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***Authentic*** Connections

# **Mindfulness Exercise**

# Mindfulness is critical to being present for another.

Being present takes practice, and it can become a way of being as you master the skill.

**Try the following activity the next time you are in the shower…**

Close your eyes if you feel safe doing so – only if you have no balance or mobility concerns.

Focus on your senses one at a time. Stay with each one for a couple of minutes to see what else comes up. Name each sensation as you identify it. Pay attention to your body, your surroundings, and your thoughts.

If you find your thoughts drifting, identify that as ‘thinking’ and bring your mind back to your senses. No judgment – just practice refocusing.

What do you hear?

Listen to sounds in the foreground and the background. Water running, splashing as you move around, squeaking as you move your feet, dog barking…

# What do you smell?

Soap, shampoo, dinner cooking in the other room, mint, lavender…

# What do you feel?

Wetness on your hair and skin, slick/soapy feeling, water running down your back, hair sticking to your face, pain in your knee…

# What do you see?

Do you see colors, darkness, sparkles? If your eyes are open, what do you see? Water, shampoo, soap, washcloth, shower curtain, colorful soap bubbles…

# What do you taste?

Coffee, soap, bacon, mint, mouthwash…

Throughout the day, take a few minutes to check in with your senses. Pay attention to what is happening around and inside you. Anytime you notice your mind is not focused on the present, you can practice mindfulness by bringing your thoughts back to your senses.

**Do this a few times each day - practice makes progress!**