

# 4 Steps to Mindfulness



Now, more than ever, you must build your resilience to stress.

Heightened levels of stress can lead to confusion, frustration, anger, and fear. It can weaken our immune system and leave us vulnerable to other conditions and illnesses. Thus, it is highly important to focus on nursing self care, so we can take good care of ourselves and our loved ones. While our work is important, it is imperative to focus on our mental, emotional, and physical health and wellness. Here are 4 steps that can help.

## OUTDOOR MINDFUL EXERCISE

Stand outdoors — whatever that means for you (back porch, leaning out an open window, your backyard, a park, or elsewhere). Breathe deeply and notice the elements and the environment. Is the sun shining? Is the wind blowing? Can you smell certain scents? Can you hear the birds singing? Have some of the trees begun to bud? Are flowers blooming?



## MINDFUL HANDWASHING

Handwashing is an impressive mindfulness activity for now and forever — an uncomplicated endeavor that you can do alone, with children, or with your students in patient-care areas. As you wash your hands, be mindful of the temperature of the water. Feel the friction of your fingers rubbing against each other. Feel your hands moving along your wrists and forearms. Feel the suds washing away as you rinse. Enjoy the sensations.

## MINDFUL BREATHING

Throughout the day, pause for a moment and take slow breaths in through your nose and exhale out through your mouth. Focus on your breathing, and notice the sensation of your lungs filling and your rib cage falling. Clear your mind, and relax as you continue breathing.

## NOTICE 5 THINGS

When you find yourself getting caught up in your thoughts and feelings, pause for a moment. Look around and notice 5 things you can see, hear, feel or smell. This simple, yet potent, exercise helps us refocus and reconnect with our environment.

