

Therapeutic Mindfulness How-To: Full Process

Step 1. Choose – A Target

1. If a strong emotion comes up, pause. You can begin immediately or once you are alone.
2. As part of a regular practice, choose any life situation, image, memory, or thought that brings up an illogical reaction or strong emotion. You can list these targets for future practice periods.

Step 2. Describe – Your Body Reactions

1. What do you feel, and where is it in your body?
2. Imagine the feeling is an entity that you can picture or sense. Ask the body focusing questions to get focused completely on the feeling.

Step 3. Allow – Practice Nonjudgment

1. Using the “Allowing Phrases” worksheet, repeat to yourself the phrases that fit best for you. Continue to repeat your phrases while paying attention to the feeling.

Step 4. Repeat – Steps 2 and 3

1. Every minute or so, use the body focusing questions to describe new changes.
2. After you describe, repeat your preferred allowing phrases.

Step 5. Return – To the Target

1. When the feeling has faded or disappeared, bring up the original thought, image, or memory that was emotional. Look directly at it and check for any lingering emotion.
2. If there is emotion left, you can return to steps 2 and 3 until you are done.
3. If there is no negative emotion, you can take a few moments to notice what it feels like in your body when you are calm and without that hurt.

Note: If you still have intense negative emotions when you're ready to finish, you can get back to your logical brain quickly by counting the things that you see. For example: Count everything you can see that is brown. Count everything that is square. Count how many shades of green you can find. You can also use your preferred coping and focusing skills (meditation, deep breathing, smelling a favorite scent, listening to music, gardening, time outdoors, snuggling with a pet, etcetera).