

## A User Guide to – Observing Through Your Senses

*(or, 5 to 1 things you see/hear/feel)*

Author: Luisa Dal Molin

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### Use of this Exercise

This exercise can be a useful strategy to help you stay in the present moment when your anxiety, stress or other feelings are becoming intense and potentially overwhelming. It can also be helpful when your mind is racing with thoughts and you are struggling to think clearly.

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## How to practice “Observing Through Your Senses”

**Step 1.** Sit or lie in a comfortable position, or the most comfortable position you can right now. Place your feet on the floor and look around you. Begin to notice what you can see, hear and feel.

**Step 2.** Name five (5) things you can SEE

Take your time to notice what you see around you, and start naming 5 of these things, either aloud or to yourself. For example: “I see the door, I see the window, I see the poster on the wall, ...”

Name five (5) things that you can HEAR

For example: “I hear a truck, I hear the air conditioning, I hear someone talking in the next room ...”

Name five (5) things you FEEL, (as physical sensations on the surface of your body)

For example: “I feel the edge of my socks against my ankles, I feel my hair against my neck, I feel tension across my shoulders, ...”

**Step 3.** Now repeat the exercise, this time naming:

Four (4) things you SEE

Four (4) things you HEAR

Four (4) things you FEEL

If you can, focus on new things, sounds and sensations

**Step 4.** Repeat the exercise again, this time naming:

Three (3) things you SEE

Three (3) things you HEAR

Three (3) things you FEEL

**Step 5.** Repeat the exercise again, this time naming:

Two (2) things you SEE

Two (2) things you HEAR

Two (2) things you FEEL

**Step 6.** Repeat the exercise one more time, this time naming:

One (1) thing you SEE

One (1) thing you HEAR

One (1) thing you FEEL

### Finishing the exercise:

Now notice how you are feeling:

- Has the intensity of your anxiety, stress or discomfort changed?
- Are you feeling more relaxed, or perhaps more stressed?
- Have the racing thoughts reduced in intensity?

If you haven't noticed any changes, you may like to start the exercise from the beginning, and to continue until your anxiety or stress is reduced, and the racing thoughts are less intense.