



Peer
Education
Project



Mental Health
Foundation



Mindfulness activities pack



Mindfulness activities pack



What is mindfulness?

Mindfulness is the skill of paying attention to what is happening in your mind and body right now, without judgement. Thoughts, feelings, and bodily sensations can come and go – being mindful is simply noticing them passing through your mind.

How to use these exercises

Before each lesson, select the mindfulness activities to use. You can choose to repeat an activity at the beginning and end of the lesson or choose two different activities.

This pack provides a selection of mindfulness scripts you can use or adapt. However, you can write or search for alternative mindfulness activities to do in the lessons. Keep in mind the lesson plan allocates only 5 minutes to the mindfulness activities and should be something simple to follow.

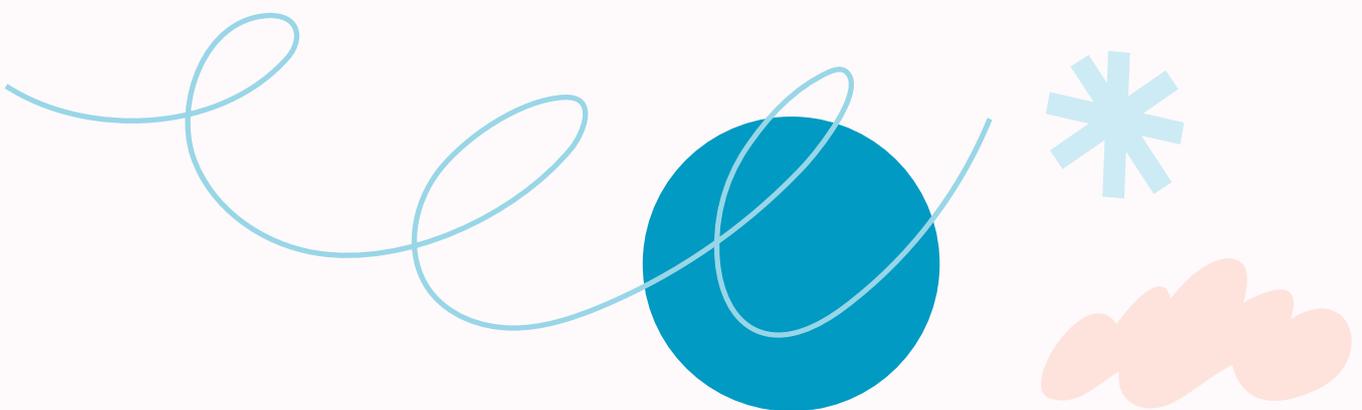
When delivering these exercises, you may want to consider the following:

- Remind the Peer Learners that the lessons will always begin and end with a mindfulness activity to encourage them to bring their attention to the present moment and into the room.
- Avoid lengthy explanations beforehand. Encourage the Peer Learners to try the activities, experiment, and then invite comments afterwards.



