

PARENT WORKBOOK ACTIVITY 3: Practice at Home! Mindful Smelling

Practicing Mindful Smelling

For this Mindful Seeing activity:

- Read and follow the instructions outlined in the Mindful Seeing Directions.
- Be aware of your individual experiences.
- Once you complete this activity think of ways you could introduce it to your children.
- Can you think of other Mindful Seeing activities?

Mindful Smelling Directions

1. Collect three small jars and three cotton balls. Moisten each cotton ball with a different scent (essential oils, baking oils, other every day liquid scents, etc). Place each cotton ball in a different jar.
2. Try to identify each scent by smelling mindfully with your eyes closed.
3. Notice any thoughts or memories that surface while mindfully smelling.
4. Write the name of what you think each scent is on your "Mystery Sound/Scent" sheet (pg. 7).
5. Discuss with your family how this type of smelling is different from the way we usually smell and react. How were you able or not able to stay focused on individual scents?
6. Which important part of your brain is responsible for the recollection of memories associated with the different scents?

Mindful Smelling

The sense of smell is strongly linked with memory—the memory and smell centers in the brain are located near each other. In addition, different smells impact mood and energy level. Some stuffed animals are now coming with lavender in them to calm a child or help her sleep. How can you use a calming scent to help soothe your child?

MindUP™ Family Activity Ideas:

Mindful Seeing Fun—All Ages

- Make your own "mystery scents" using opaque containers and fill them cotton balls soaked with different scents- get creative with common household scents (check the fridge or the cupboard).
- List with your child the smells of each season.
- Discuss together 3-5 of your favorite scents and share the memories associated with each scent.
- Take a mindful smelling walk together. Choose a walking-friendly street in your town or city that has a variety of restaurants and shops. Stop and notice each new smell along the way. How does the bakery smell differently from the ice cream shop or the nearby park? How many different scents can you identify?

Parent Workbook Activity 3 :

MindUP™ For Parents

As a MindUP™ parent, once a day:

Take a moment to appreciate the smell of your food at breakfast or lunch before eating it.

Teach your child to do the same.



PARENT WORKBOOK ACTIVITY 3: Practice at Home! Mindful Tasting

Practicing Mindful Tasting

For this Mindful Tasting activity:

- As a family, practice mindfully tasting a morsel of food.
- Choose a type of simple food that will appeal to everyone (like a grape, a cracker, or a carrot).
- First, put the morsel of food in the palm of your hand and mindfully see it. Next, mindfully smell the morsel. Then, put the morsel of food into your mouth- but DON'T bite down yet! What do you notice as you hold the morsel on your tongue? Begin to slowly chew your morsel, what is the taste, texture, temperature? Finally, swallow and feel the morsel go all the way down your throat.
- Once you complete this activity think of ways you could introduce it to your children.
- Can you think of other Mindful Tasting activities?

Mindful Tasting

Taking time to savor our food and appreciate the flavors, the textures and the temperature is a pleasure that is available to us every day but rarely enjoyed. Eating mindfully has implications for our health and well-being. With obesity on the rise, examining our eating habits can act as a protective factor. "Wow, this carrot is so crunchy and sweet!"

MindUP™ Family Activity Ideas:

Mindful Seeing Fun—All Ages

- Conduct a blind taste test of each food on your child's plate at dinner.
- Teach your child to savor a morsel of food and describe the experience. Ask her how it felt in her mouth, what sensations did she notice in her body, what memory did it trigger?
- Choose one day a week where your child (with more help depending on their age) is in charge of making dinner. Help them plan their menu and prepare. Throughout the process, draw their attention to the sensory rich moments. Mindfully taste together a morsel of each food they prepare.
- Help your child to create a menu they would enjoy eating mindfully. Include beverages and desert. Have them describe flavors and textures that would make this meal worth savoring.

Parent Workbook Activity 3 :

MindUP™ For Parents

As a MindUP™ parent, once a day:

At lunch, take ten minutes to really taste (and digest) your food. No multitasking! You'll feel more satisfied, more able to focus, and more prepared to effectively manage your day.

Parent Workbook Activity 3 :

Further Reading and Resources

Learn More . . .

Intentional awareness of the senses allows us to live more fully and more authentically.

For some children, the central nervous system misinterprets messages from their senses.

Exercise is truly the best defense against everything from mood disorders to ADHD to addiction to menopause to Alzheimer's.

Learn more about giving our children and our selves the social and emotional skills to reduce stress and anxiety for healthier, happier lives.

Good Books . . .

Coming to Our Senses: Healing Ourselves and the World through Mindfulness
By Jon Kabat Zinn

The Out-of-Sync Child: Recognizing and Coping with Sensory Processing Disorder and The Out-of-Sync Child Has Fun (Activity based)
By Carol Kranowitz

Spark: The Revolutionary New Science of Exercise and the Brain
By John J. Ratey, M.D.

10 Mindful Minutes
By GoldieAWN