

4 Elements

Element 1- Ground: Senses

Take a deep breath, and then look around and notice 3 new things. What do you see? What do you hear? The idea of this part of the exercise is to remind yourself that you are safe in the present moment. To practice mindfulness, one must be fully aware of their surroundings. This keeps our minds focused on the tasks at hand, instead of worrying about our past, or what our future will bring.

Element 2- Air: Breathing

After you have grounded yourself, close your eyes and take 5 slow, deep breaths. 4 seconds in, hold for 2 seconds, and breath out for 2 seconds. Take note of how the breath enters your body, how holding it brings a sense of calm, and exhaling it releases any pent-up stress and anxiety. Focusing on your breathing brings you to the present, and lets the element of air keep your lungs full and your mind clear.

Element 3- Water: Saliva

Close your mouth. How much saliva do you notice? When you are anxious or under stress, the mouth will often dry, due to an emergency response nervous system to shut off the digestive system. By creating more saliva in your mouth, you switch on the digestive system again, which helps bring back control to your thoughts and your body. Take a few moments to create saliva in your mouth, whether by drinking fluids or doing so naturally.

Element 4- Light: Lighting up the Imagination/creativity

For the final exercise, begin by closing your eyes. Create an image of very relaxing scenery. Imagine that you are there. What would you see, hear, taste, smell, touch? Are your muscles relaxing? As you continue to think of this image, tap gently and slowly with the butterfly hug on each shoulder. By doing this exercise, you are lighting up your imagination to create warmth, and a relaxing space to escape to when you are feeling anxious.