

Contact with the Present Moment

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What is it?

How can it help me?

How to do it

Wrap up

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Contact with the Present Moment is a "mindfulness practice"



- "Centering" or "Grounding"
- Focused on observing (your self or your space)
- Short or long, simple or elaborate
- Often includes using your 5 senses
- Like any "practice," it gets easier and better with repetition

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How can it help me?

Brain Model

- Interrupt negative thought patterns
- Shift focus away from distress or anxiety/panic/flash-back "symptoms"
- "Ride out the storm" until something else shows up;
- Return to a better level of functioning; make choices that will help you
- Complete the Stress Response Cycle; triggers parasympathetic nervous system to work for you

CWPM does not...

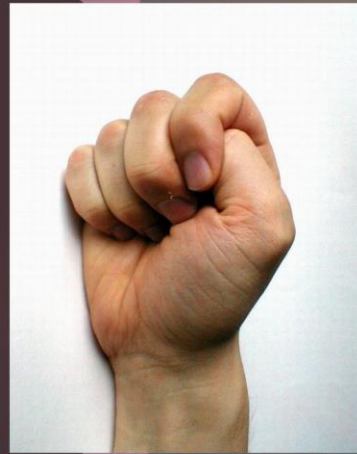
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"Name it to tame it"

Dr. Dan Siegel

- Upstairs brain and downstairs brain (cortex and subcortex)
- Release soothing chemicals (acetylcholine)



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CWPM does not...

- *Make difficult experiences (stressors) end or change; "fix it"*
- *Push away or get rid of difficult emotions*
- *Not a "cure all" or "magic bullet"; (it's a tool to be used as needed)*

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How to do it:



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When distraction happens

1. "Oops I got distracted."
2. Refocus on contact with the present moment, the exercise you are doing
3. Repeat the refocus as often as necessary



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Anchoring to get through the storm

1. Acknowledge your inner experience (difficult emotions, scary memories, worried thoughts); name it
2. Connect with your body (feel the chair hold up your body, press hands together, press feet into floor, stretch)
3. Engage with the world around you (5 senses, notice people with you, open your eyes)
4. Do all three at the same time



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Be like a tree

- Start with sending your roots into the ground
- Next, think about your sturdy trunk (body) and breathe 10 slow breaths
- Third, reach out to the world around you, using your 5 senses like branches



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5 Sense Observing

1. Name 5 things you can see
2. Name 4 things you can touch
3. Name 3 things you can hear
4. Name 2 things you can smell
5. Name 1 thing you can taste

Repeat as needed.



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Citations:

- "Reality Slap: How to find fulfillment when life hurts" by Russ Harris (2011, Exisle Publishing)
- Dalai Lama Center for Peace and Education video on YouTube with Dr. Dan Siegel "Name it to tame it"

Resources:

- <https://www.actmindfully.com.au/free-stuff/free-audio/>
- Mindfulness apps (Insight Timer, Smiling Mind, MyLife Meditation, UCLA Mindful, Healthy Minds Program)
- www.mindful.org (free e-newsletter)

QUESTIONS
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