

BE HUMAN, NOT CONCRETE.



the
Hearten Up
podcast

with Joel Clapham

INFORMATION SHEET: GROUNDING

Mindfulness is essentially being fully present, conscious and intentional in the moment of now.

Others might explain it differently or try and sell you something to improve your 'mindfulness', (and I do quite enjoy colouring in, but that's an optional extra and not essential). Genuine and authentic mindfulness can be found and created in the everyday moments and tasks we take for granted – or begrudge!

Noticing and paying attention to the natural elements of the world around us (whether in cities, suburbs, or regions) is one of the more powerful ways to harness mindfulness.

Try this grounding exercise and see how it feels to you at the time, and afterwards.

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- Find a patch of grass, dirt, crushed rock, or loose gravel you can hang out on for 15-30 minutes (anything natural and/or loose is great, so try and avoid concrete, bitumen, paving etc)
 - Sit down and take off your shoes and socks, noticing the feeling of the air on the skin as it becomes exposed
 - Stand up and stay still for a few moments with your eyes closed, listening to the noises around you. Are there birds? dogs barking, wind rustling through foliage, some nearby machinery or traffic? If you hear people talking, listen to the differences in their voices
 - Gently open your eyes, and began slowly walking around. Make sure it's strolling pace, or even slower.

This is an exercise in presence – not pace!

- Notice the grass/stones/dirt/rocks under your feet as you take each step. Pay attention to the different sensations on different parts of your feet as you shift your weight with each gradual movement.
- Breathe in slowly, gently, and deliberately. Moderate the pace and depth of each breath in through your nose, and out through your mouth [*in, two, three, four – out, two, three, four*]
- Do this for fifteen minutes or more, while noticing what you feel, smell, hear, see, and perhaps taste (eg. the salt in the air near the coast, or the moisture if it's overcast).
- As you finish, stroll to where your shoes and socks are. Sit down gently, and put your socks and shoes on slowly and purposefully.
- Sit still a moment and notice if you feel like smiling – many do, and that's rather beautiful :)
- How do you feel after doing this?

Repeat this every day you can (make the time!) and notice your sense of peace and calm gradually increase.
