

Chapter 2:

Grounding Exercises:

Deep Breathing

- Find a quiet place to sit or stand.
- Place your hands on your belly.
- Find a focal spot in front of you or close your eyes.
- Inhale and exhale, using a normal pace—not too deep and not too shallow, just the pace with which you normally breathe.
- Be aware of the rising and falling of your stomach muscles with every inhale and exhale.
- Practice this for one minute each day; then extend it to two minutes, building up tolerance for as long as you enjoy.

Here is a variant:

- Inhale through your nose for a count of four.
- Hold for a count of seven.
- Exhale through your mouth for a count of eight.
- Repeat the entire cycle ten times.

Sometimes, deep breathing is not tangible enough, so students need something more concrete. If this is the case for you, try one of these mindfulness exercises:

Mindfulness Exercises

Location Exercise

- Look around you—this exercise can be used anywhere—in your room, in your classroom, outside, on a walk, on an airplane, etc.
- Locate six red things, five orange things, four yellow things, three green things, two blue things, and one purple thing.

Variant: You can use other categories to identify items: six desserts, five entrees, four vegetables, three fruits, two breads, and one fat. Or, think of six NFL teams, five NHL teams, four NBA teams, three MLS teams, two MLB teams, and one tennis player.

The point of this exercise is to give you something concrete to focus on to quiet the noise that can frequently fill your mind.

Ice Cube Exercise

- Take an ice cube and observe it using your five senses:
 - Smell- What does it smell like? (Hopefully, nothing—otherwise, someone may need to clean out your freezer!)
 - Touch- What's the temperature? Smooth or rough? Sharp or round edges?
 - Sight-What does it look like? Bubbles frozen inside? Shape? Size? Clear or cloudy?

- Hearing-Yes, sometimes ice makes noise! Lift the cube to your ear

and have a listen!
- Taste- Ideally, your ice cube does not taste like anything! But place it in your mouth and observe what happens to the ice cube. How does its shape, size, and texture change? How does your mouth respond to the ice cube's presence? Do you have the urge to bite it?

Don't! Hold it in your mouth until it melts.

The point of this exercise is to give you something concrete to focus on to quiet the noise that can frequently fill your mind.