



# Wellness: Mindfulness

## Coping Mechanisms for Dysregulation

This month, we offer a toolkit consisting of several tips and tricks designed for self-regulation and maintaining calm. Useful for everyone in this industry, we will cover mindfulness exercises, breathing exercises, and relaxation tools. These should always be kept in your “back pocket,” to use to check in with yourself, return to a baseline place of calm collectivity and repair and heal both body and mind when you feel dysregulated. These tools allow you to show up as your best self every day, not just at work.

### What is Dysregulation?

Being dysregulated means having trouble controlling your emotions, thoughts, or actions in a calm and balanced way. This can manifest as heightened emotional reactions, impulsivity, mood swings, not being able to cope with stress or challenging situations. Dysregulation can impact various aspects of an individual's life and may contribute to difficulties in maintaining healthy relationships, managing responsibilities, and overall emotional well-being. There are always moments when we find ourselves emotionally dysregulated during the day. A conversation may not have gone as planned, a cue might have been off, or something might have happened that leaves you in a heightened emotional state. In these moments, it is important to have the tools to regain control and allow our brains and bodies to return to baseline, where we can think not with our **emotion mind**, but with our **wise mind**.

### What is Mindfulness?

Mindfulness is the practice of being fully present and engaged in the current moment, acknowledging, and accepting one's feelings, thoughts, and bodily sensations without judgment. Mindfulness exercises play a crucial role in managing emotional triggers and promoting self-regulation by providing a toolkit for individuals to pause, assess, and respond to challenging situations with greater awareness and control.

By fostering mindfulness, one can develop the ability to observe their thoughts and emotions without immediate reactivity, creating space for more deliberate and constructive responses. This practice not only enhances emotional resilience but also cultivates a deeper understanding of oneself, reducing stress, and ultimately leads to more balanced and harmonious interactions with others and the world around us.

Mindfulness exercises can be helpful for improving emotional regulation, increasing self-awareness, and managing distress. You can incorporate them into your daily routine or use them as needed to cope with challenging situations.

### Some Mindfulness Exercises to Try:

- **Five Senses Grounding Exercise:**
  - This exercise helps you become fully present by engaging all five senses, bringing you back into your body when you may have become upset.
  - Identify and describe five things you can see, four things you can touch, three things you can hear, two things you can smell, and one thing you can taste in your current environment.
- **Half-Smile:**
  - Close your eyes and gently bring a half-smile to your face.
  - Notice how this physical gesture can affect your mood and emotional state.
  - Allow yourself to experience the positive effects of this subtle smile.
- **Body Scan:**
  - Lie down or sit comfortably.
  - Close your eyes and bring your attention to your toes. Then your feet. Then your ankles. Then your shins, gradually and slowly working your way up. You can also start with the top of your head, moving down. Sometimes it is useful to imagine a warm light hitting each part of your body.
  - Slowly move your focus up through your body, paying attention to any sensations or tension.
  - Release any tension you notice as you go along.
  - This helps you become more aware of your body and any areas of stress or discomfort.
- **Radical Acceptance:**
  - This one is a tough one! Practice accepting reality as it is, even if it's not what you want it to be.
  - Repeat the phrase, "It is what it is," and let go of the struggle against the present moment.
  - This exercise can help reduce emotional suffering caused by resistance to reality.
- **Walking Meditation:**
  - Go for a walk in a quiet, natural setting.
  - Pay attention to each step you take.
  - Notice the sensation of your feet lifting, moving, and making contact with the ground.
  - Be aware of the sounds, sights, and smells around you.
  - This can help you stay grounded and present while walking.
- **Mindful Eating:**
  - Choose a small piece of food, like a raisin or a piece of chocolate.
  - Examine it with all your senses before eating it.
  - Notice its texture, smell, taste, and even the sound it makes when you chew.
  - Eat slowly and savor each bite mindfully.
- **Thoughts as Leaves on a Stream:**

- Find a comfortable and quiet place to sit or lie down.
  - Close your eyes and focus on your breath for a few moments to center yourself.
  - Visualize a gentle stream with leaves floating on its surface.
  - As thoughts arise in your mind, imagine placing each thought on a leaf and letting it float away down the stream.
  - Observe each thought without judgment, allowing them to come and go freely.
- **Gratitude Journal:**
    - Take a few minutes each day to write down things you're grateful for.
    - This practice can help you focus on the positive aspects of your life and foster a sense of gratitude.
- **Loving-Kindness Meditation:**
    - Sit quietly and think of someone you care about.
    - Send them wishes for happiness, health, and well-being.
    - Gradually extend these wishes to yourself, loved ones, acquaintances, and even people you have conflicts with.
    - This meditation can cultivate feelings of compassion and connection.

### Breathing Exercises:

While many performers know the benefits of breath work, breathing exercises are incredibly useful for those backstage as well! Breathing exercises can help calm your mind, reduce stress, and promote relaxation. Here are a few breathing exercises you can try:

- **Deep Belly Breathing (Diaphragmatic Breathing):**
  - Place one hand on your chest and the other on your abdomen.
  - Inhale deeply through your nose, allowing your abdomen to rise as you fill your lungs.
  - Exhale slowly through your mouth, letting go of tension and allowing your abdomen to fall.
  - Focus on the rise and fall of your abdomen as you breathe.
  - Continue for a few minutes, gradually lengthening your breaths.
- **Observing Your Breath:**
  - Find a comfortable and quiet place to sit or lie down.
  - Focus your attention on your breath as it goes in and out.
  - Observe your breath without trying to change it in any way.
  - Notice the sensation of the breath in your nostrils, chest, or abdomen.
  - If your mind wanders, gently bring your focus back to your breath.
- **4-7-8 Breathing:**
  - Sit in a comfortable position with your back straight.
  - Close your eyes and take a deep breath in through your nose for a count of 4 seconds.
  - Hold your breath for a count of 7 seconds.
  - Exhale slowly and completely through your mouth for a count of 8 seconds.
  - Repeat this cycle for several rounds. This technique can help reduce anxiety.

- **Box or Square Breathing:**
  - Sit comfortably and close your eyes.
  - Inhale through your nose for a count of 4 seconds.
  - Hold your breath for 4 seconds.
  - Exhale slowly for 4 seconds.
  - Pause for 4 seconds before taking your next breath.
  - Repeat the process for several rounds, gradually increasing the duration if comfortable.
  
- **Calm-Down Breathing:**
  - Place one hand on your chest and the other on your belly.
  - Inhale deeply through your nose for a count of 4 seconds.
  - Exhale slowly through your mouth for a count of 6 seconds.
  - As you exhale, imagine releasing tension and stress with each breath.
  - Continue for a few minutes until you feel more relaxed.
  
- **Alternate Nostril Breathing (Nadi Shodhana):**
  - Sit comfortably with your spine straight.
  - Use your right thumb to close off your right nostril and inhale deeply through your left nostril.
  - After inhaling, use your right ring finger to close off your left nostril while releasing your right nostril.
  - Exhale slowly and completely through your right nostril.
  - Inhale through your right nostril.
  - Switch fingers again to close off your right nostril and exhale through your left nostril.
  - Repeat this pattern for several rounds. It helps balance energy and reduce stress.

Choose a breathing exercise that resonates with you and practice it regularly to experience its calming and centering effects. Breathing exercises can be done almost anywhere and are a valuable tool for managing stress and promoting relaxation.

As always, if you are struggling, we encourage you to reach out to us at [HR@kkreset.com](mailto:HR@kkreset.com).  
Wishing you good mental health!