Mindfulness activities pack

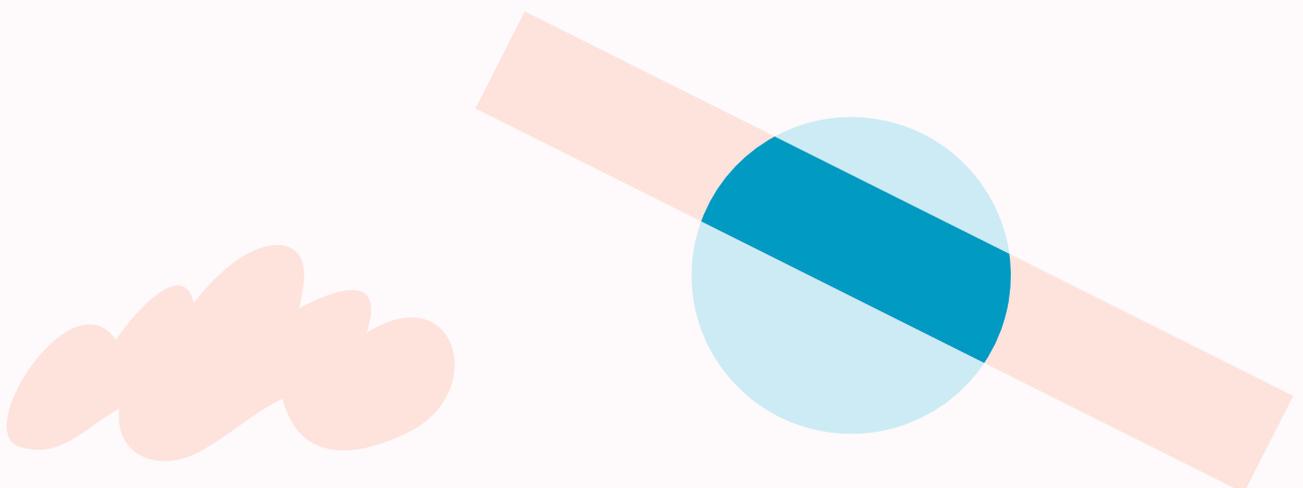
- Find a way that feels comfortable to start and finish – it may be as simple as “Let’s start with a mindfulness exercise” or “When you’re ready, take a deep breath, open your eyes and come back to the room”.
- Remember to speak slowly and leave plenty of pauses for the Peer Learners to notice the sensations, sounds or their breath. This might feel awkward at first, but after a few tries, it will begin to feel easier.
- Tell the class that their mind may wander as that is what minds do. Encourage them to notice that their mind has wandered and try to bring their attention back to your voice. If they find themselves giggling or looking at other people, they can notice this response without judgement and come back to focusing on your voice.
- Keep in mind that Peer Learners may not have done something like this before, so it may take a few lessons for them to feel more comfortable with these exercises. If Peer Learners seem to find an activity challenging, let them know it is ok to engage with it only as much as they feel comfortable.



Mindfulness activities



Seated relaxation	5
Deep breathing	7
Noticing sounds	9
Hot air balloon visualisation	11
Connecting with the senses	13
Walking through nature visualisation	15
Developing positive affirmations	17
Practising gratitude	19
Following the beat	21
My ideal day visualisation	23



Seated Relaxation

Move your body into a comfortable position on your chair, placing both feet on the floor.

If you feel comfortable to, close your eyes, or find a point in front of you to focus on.

Rest your hands on your lap or on the table in front of you.

Take a deep breath in. [PAUSE]

And out. [PAUSE]

Breathe in. [PAUSE]

And out. [PAUSE]



We are going to walk through a seated relaxation exercise, bringing our attention to different parts of our body. Listen to my voice and follow along.

Take a moment to notice how your head and shoulders feel. [PAUSE]

Do they feel tired or tense? [PAUSE]

Try gently moving your head from side to side, feeling the gentle stretch in your neck. [PAUSE]

Now, with each breath, raise your shoulders up towards your ears, then let them gently fall away. Do this a couple of times, feeling your shoulders relax a little more with each breath. [PAUSE]

Take a moment to notice how your body feels against the chair. [PAUSE]



Seated relaxation (continued)

Is there a part of your body that needs more support? [PAUSE]

Does your back need to be more in contact with the chair, or do you need to shift your hips to feel more comfortable.

Move your body gently until you feel most comfortable on the chair. [PAUSE]

Now turn your attention to your legs and feet. How do they feel? [PAUSE]

With each breath, gently raise and lower the heels of your feet.

Do this a couple of times, releasing any tension from your calf muscles and ankles. [PAUSE]

Take a couple of deep breaths in

Breathe in. [PAUSE]

And out. [PAUSE]

Breathe in. [PAUSE]

And out. [PAUSE]

When you feel ready, slowly bring your attention back to the room.



Deep breathing

Move your body into a comfortable position.

If you feel comfortable to, close your eyes, or find a point in front of you to focus on.

Rest your hands on your lap or on the table in front of you.

Bring your attention to your breath. [PAUSE]

Notice your body rise and fall.

