

MINDFULNESS

A person with short hair, wearing a dark jacket, is sitting on a wooden bench made of two logs. They are facing away from the camera, looking out over a valley. The scene is set in a forest with tall, thin trees and a clear sky. The ground is covered in dry leaves and pine needles.

"Mindfulness means paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally."

Dr Jon Kabat-Zinn

Founder of Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)

Introduction

Life is full of unforeseen changes, challenges, and chaotic times. It is easy to be swept away by the seemingly endless list of chores, tasks, and deadlines that seem to pile up without you even realising it. This can cause you to feel rundown in your body, mind, and spirit.

Once you find yourself feeling this way, it can seem nearly impossible to wake yourself back up to the beauty and benefits of life. This can then cause you to feel completely hopeless and tired of your own life, and your health, both physically and mentally, may suffer.

Luckily, there is a way to improve your life even during the most chaotic or stressful of times.

Studies have shown that mindfulness is a key technique for improving your body, mind, and spirit no matter the situation, even times of chaos. In short, mindfulness is the act of being in the present, but there is more to it than that. In this book, we will learn what mindfulness is and key techniques for becoming more mindful.

As a result, you will learn how to improve your entire essence during these chaotic and challenging times.



WHO SHOULD READ THIS BOOK?

This book will be especially helpful for those who have never tried or practiced mindfulness before. We have specifically created this book with the inexperienced user in mind, allowing it to be a beginner's guide of sorts.

Even if you have practiced mindfulness before, this book may be useful. We offer a variety of unique practice ideas, tips, and tricks that will help you enhance your current mindfulness practice.

Chapter One

What is mindfulness?

Mindfulness is the ability to be completely in the present, as opposed to thinking and worrying about the future, ruminating about the past, or any other event that takes us away from the present moment.



Being mindful includes being aware of where we are, what we are doing, and how we feel. More so, it includes being in touch with ourselves, knowing our limits, and understanding our goals and desires for life.

As humans, it is easy to get swept away by other thoughts and events than the present. This causes us to be the opposite of mindful, wreaking havoc on our physical, mental, and emotional health. For example, stress in the workplace can distract us from appreciating our family, causing problems in the home. Mindfulness can help.

All people are capable of mindfulness, even if it seems hard. Our brains are completely capable of focusing on the present and honing out the distractions of life. With that being said, it can be incredibly difficult to do this, which is why mindfulness practices are so helpful. Practicing mindfulness can teach us and train us to better focus on the present, allowing us to ignore anything else that may be a distraction.



Understanding the point of mindfulness



Before starting your mindfulness journey, it is important to understand what mindfulness can and cannot do for you.

If you have unrealistic expectations about mindfulness, it can be incredibly easy to feel like mindfulness is not working and give up on the practice completely.



Many people believe that mindfulness is about attaining some state of bliss. Bliss is often described as some state of perfect happiness that is oblivious to other factors surrounding it.

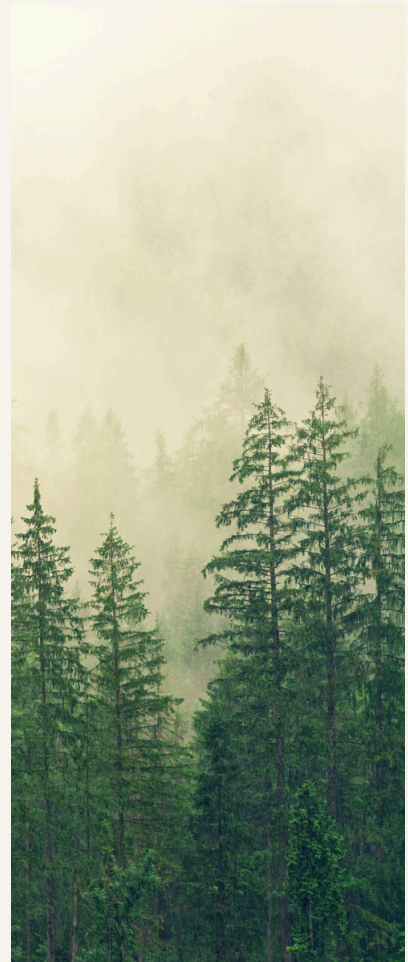
It is important to recognise that mindfulness is not about reaching a state of bliss. This state is impossible to reach because there will always be challenges and difficulties in life that disrupt this so-called state. In other words, bliss does not exist.

With that being said, mindfulness can and should make you feel happier and more content with your overall life, but it is more realistic about it. This allows mindfulness to be geared towards appreciating your life and self better. It helps you see past short-term struggles and appreciate the life you have, even in the bad times.

