:

Mindfulness for Teachers and Students

By Elizabeth McAvooy and Jacqueline Thousand



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