Where you feel your breath most strongly? [PAUSE]

Is it in your nose? Your chest? Your stomach?

Now bring your attention to the pace of your breathing.

We are going to practise deep breathing, focusing on slowing our breathing process and releasing any tension we may be holding. Listen to my voice and follow along.

Take a slow deep breath in for a count of 4 and hold it for a count of 7. [PAUSE]

Now release your breath slowly for a count of 8. [PAUSE]

Take another deep breath in (count of 4) and hold it (count of 7). [PAUSE]

Then exhale slowly (count of 8). [PAUSE]

Continue breathing in this pattern for another three breaths. With each exhale, feel any tension in your body release.



Deep breathing (continued)

Now let your breathing return to its normal rate. [PAUSE]

When you feel ready, slowly bring your attention back to the room.



Noticing sounds

Move your body into a comfortable position.

If you feel comfortable to, close your eyes, or find a point in front of you to focus on.

Rest your hands on your lap or on the table in front of you.

Take a deep breath in. [PAUSE]

And out. [PAUSE]

Breathe in. [PAUSE]

And out. [PAUSE]

We are going to bring our attention to our sense of hearing. Listen to my voice and follow along.

Can you hear any sounds coming from outside the room? [PAUSE]

It could be a vehicle going passed. [PAUSE]

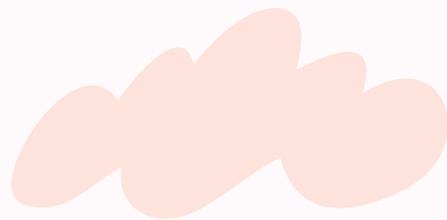
Or a bird singing. [PAUSE]

Once you have noticed a sound from outside of the room, gently put your hand on the table in front of you. [Wait for most pupils in the room to have their hands on the table].

Now return your hands to your lap.

We are going to bring our attention back to our sense of hearing.

Can you hear any sounds coming from inside the room? [PAUSE]



Noticing sounds (continued)

It could be the ticking of the clock. [PAUSE]

Or the person breathing next to you. [PAUSE]

Once you have noticed a sound from outside of the room, gently put your hand on the table in front of you. [Wait for most pupils in the room to have their hands on the table].

Now return your hands to your lap.

We are going to bring our attention to our breathing – a sound that comes from you.

Take a deep breath in. [PAUSE]

And out. [PAUSE]

Breathe in. [PAUSE]

And out. [PAUSE]

When you feel ready, slowly bring your attention back to the room.



Hot air balloon visualisation

Move your body into a comfortable position. If you need to, stretch out any part of your body that is holding tension.

If you feel comfortable to, close your eyes, or find a point in front of you to focus on.

Rest your hands on your lap or on the table in front of you.

Take a deep breath in. [PAUSE]

And out. [PAUSE]

Breathe in. [PAUSE]

And out. [PAUSE]



We are going to practise a breathing visualisation. Listen to my voice and follow along.

Imagine you are standing in your own hot air balloon. This is your balloon. [PAUSE]

You can decide what colours, shape, and size the balloon is. [PAUSE]

Maybe your balloon is one colour.

Or maybe your balloon is multicoloured. [PAUSE]

Your balloon maybe an oval shape.

Or maybe it is shaped like another object or person. [PAUSE]

Are you standing in a basket at the bottom of the balloon? Or is there



Hot air balloon visualisation (continued)

another way of riding under the balloon that you prefer? [PAUSE]

This is your balloon. [PAUSE]

As you breathe in and out, your balloon begins to fill with air.

Your balloon is ready to fly.

Imagine your tensions are ropes anchoring your balloon to the ground.

With each breath, imagine untying one of these ropes, and releases any tension or challenging thoughts you may be holding. [PAUSE]

YOU are in control of your balloon. [PAUSE]

Once you are ready, your balloon takes flight. [PAUSE]

With each breath, watch your balloon calmly move to where you want it to go. [PAUSE]

Take a deep breath in. [PAUSE]

And out. [PAUSE]

Breathe in. [PAUSE]

And out. [PAUSE]

When you feel ready, slowly bring your attention back to the room.