For this reason, the point of mindfulness is to help you live a better life. Living a better life includes being more content in your situation, responding more compassionately and rationally in difficult situations, and being more compassionate with yourself and others. Mindfulness is not about creating a perfect life, but it is about creating the life you want and are excited to live.

If you understand that this is the point of mindfulness, you can more easily set realistic goals for your mindfulness training. These goals should reflect your current abilities and future wants so you are actively pursuing your ideal life.

It is important to note that mindfulness is not about being in the present all the time. As humans, we would become completely overwhelmed and overloaded if we stayed in the present all day, every day. There are times in our lives when we should think about the past, future, or nothing at all.





Benefits of mindfulness

The effects of mindfulness have been studied by several clinical trials, allowing us to confidently know that mindfulness improves our overall health and wellbeing. For example, mindfulness can improve the following conditions: stress, anxiety, pain, depression, blood pressure, insomnia, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases.

Mindfulness also helps to increase attention, regulate emotions, and increase motivation and overall life satisfaction. Together, these benefits allow you to experience a healthier and happier life. Mindfulness is the act of being in the present so that you can live a healthier and happier life. As you become more mindful, you will experience a number of benefits for your emotional, mental, and physical health.

Chapter Two

Mindfulness in times of chaos

Life is full of unexpected, stressful, and difficult periods and events. Whenever these challenging times arise, it is easy to feel overwhelmed, overworked, and overall dissatisfied with your life.

Even more worrisome is that humans often ignore these feelings or chalk them up to weakness whenever they arise. This causes this situation to feel even worse, creating a never-ending cycle of stress, anger, and dissatisfaction.

To stop the cycle head-on, we must recognise how we are feeling, understand the situation fully, and take active steps to be more compassionate to ourselves and problem-solve our way out of the situation.





For many people, stopping the cycle is really difficult.

Either they feel as though their feelings are not important or rational or they feel as though they can handle their emotions simply by ignoring them.



Many people especially ignore their feelings whenever they feel like this situation is not "bad" enough to warrant their emotions. One damaging thing humans do is comparing ourselves to others.

When you compare your difficult situation to that of another, it is easy to feel as though your situation is not that bad and that you should simply get over it. This causes the situation to compound until emotions explode.

To avoid making the mistake of discounting your emotions, it is important to recognise when a situation is difficult, challenging, or chaotic for you.

Every person has their own limits, meaning you should not compare your chaotic times to that of another.

What counts as a *'times of chaos'* ?



In short, a chaotic time is anything that leaves you feeling stressed, overwhelmed, overworked, or chaotic. It does not matter what the situation or event was. The only thing that matters is how you feel in response to the situation. This can include your actual emotions, as well as how you plan to react to the situation.

Anything from a failed test to a death in the family can count as a time of chaos. It is important to accept that anything that causes you to feel negatively counts as a chaotic time. You owe it to yourself to accept this fact so you can learn tools to better navigate those times in a healthy and functional manner.

Negative effects of chaotic times

It is important to correctly navigate our feelings and responses during chaotic times.

Many studies have shown that chaotic events or periods result in costly and life-altering health effects.

For example, poorly managed chaotic times can lead to the following: Increased stress, increased anxiety, insomnia, cardiovascular diseases, work burnout, poor relationships and obesity



How mindfulness helps

To combat these unwanted health effects, it is important to healthily manage ourselves during these times. Mindfulness is one of the best ways to learn how to find your calm amidst a chaotic storm.

By practicing mindfulness, you can learn how to better comprehend the issue at hand, connect your rationality to your emotions, and respond to people and yourself in a more compassionate and respectful way.

Simply by practicing mindfulness every day, you will be able to better handle any situation that comes your way.

It will help you to become more compassionate and resilient, allowing you to tackle all of life's challenges confidently and eagerly.

Life is full of hardships, challenges, and chaos. If we do not properly handle ourselves during these difficult times, our body, mind, and spirit can and will suffer.

Luckily, mindfulness is one tool for combatting feelings of stress or inadequacy during times of chaos. It allows us to calm down, better connect to our rationality, and respond respectfully and compassionately.



Chapter Three

Mindfulness and the body

It is no surprise that being mindful and optimistic during chaotic times has a significant impact on your physical wellbeing and body. In fact, being mindful is one of the best ways to improve your physical health during chaotic and monotonous times alike. Let us take a look at exactly how mindfulness impacts the body. Mindfulness has been studied frequently, which has provided us with a plethora of research and data about the health benefits of mindfulness on our bodies.



