

## When being present is difficult

There are so many benefits to practicing mindfulness – lowering our blood pressure and cortisol levels, feeling more connected with others, being able to direct our attention to the task on hand and feeling more “anchored in the midst of the storm” are just some. Occasionally, when we are “in the midst of the storm” so to speak, it can be tricky to stay with what’s going on and our automatic patterns of reactivity kick in – usually they are some form of avoidance, wanting to get away from the unpleasantness or for things to be different.

Here are some tips for when big feelings arise, whether you’re practicing with a guided track, having a quiet sit or living the rest of life!

- If your eyes are closed, open them and look around you to remind yourself of where you are
- Pay particular attention to something in your environment – looking at the detail of an object and naming it’s colour, size, function, shape, texture. Not as a way to distract yourself from what you’re feeling but as way of broadening what’s going on so you are ALSO aware of other things. This helps us to react less to our experience and then it can shift and change of it’s own accord or be more tolerable.
- Move – stretch, move position or go for a walk, listen to your body and what it needs.
- Feel where your body makes contact with the surface that you’re on such as your feet on the ground and let your attention rest there, come back to it when it gets swept away and feel that stability.
- Track where your attention goes and then where it goes e.g. I’m remembering, I can hear the sound of traffic, I feel tension in my shoulders etc. watching where your attention goes to moment to moment and just resting in that, not trying to change it or make it different.

If you have any questions about your mindfulness practice that you’d like to discuss, or if you would like to find out more about our programs, contact us at:

[www.mindfulnessaus.com.au](http://www.mindfulnessaus.com.au)

[admin@mindfulnessaus.com.au](mailto:admin@mindfulnessaus.com.au)

0488 064 228

Miranda Stephens

Clinical Psychologist

Co-Director of Mindfulness Programs Australasia