Connecting with the senses

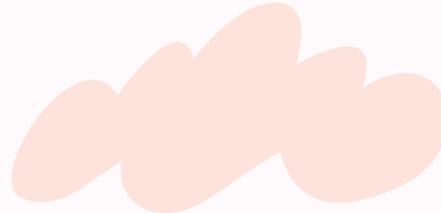
Move your body into a comfortable position.

Take a deep breath in. [PAUSE]

And out. [PAUSE]

Breathe in. [PAUSE]

And out. [PAUSE]



We are going to bring our attention to our senses. Listen to my voice and follow along.

Hold one hand up in front of you.

FIVE. Notice five things you can see around you. Count them using your hand.

Once you've found five, put your thumb down.

FOUR. What four different things can you touch around you? This could be the chair you're sitting on, or your own skin. How do they feel – soft, hard, warm, cold?

Once you've found four, put a finger down.

THREE. Listen to three sounds you can hear around the room. Think about where each sound is coming from. Is it coming from a person? A clock? From outside?

Once you've found three, put one more finger down.

TWO. Take a couple of deep breaths in. Can you identify two smells in this moment?



Connecting with the senses (continued)

Once you've identified two, put another finger down.

ONE. What taste do you have in your mouth? Maybe something you've had to drink or eat? Take a moment to bring your attention to this taste.

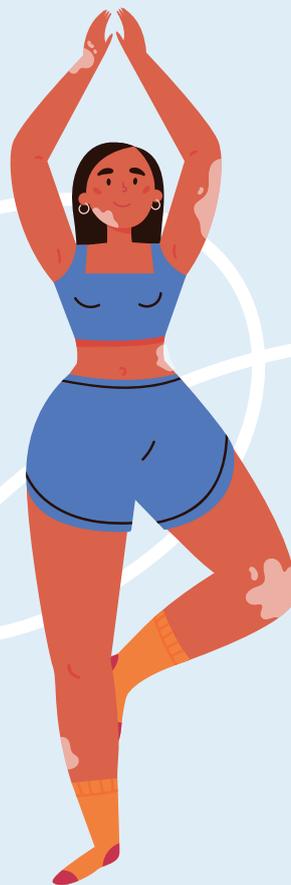
Take a deep breath in. [PAUSE]

And out. [PAUSE]

Breathe in. [PAUSE]

And out. [PAUSE]

When you feel ready, slowly bring your attention back to the room.



Mental Health
Foundation



Walking through nature visualisation

Move your body into a comfortable position. If you need to, stretch out any part of your body that is holding tension.

If you feel comfortable to, close your eyes, or find a point in front of you to focus on.

Rest your hands on your lap or on the table in front of you.

Take a deep breath in. [PAUSE]

And out. [PAUSE]

Breathe in. [PAUSE]

And out. [PAUSE]



We are going to practise a visualisation activity. Listen to my voice and follow along.

Imagine yourself in a place surrounded by nature. [PAUSE]

This could be somewhere special to you, a place you have seen on TV, or your own vision of a natural place in your mind. [PAUSE]

Imagine yourself taking a gentle walk in this place.

Notice what can you feel beneath your feet? [PAUSE]

Is the ground soft or hard? Wet or crisp?

Does the ground change as you continue walking? [PAUSE]



Walking through nature visualisation (continued)

Now bring your gaze to where you are walking to. What can you see around you? [PAUSE]

What colours can you see? [PAUSE]

What can you hear? [PAUSE]

What can you smell? [PAUSE]

Take a few more steps, taking each moment to explore around you.

Slowly come to an easy stop.

Take a deep breath in. [PAUSE]

And out. [PAUSE]

Breathe in. [PAUSE]

And out. [PAUSE]

In a moment, you will bring your attention back to the room, and quietly pick up your pen or pencil, and take it to your paper. You will let your hand flow and draw, write or scribble about this natural space you have been in.