Benefits of Practicing Mindfulness For The Body



Decreases heart diseases

Most notably, many researches have found that mindfulness may be good for hearts. Since heart disease is a leading killer in Australia, it is imperative to take special care of our hearts in what ever ways possible.

More specifically, some studies have shown that mindfulness and progressive muscle relaxation, which we will discuss more in the next section, significantly reduces systolic and diastolic blood pressure in those with prehypertension. As a result, it decreases the risk of heart disease since it lowers blood pressure.

Research also shows that those who practice mindfulness have stronger hearts, allowing them to improve their breathing rates when exercising. In one study specifically, some people with heart disease were randomly assigned a mindful practice and then given a six-minute walking test. Those who were assigned meditation showed signs of slower heart rates, a measure of cardiovascular capacity, during the test.

Increases Immune System Response

Another way that mindfulness impacts our body is that it improves our immune response. Whenever we encounter any viruses or organisms that cause diseases, our body sends out immune cells to fight them off. Studies have found that mindfulness affects these cells.

More specifically, several studies have shown that mindfulness often increases levels of T cells or T cell activity in patients with HIV or breast cancer.

Though this is not proof that mindfulness will cure the illnesses, it does suggest that mindfulness will improve biomarkers that indicate disease progression.

In another study, elderly patients were assigned either a mindfulness based stress reduction course or a moderate-intensity exercise program at random.

The patients who practiced mindfulness had an increased amount of protein interleukin 8 in their nasal secretions. This increased protein suggests an improved immune function.



Reduces Cell Ageing



Everyone wants to live forever, but our cells naturally age, making our bodies age as well. Some studies have suggested that longtime mindfulness practitioners have greater telomere length or telomere activity. Telomere length is associated with cell ageing. The longer the length, the slower the cell is ageing.

One study found that cancer survivors who were prescribed mindfulness had longer telomeres than those who were not. In contrast, other studies have found that some survivors who practice mindfulness have no difference in telomere length but increased telomere activity instead. This increased telomere length and telomere activity leave scientists optimistic about the connection between mindfulness and cell ageing reduction.

Why mindfulness benefits the body?

Whenever we experience stress, our body physically responds by sending out various hormones and chemicals. These hormones and chemicals are designed to help us act and problem-solve our way out of tough situations.

Though these hormones and chemicals are helpful in the short term for increasing productivity or problem solving, they are extremely damaging to our body if they are constantly released. Whenever we find ourselves in constant stress, such as when we are living in a chaotic time, our body responds too strongly.

Mindfulness, however, calms us down, which signals our brain to stop releasing the hormones and chemicals associated with stress. This then allows our body to recover and restore itself more frequently, making us healthier both in the short term and the long term.





MINDFULNESS

& the body practises

To unlock the full benefits of mindfulness and the body, it is important to know the best mindfulness practices that relate to the body. Here are the most popular mindfulness techniques that help to improve your body's physical health and wellbeing.

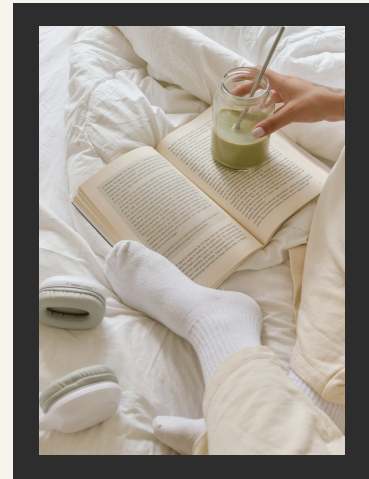
Progressive muscle relaxation

Progressive muscle relaxation is a mindfulness technique that is specifically designed to manage stress and alleviate stress-related pain. Whenever you experience stress, your body often responds with muscle tension. Progressive muscle relaxation allows you to relieve that tension, thus lessening the pain.

How progressive muscle relaxation works is that it is a series of tensing and relaxing every muscle group in your body.

When you intentionally release your muscles, it allows your body to relax, which signals to your brain to feel less pain and stress and relax further.

When you are new to this technique, it may be helpful to try it with an audio recording, which you can find on the Resources page, mindfuleffect.net.



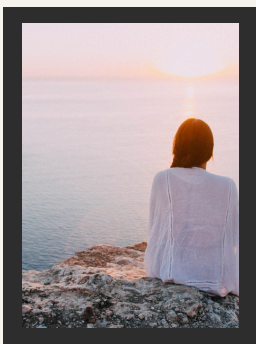
1 Lay down

Start by laying on your back in an area where you will not be interrupted. Stretch out comfortably. Many people prefer to do this on a carpeted floor. You might want to avoid trying this technique on a bed since beds are soft and can inhibit your abilities to properly tense and relax.

