

A mindfulness activity you might like:

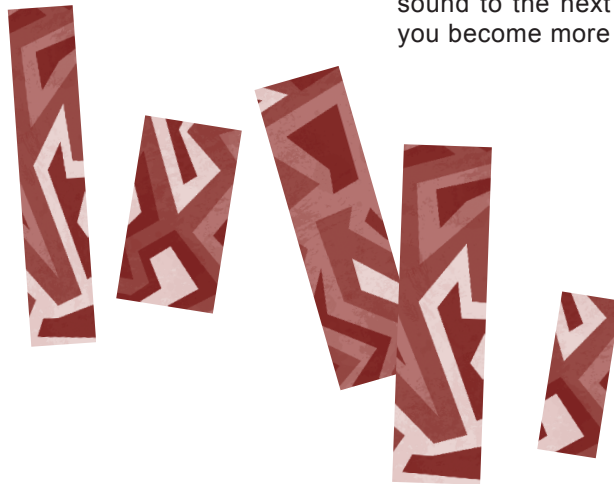
Rhythms and Sounds

Mindfulness skills help us to focus our attention, especially when we are overwhelmed with strong emotions. This skill can help us stay calm and rational, allowing us to choose how we want to respond rather than automatically and impulsively reacting to situations. When developing mindfulness skills it is best to do these regularly and increase the duration of the task over time. The ideas here practice the core aspects of traditional mindfulness - observing, being one-minded, effective and participating in the moment. You can practice these mindfulness activities in a group or with a friend.



KEEPING THE RHYTHM

Begin with a rhythm (for example two claps). The next person then repeats the rhythm (two claps) and adds an additional rhythm (for example a foot stomp). The next person repeats this rhythm (two claps and a foot stomp) and adds an additional rhythm (for instance taps chair). The rhythm is passed on from person to person, adding rhythms as you go. The activity starts from the beginning if someone forgets a rhythm.



THROWING AND CATCHING SOUNDS

Start the activity by throwing a sound to another person (for instance, throw the sound by using hand movements as if throwing a ball while saying the sound 'buzz'). The person catches this sound (using hand movements as if catching a ball while saying 'buzz'). Now, this person throws a new sound to the next person (for instance, throws the sound 'boing'). This person will catch this sound and throw a new sound to the next person. Speed up the pace as you become more practiced.

Take some time to reflect on your experience. Some people first notice some anxiety. Often this goes away quickly as they focus on the activity. Other people do not notice any thoughts, feelings or urges because the activity distracts them. The more you do this activity, the less anxious, more capable and more focused you become. The more you practice mindfulness, the more skilled you become! The skill of mindfulness can help you in other areas of your life.

When you are ready, try the activity again. Did you notice any difference in your experience?

The Project Air Strategy acknowledges the major support of NSW Health. The Project works with mental health clinicians, consumers and carers to deliver effective treatments, implements research strategies supporting scientific discoveries, and offers high quality training and education. Contact us at info-projectair@uow.edu.au or visit <http://projectairstrategy.org>