When you are ready, quietly take your pen to your piece of paper. [PAUSE]

Once you are ready, place your pen down and quietly reflect on your natural place, and the feelings you had.



Developing positive affirmations

Move your body into a comfortable position. If you need to, stretch out any part of your body that is holding tension.

If you feel comfortable to, close your eyes, or find a point in front of you to focus on.

Rest your hands on your lap or on the table in front of you.

Take a deep breath in. [PAUSE]

And out. [PAUSE]

Breathe in. [PAUSE]

And out. [PAUSE]

We are going to practise using our internal voice to speak kindly to ourselves. Listen to my voice and follow along.

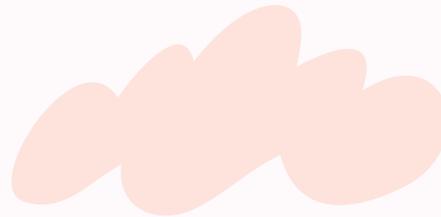
In your mind, think of kind words or phrases that you may often say to people you care about. [PAUSE]

How often do you say such kind words or phrases to yourself? [PAUSE]

Is there something that you would like to hear that would help you feel comfortable and more confident in who you are? [PAUSE]

You may choose phrases such as, "I am enough" or "I believe in myself."

Bring your attention only to this phrase. This is your positive affirmation. [PAUSE]



Developing positive affirmations (continued)

Imagine that you are in a comfortable, safe space. This can be anywhere that is safe for you.

Imagine yourself standing in front of a mirror, looking at yourself.

Bring your attention back to that positive affirmation, that phrase that you want to tell yourself.

Now imagine that you are whispering that quietly to yourself as you look in the mirror. Repeat that a few times and feel the positive energy in your body as you hear those affirming words. [PAUSE]

Now, in your mind again, repeat the phrase a few more times, but this time a little louder. Feel that warmth in your body as you share this kindness with yourself. [PAUSE]

And now, repeat that positive affirmation in your mind but imagine that you are shouting it from the rooftops with a big smile on your face. Enjoy it, feel the joy of telling yourself your positive affirmation. [PAUSE]

Take a deep breath in. [PAUSE]

And out. [PAUSE]

Breathe in. [PAUSE]

And out. [PAUSE]

When you feel ready, slowly bring your attention back to the room.



Practising gratitude

Move your body into a comfortable position. If you need to, stretch out any part of your body that is holding tension.

If you feel comfortable to, close your eyes, or find a point in front of you to focus on.

Rest your hands on your lap or on the table in front of you.

Take a deep breath in. [PAUSE]

And out. [PAUSE]

Breathe in. [PAUSE]

And out. [PAUSE]

We are going to practise a gratitude reflection. Listen to my voice and follow along.

Bring the word gratitude into your mind.

What does the word gratitude mean to you? [PAUSE]

Gratitude can be shown to ourselves, to others, and the wider community around us.

Bring your attention to something or someone you are grateful for in the last 24 hours. [PAUSE]

Why are you grateful for it or them?

How did it or they make you feel in the moment? [PAUSE]



Practising gratitude (continued)

Did you show your gratitude in the moment? Or what can you do to show it? [PAUSE]

Bring your attention back to the room and write or draw on the paper in front of you the feelings of gratitude this thing or person has created for you.

When you are finished, fold the paper up and place it in your hand.

Take a deep breath in. [PAUSE]

And out. [PAUSE]

With each breath, imagine your body being filled with these feelings again. [PAUSE]

Imagine passing your piece of paper to someone else, and watching the feelings pass to them. [PAUSE]

Take a deep breath in. [PAUSE]

And out. [PAUSE]

Breathe in. [PAUSE]

And out. [PAUSE]

When you feel ready, slowly bring your attention back to the room.



Following the Beat

Move your body into a comfortable position. If you need to, stretch out any part of your body that is holding tension.

If you feel comfortable to, close your eyes, or find a point in front of you to focus on.

Rest your hands on your lap or on the table in front of you.