2 Breathe, Tense, and Relax

Once you are in a comfortable place, breathe in and tense the first muscle group. Hold for about four to ten seconds. Then, breathe out as you suddenly relax the muscle group completely. Do not relax the muscles gradually. Instead, relax them immediately or all at once. Keep your muscles relaxed for about ten to twenty seconds.

3 Repeat Over The Entire Body

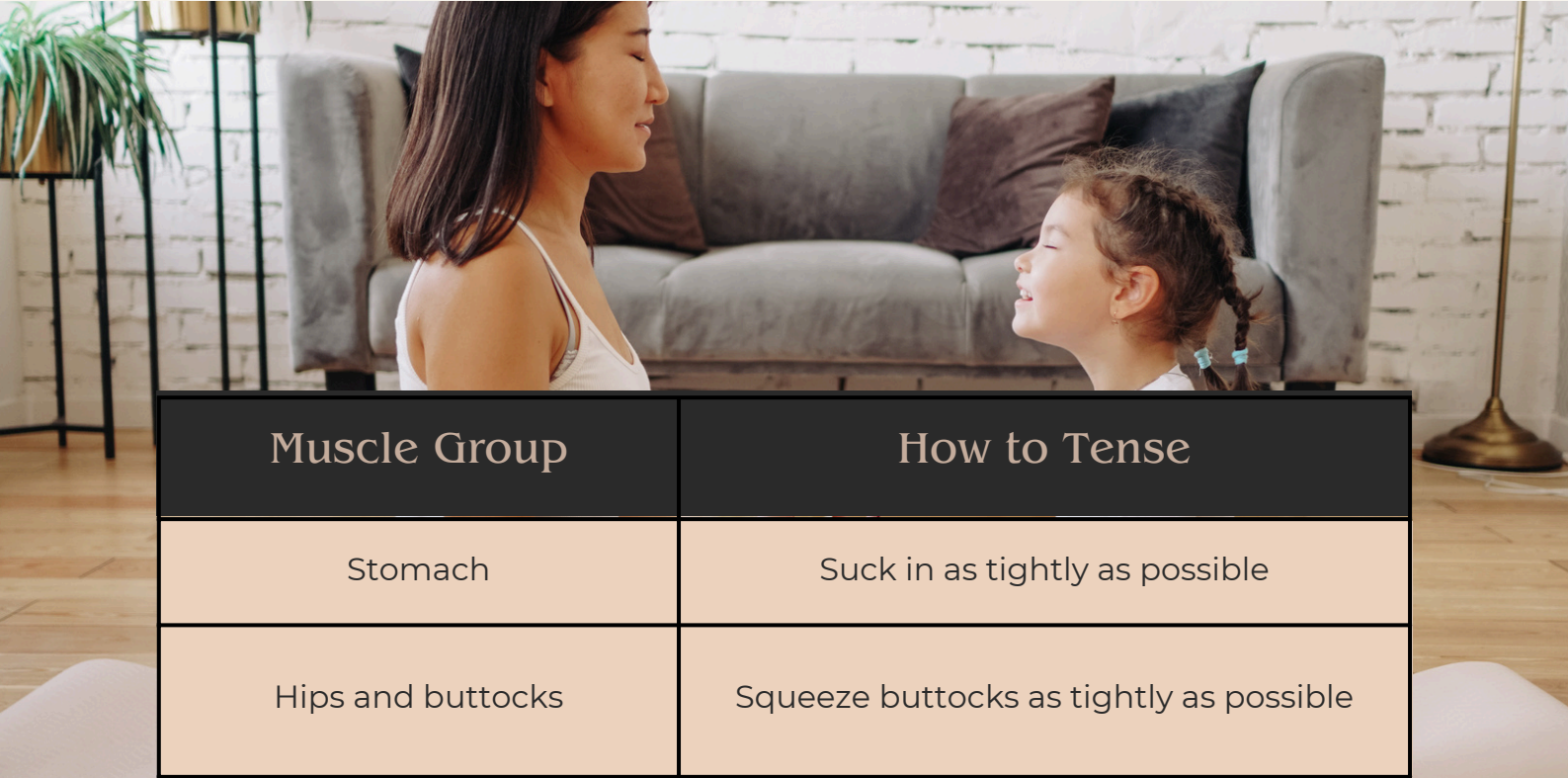


Once your relax/rest time is up, move on to the next muscle group and repeat the process all over again.

When you finish all muscle groups, bring yourself back to the present by counting backward from five to one.

