

Five Senses Stations

When faced with stress and difficult situations, it is easy to become lost in thoughts and feelings that we may not know what to do with. This activity asks participants to focus on using their five senses (sight, sound, smell, touch, taste) in order to be fully present in the moment and come back into their bodies. Taking time to slow down and reconnect with ourselves by taking a moment to focus on each of our senses can be an effective form of self-care, helping to ease the mind and body while improving our capacity to cope and process what we find challenging. During this activity, participants are asked to use the five senses to complete different tasks around the room.

MATERIALS:

- Blank paper
- Pen or pencil
- Tape or sticky putty for the wall

PREPARATION:

Before starting this activity, brainstorm simple tasks that can be completed around the room using any of the five basic senses. Include variety, but the number of tasks to include is up to you. Write the tasks on the blank sheets/scraps of paper (one task per paper). Depending on the space you have available, the number and type of tasks may be modified to whatever is accessible to you. To get you started, a list of examples for tasks you may choose to include is below.

Tasks

- Look around the room. Name five colors you see.
- Count the light switches in the room.
- Walk around the room and touch five different things. Notice if they feel soft, smooth, hard, rough...
- Name 5 different shapes you see.
- Close your eyes and name three sounds you hear.
- Take a walk outside. Try to find at least three many sights, smells, or sounds that you have never noticed there before.
- Pet your dog or cat softly for 10 seconds.
- Hold an item in your hand and name three things you notice about how it feels, how it smells, and how it sounds.
- Lay down on the floor for 60 seconds. Starting with the muscles in your face, try to relax them. Soften your jaw. Close your eyes or soften your



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gaze. Keep going...relax the muscles in your shoulders, arms, back – all the way down to your feet.

- Stop where you are and close your eyes or look down. Notice how your body feels. Is there any part that could use a stretch? Go ahead and stretch.
- Name one thing you can taste.
- In your head, count backwards from 20 to 1.
- Practice breathing deeply a few times: breathe through your nose for five seconds and out your mouth for five seconds.
- Push your hands or back against the wall. Slowly notice your muscles pushing.

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Determine where the activity will take place.
- Use the tape to hang each paper/task in different spots around the room.
- Explain to the participant(s) that they will have 15 minutes to explore the room/area and complete the different tasks they find. Extend time if desired.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES:

This can be a short and simple activity to help relax the mind and body. To enhance this activity, you can add special items such as essential oils, stress balls, or headphones with music to be implemented into specific tasks. If doing this activity with a child or family group, parents/caregivers are encouraged to join in and participate too! Set an example that will help everyone genuinely participate.