Take a deep breath in. [PAUSE]

And out. [PAUSE]

Breathe in. [PAUSE]

And out. [PAUSE]

We are going to guide our attention to our sense of hearing, focusing on one sound – the sound of tapping.

I will begin by tapping out a beat (use a table to tap out soft, slow beats).

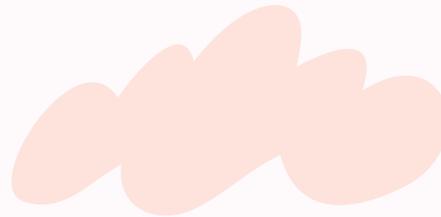
Draw all your attention to this beat. [PAUSE]

Begin to try and copy the beat, following along by tapping on your hand on your lap.

You may notice other sounds around you, or thoughts popping into your mind.

That's ok. Let them pass through your mind, without judgement, and refocus your attention back on the tapping. [PAUSE]

You may notice the tapping beat change.



Following the Beat (continued)

Listen carefully and try to match your tapping to the beat.

I will change the beat now. (Change the beat). [PAUSE]

Listen to the beat change now. (Change the beat). [PAUSE]

Continue to focus on the beat for a few more moments.

(Gradually slow the beat right down until a stop).

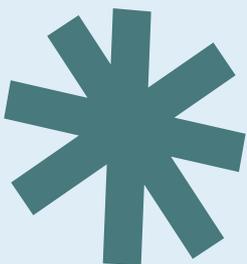
Take a deep breath in. [PAUSE]

And out. [PAUSE]

Breathe in. [PAUSE]

And out. [PAUSE]

When you feel ready, slowly bring your attention back to the room.



My Ideal Day

Written by a Peer Educator

“We are all different. We all have our own ways of relaxing, our own favourite foods and our own favourite activities. We all have different likes and dislikes. We are all unique and wonderful.”

Let's now close our eyes, if you feel comfortable to, and be still.

You can place your hands on your lap, on the desk in front of you, cross them in front of you – whatever feels most comfortable for you.

Remember to be in your own space, and not cross over into other people's space.

Once you are comfortable, take three deep breaths on my signal. [PAUSE]

Breath in. [PAUSE] Breath out. [PAUSE]

Breath in. [PAUSE] Breath out. [PAUSE]

Breath in. [PAUSE] Breath out. [PAUSE]

Now, I would like you to imagine a place. This can be wherever you like, wherever makes you feel the

happiest. Do your best to imagine this place in your mind. [PAUSE]

Perhaps you are at the park, or at home, at a museum or a party.

Wherever you are, this place is the place where you feel relaxed and happy. [PAUSE]



My Ideal Day (continued)

Now think about what you would most like to do in your place.

Are you playing a game? Watching TV? Reading a book? Talking with your friends? Dancing or singing?

Take a few moments to think about what you are doing, in your favourite place. [PAUSE]

Finally, think about if anyone is with you during your ideal day.

Family? Friends? A pet? Or maybe, you would prefer to have time just to yourself?

Take a few moments to think about it. [PAUSE]

We are coming to the end of our mindfulness activity now.

Take a moment to think about the ideal day you have created.

How does it make you feel? [PAUSE]

Sometimes, it takes a while for us to learn what we like and want to do. We can learn to be kind to ourselves, just like we can be kind to others.

Let us end the exercise by taking three deep breaths, like before.

Breath in. [PAUSE] Breath out. [PAUSE]

Breath in. [PAUSE] Breath out. [PAUSE]

Breath in. [PAUSE] Breath out. [PAUSE]

Take a moment to re-adjust to your surroundings.





[mentalhealth.org.uk](https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk)

 [Mental Health Foundation](https://www.facebook.com/MentalHealthFoundation)

 [mentalhealthfoundation](https://www.instagram.com/mentalhealthfoundation)

 [@MentalHealth](https://twitter.com/MentalHealth)



Registered Charity No.
801130 (England), SCO39714 (Scotland).
Company Registration No. 2350846.