Muscle Relaxation *Techniques*

Muscle Group	How to Tense
Hands	Close fists
Wrists and forearms	Extend arms and bend hands back at the wrist
Biceps and upperarms	Make fists with your hands, bend arms at the elbow, and flex biceps
Shoulders	Shrug
Forehead	Winkle
Eyes and bridge of nose	Remove contact lenses before you start practice if needed and close eyes as tightly as possible
Cheeks and jaws	Smile as widely as possible
Mouth	Press lips together as tightly as possible
Chest	Inhale deeply and hold for four to ten seconds
Back	Arch your back up and away from whatever surface you are laying on



Muscle Group	How to Tense
Stomach	Suck in as tightly as possible
Hips and buttocks	Squeeze buttocks as tightly as possible
Lower legs	Flex toes towards face then curl them downward at the same time

Body Scan

The body scan practice is a way to connect to how your body feels at that moment. Like with a progressive muscle relaxation practice, you can find plenty of body scan guided practices online. Here is a quick look at how to do your own body scan for mindfulness purposes.

1 Lay down and be attentive

Begin by lying down on a comfortable but firm surface. A carpet or a floor with a mat on top will be best. Close your eyes and try to draw attention to the feelings around you.

Feel the surface you are laying on, note the heaviness of your body and try to detect the temperature of the air. Any time you feel yourself drifting away during the practice, come back to this step.

2 Breathe intentionally

Begin to pay attention to your breathing. Try to slow the breathing as slowly as possible, making a conscious effort to elongate the exhale so that way it is longer than the inhale.

You might want to count your breath to keep your breathing even and deep. Many people start off by inhaling for four seconds, holding for four seconds, and exhaling for seven seconds.

3 Start the body scan

When you are ready, let go of your breath on an exhale. Focus your attention now on your left leg and try to imagine your mind's eye coming into the left foot's big toe. Pay attention to any sensations that you feel, but do not move your leg in any way. Just try to hold your attention to the sensation of your leg. Press your attention to the other toes on your leg and continue the practice.

When you are ready, open your awareness to the top of the foot and slowly work your way up through the entire left leg, starting with the ankle and working your way up. Once you get all the way to the top of the left leg, repeat the practice starting with your right big toe.

4 Work your way up

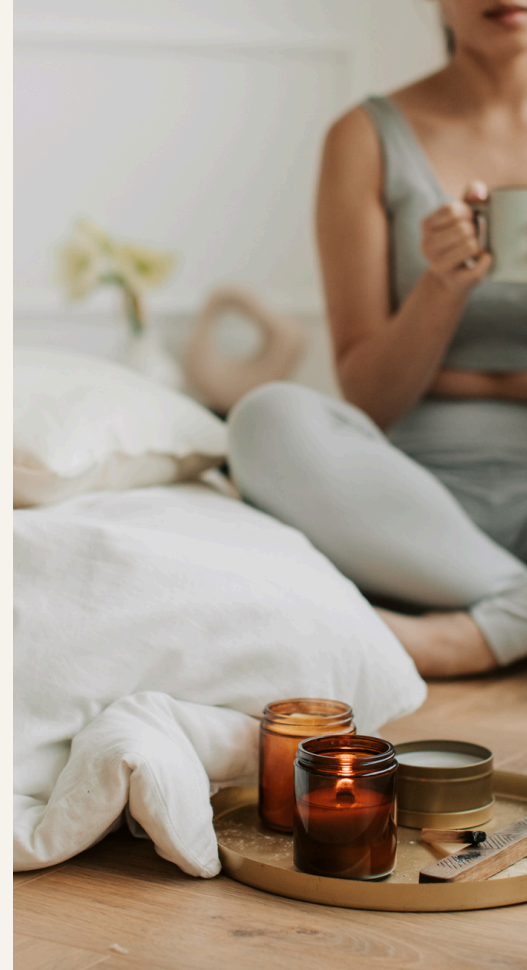
Once you repeat all of the steps on your right leg, carefully work your attention throughout your entire body, starting with the hips and then continuing through the pelvic region, back, shoulders, arms, hands, stomach, chest, neck, and head.

Try to notice every sensation you feel, even when you are not moving.

5 Finish

After you have completed scanning the entire body. Open your attention even more so that way you can recognise all of the body's sensations at once. You might want to imagine that you are breathing into your whole body throughout this step. Whenever you are ready, you can open your eyes, stretch a little, and gently get up.

Throughout the practice, you may find your mind wandering to different ideas, memories, or To-Do Lists. Gently recognise the thought and then let it go whenever it has reached a natural conclusion.





"You attract the right things when you have a sense of who you are."

