

# Body & Soul

## Top 10 Mindfulness Games

Here's my top 10 mindfulness games.....let's start with activities to do solo!



### Colour Counting

Colour Counting is first up! Have a clock handy so you can time a minute. Now say a colour to yourself.....like I'm going to go green. The aim is to focus your eyes like laser beams on any green objects you can see inside or outside....but only from where you are sitting. Every time you see a new one, you can count it out loud or to yourself.

Times up!....how many? Over 10 is pretty good. Now you can repeat if you like. The great thing about this is it really fixes your focus on the moment and not your worries.

An Extra Twist: if you play with another person, when the minute is up, ask them to say how many objects they can remember.....that were blue!



### Hand Breeze

Next up is Hand Breeze! Sit up comfortably in your chair with both feet on the ground. Now, before you start, you are going to do 2 things. Place one hand on your belly and the other just in front of your mouth, but not touching. You are going to breathe in deeply through your nose so you can feel your hand rise on your belly. When you exhale, you are going to slowly move your hand away from you as you feel the breeze from your breath. Try to keep the feeling of your breath going for as long as possible.....then go again: belly breathing in Hand Breeze out!

Get it? It really regulates your breathing and slows and calms you down!



## Stress Ball

Ok, Stress Ball. This is a bit messier next.....you need a balloon, funnel from the kitchen, flour or rice. Can you guess? Make sure they get properly filled, then you have something you can squeeze any time you need it. It's really good as way to focus your mind on the sense of touch!

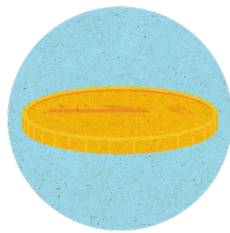


## Houdini

Let's call the next one Houdini, after the famous escapologist. No, you're not doing anything dangerous, but you're going to try and escape a few tangles!

Get different lengths of wool, string, laces or ribbon. All you need to do with each one is ask someone to tie a few knots and tangle them up. When you are ready, the challenge is to take one and slowly unpick the tangle. If you are going to succeed, it's going to need all your attention!

Let's try a couple now that you can do solo or with someone else.....



## Penny Search

Penny Search is super simple. Collect a number of coins, all the same type.....either pennies or whatever you have. You need about 10 altogether.

Like before, you need to be able to time a minute. In that time you are going to study the coin like you've never studied it before. Spot all the details, shapes and patterns, but also what is unique about that coin, the colour, marks or dates.

Right, time's up! Put it in with the other coins in a cup and shake them around. You guessed it....now you have to find YOUR one!



## Balloon Bombs

Balloon Bombs takes a bit of set up and about 4 or 5 balloons. Make sure they are inflated properly so they will float on the air better. This activity is great when you have lots of worries on your mind....as you will see. You can set the timer for 1 minute or longer for this one. All you have to do is keep the balloon bombs off the floor to stop them popping! Try 3 to begin with and if you manage 1 minute you are ready to do the 4 balloon bomb challenge and then as high as you can go.

When you are really focused, your brain isn't able to focus on the worry thoughts and the physical exercise also helps your body and mind to focus on being active, not on your thoughts.

The last 4 activities are great when you can get someone else involved:



## Spot the Difference

I love Spot the Difference. Start by asking someone to sit in a chair where they can see most of the room in front of them. For 1 minute they are going to try and soak up every detail in the room just using their eyes and observation. Ok, when the minute is up ask them to turn away and cover their eyes. You have the fun job of changing 5 things in the room to see if they can notice. It can be big things or sneaky small things. When you are ready they have only 1 minute more to 'spot the difference'!

When they have had their turn, it's time for you to sit in the hot seat!



## Categories

Categories is a mindful game to play anywhere. The fun is in choosing an everyday 'thing' for which there are lots of examples. You could start with breakfast cereals – you take it in turn to name one and you keep going until someone pauses for more than 10 seconds or if someone repeats.

Other favourite categories are: 'sandwich fillings', 'things you might find under the sofa' and 'under the ground'.



## Count to 20

Count to 20 is a game for minimum 3 people. We can all count to 20, but this time you have to do it as a group. You start when someone says 'one', but the only other person can say the next number. If two people speak at once.....you have to go right back to start. One last thing.....you have to all sit back to back so you can't see each other!



## Reverse Hand Writing

The final mindful exercise is Reverse Hand Writing. You can try this with any short passage. 'The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog' uses all the letters of the alphabet, so a good choice.

All you have to do is switch your pen to your 'non-dominant hand' and try and keep it as neat as you can.

A follow-up is to switch back to your dominant hand but try writing the words in reverse order: 'god yzal eht revo.....'

Well done! You're brain has had the ultimate workout and your mindfulness superpowers have grown. Keep exercising!