Sipping on a warm drink



If you do not have the time for progressive muscle relaxation or a body scan, then you might want to try sipping on a warm drink.

This mindfulness technique is great for incorporating into your morning routine or coffee break, making it ideal for those on the go.

1 Prepare your drink

All you need to do is select your favourite warm drink and prepare as usual. Most people prefer selecting a non-caffeinated drink, such as warm lemon water or herbal tea, for this practice, but you can try this with your morning cup of coffee as well. It will work just as efficiently.

2 Breathe In The Steam Before Drinking

Before you start drinking, take a few deep breaths to get in touch with how you feel. Slowly bring the cup up to your mouth but do not sip yet. Instead, continue breathing deeply, inhaling the steam.

Note how the warm air feels when it goes in your nose, into your body, and out your mouth. After a few rounds of this, you can start drinking your drink.

3 Drink slowly

As you are drinking your warm drink, sip slowly. Pay attention to how the liquid feels on your tongue and running down your throat. Additionally, note how the warm liquid fills your belly after you have swallowed.

Do this while drinking the entire cup. Once you have finished drinking, place the cup on a table and deeply inhale and quickly exhale. Note if you feel any different from before.



Mindfulness positively impacts our bodies by decreasing the risk of heart disease, improving immunity, and slowing the ageing process.

Just by practicing progressive muscle relaxation, body scan, or sipping on a warm drink, you can signal to your body to relax, which increases your body's overall health and wellbeing.



Chapter Four

Mindfulness & The Mind

"Just as mindfulness positively affects the body, it also positively affects the mind"

In fact, mindfulness literally changes the brain, allowing it to function properly. As a result, your mind is improved, allowing you to be a better learner, listener, and thinker.



Benefits of practicing *Mindfulness*

Thanks to modern medical technology, researchers are able to study exactly how mindfulness and meditation affect the brain. Numerous studies have since come out, showing that mindfulness greatly impacts the brain, allowing you to be the best version of yourself.

01 *Improves Reasoning Abilities And Increases Attention*

Practicing mindfulness improves reasoning abilities and increases attention. Studies have found that mindfulness and meditation boost brain activity in the frontal cortex, which is the area of the brain associated with rational thought, intentional planning, executive functioning, and emotional awareness and control. If the frontal cortex is more active, you are better able to problem-solve and think outside the box in tough situations.

Additionally, mindfulness increases the brain activity in the anterior cingulate cortex, or the ACC. This area of the brain is associated with things like emotion regulation, self-perception, and attention. If the ACC is more active, you are able to lengthen your attention span, allowing you to focus for longer periods of time and learn more technical content easier.

Together, these two benefits, namely improving reasoning abilities and increasing attention, allow you to be a better learner. You will be able to think of more effective problem-solving techniques as well as focus on whatever task is at hand.

Improves memory

02

The hippocampus is also affected by mindfulness. The hippocampus is responsible for making new memories, instead of living in the past.

Studies have found that patients with post traumatic stress disorder or severe depression have a smaller hippocampus, which partially explains why these patients are less able to disconnect from the past and live in the present.

Mindfulness increases the gray matter within the hippocampus, which improves your ability to make new memories.

When you make new memories, you usually are more content with your life in the present, instead of focusing on things in the past. This generally allows people to feel more content and satisfied with their lives.



03 *Regulates Emotions And Improves Compassion*

Both the frontal cortex and ACC are associated with emotion regulation. As both of the brain regions are improved, so will your emotional regulation. As your emotions become more regulated, you are better able to see situations as they are, connect actual situations to your feelings, and live an overall happier and more content life.

At the same time, mindfulness improves compassion and self-compassion. This allows you to respond to tough situations more understandingly and responsibly. More so, it allows you to view yourself in a more positive light, which prevents against irrational self depictions.

Helps To Connect The Right And Left Hemispheres Of The Brain

04

Mindfulness also helps to connect the right and left hemispheres of the brain. The right hemisphere is often associated with emotional and nonverbal processing, while the left hemisphere is associated with logical thinking and verbal processing. When the two hemispheres work together, you are better able to connect your emotional feelings with rationality and the outside world, allowing you to be more realistic.

The corpus callosum is responsible for connecting the two hemispheres. Scientists believe that the thicker the corpus callosum, the better able your brain is to connect the ideas or processes between the two hemispheres. The thought goes that a person with a thicker corpus callosum is better able to understand their own feelings and relate it to real-life events, henceforth allowing them to be more responsible and realistic in their responses.



mindfulness and the **MIND PRACTISES**

CREATING A MORNING ROUTINE

A morning routine will help set the stage for your day. If you have a chaotic morning, chances are the rest of your day will feel stressful, chaotic, and unorganised. Put your best foot forward by creating a mindful morning routine that makes you motivated and relaxed for the day to come. Every person's morning routine should be tailored to their preferences and desires. With that being said, there are a few general rules that most people like to incorporate into their morning routine to make their days more mindful.

Put down the phone

Firstly, try not to use a device for the first hour you are awake. Use this hour to really connect with yourself and your senses, as opposed to Instagram or your inbox. Though this rule may be impossible to implement every day, try your best to avoid using your phone or device during your morning routine.

Set an intention

Another important aspect of most people's morning routine is setting an intention for the day. Oftentimes, it is so easy to fall into a trap of waking up, working, eating, sleeping, allowing our lives to be run on autopilot. To help prevent this from happening, set an intention that matches your needs and To-Do List for the day. Throughout the day, check-in with your intention and see how well you are doing.

Write it out

Some people also like to journal or write a gratitude list every morning. Journaling will allow you to get in touch with your feelings and set the stage for the day, while a gratitude list will allow you to truly focus on what matters in your life. This will prevent you from getting bogged down by negative feelings or harsh situations that may come your way.



REPEATING AFFIRMATIONS

Affirmations are short but inspirational sayings that you say to yourself, either in your head or out loud. Studies suggest that repeating affirmations rewires your brain to think more positively and compassionately. As a result, repeating affirmations is one of the best ways to use mindfulness to better your brain and mind.

You can look online for affirmation ideas or you can create your own by paying attention to your needs, insecurities, and anything else that may be weighing on your mind. For example, if you feel inadequate at work, create an affirmation like “I am competent and able.” An affirmation like this one will directly address your issues while still being easy to remember on a daily basis.

The only rule for affirmations is that they must be short. The reason for this is that it is obviously easier to remember a short sentence than a long one. Create affirmations that are to the point and catchy so you are sure to remember them for multiple days at a time. It is important to repeat the affirmation for several days in a row since that is how our brain becomes rewired. We will discuss affirmations in more detail in the next chapter.



RECAP

Mindfulness greatly increases our minds by making us better learners and listeners, as well as making us more compassionate and emotionally stable.

To increase the benefits of mindfulness for your mind, try creating a mindful morning routine to set the stage for the day or reciting affirmations that address your needs, desires, or fears.

Chapter Five

Mindfulness and the Spirit

Whenever life gets chaotic or difficult, the spirit often feels worn-down, tired, and downright awful.

It is important to use mindfulness to target the spirit since it is nearly impossible to appreciate life when you feel this way. Although mindfulness does not necessarily have measurable impacts on the spirit like it does the mind, it still can improve your spirit dramatically.



Since the spirit is not a measurable organ like the brain or heart, the benefits of mindfulness on the spirit are more ambiguous and less studied. This is not to say that mindfulness does not help the spirit. On the contrary, mindfulness is a great influencer on your spirit. Instead, it simply means that the results are not as easily measured or quantifiable.

Benefits of practicing mindfulness



INCREASES YOUR WELLBEING

How to improve your wellbeing has been one of the most frequently asked questions since the ancient times. One's "wellbeing" often refers to their health from a holistic perspective, including the body, mind, and spirit. To improve your wellbeing, it is crucial to focus on your spirit since it is often the most forgotten aspect of wellbeing.

Studies have found that mindfulness is one of the best ways to improve your wellbeing. It frees you from distraction, centres yourself on what matters, and diminishes rumination. Your spirit then becomes less restless and your wellbeing is improved.



Increases Satisfaction With Life

One of the worst features of a worn-down spirit is feeling like life is meaningless or not finding satisfaction with life. If you do not like your life, it is easy to give in to the chaos and give up.

Without satisfaction in your life, it is nearly impossible to overcome any situation, let alone a chaotic one. Some studies have shown that mindfulness increases one's satisfaction in life.

One study actually found that those who practice mindfulness believe that the life they are living more closely matches the life they want to be living, or their ideal life.

As you focus on your spirit and become more satisfied with life, other aspects of your life are likely to improve. Life satisfaction is one of the greatest determiners of work burnout.

The more satisfied you are with life, the less likely you are to feel work burnout, increasing your satisfaction and work functionality.

Life satisfaction also improves satisfaction in your relationships. The old saying goes, "Nobody can love you if you do not love yourself first."

Although other people can love you regardless, you will not believe they love you until you love yourself.

If you improve your satisfaction in life, it is much easier to enjoy those around you and truly engage in healthy relationship patterns.





ENHANCES SELF-AWARENESS

One of the most important functions of the spirit is to reflect on one's self and truly understand who they are as an individual. If your spirit is worn down and tired, it can be difficult to understand or know yourself, making it imperative to use mindfulness to improve the spirit.

Recent studies have found that mindfulness is a great way to get to know yourself better and increase self-awareness. Since judgemental actions and unawareness are the culprits behind inadequate knowledge of yourself, mindfulness helps you to take a close, honest, and compassionate look at yourself, allowing you to become more insightful.

As your self-awareness increases, you can better understand why you make the choices you make and change the unhealthy behaviours accordingly. It will also increase your emotional stability since you will have a better understanding of yourself.

THE SPIRIT *practices*

One of the best ways to improve the spirit is to repeat positive and true affirmations based on your exact needs.

Most people's spirits are worndown because they believe hurtful and untrue things about themselves.

Use affirmations to rewire the negative self-beliefs. Here is how to create and use affirmations that actually enhance your life and spirit.



01 *Reflect on your life*

Reflect on yourself, your feelings, and your actions. Are there any feelings that keep coming up? What has been bothering you lately?

What do you want to improve about yourself? What do you wish someone else would tell you?

Reflecting on these questions will help you learn exactly what areas you need to work on within yourself. If you skip this reflection phase, you will not create affirmations that actually impact your mindset, spirit, or life.

Create the affirmations

02

Once you have pinpointed your areas of need, you will be able to create helpful affirmations. Make sure that the affirmations directly address the issue and are short and easy to remember.

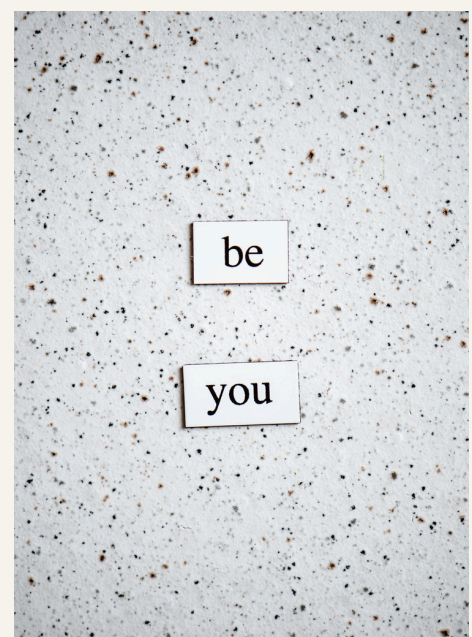
For example, if your reflection showed you that you are insecure with your abilities at work, create an affirmation that addresses the insecurity specifically. “I am competent and know how to fulfil my job” is a great affirmation for this issue. It is short, sweet, and directly flips the original insecurity on its head.

03 *Repeat affirmations*

Affirmations take many recitations to improve your life. Repeat your affirmation morning and night, five times each, for at least one month. Even if you start feeling an improvement sooner, keep saying the affirmations for a month minimum. You may want to say the affirmations longer depending on your needs.

RECAP

Your spirit is an often forgotten about part of the self. Improve your spirit by practicing mindfulness. Doing so will increase your wellbeing, increase your satisfaction with life, and enhance your self-awareness. Try creating and reciting targeted affirmations to become mindful of your spirit.



Chapter Six

Mindfulness As A Growth Opportunity

Mindfulness is a great tool when things are chaotic and harsh. It helps us to connect with ourselves and the present, making us feel more grounded despite the chaotic situation. But what about when things are going great? Should you practice mindfulness then too?





PRACTICING MINDFULNESS WHEN THINGS ARE GOOD




It can be incredibly easy to forget about your mindfulness training whenever the chaotic and harsh situations abide, but it is important to practice mindfulness during these times, nonetheless.

If you practice mindfulness even on the good days, you will become better and better at mindful thinking. As a result, you will already know the tools and tricks to help you become grounded during the bad days as well.

Let us consider a sports analogy. Even the most athletic and capable athletes practice and prepare for a big game or meet. In fact, it is their practice that allows them to win and continually perform well.

Being mindful on good days is like an athlete's practice or training: it teaches you what you want to feel like and prepares you for the bad days. This then allows you to be mindful on bad days, too, even when it is hard.



*Allow yourself to grow and
change, your
future self is waiting.*

Growing to become more resilient

If you practice mindfulness regularly, you will be more able to handle tough situations whenever they come about. This should cause you to view mindfulness training as a growth opportunity regardless of the point of life you may find yourself in.

Studies show that mindfulness increases one's resilience, which is the ability to bounce back from harsh situations. As you become more resilient, you grow and learn how to tackle all of life's challenges. This makes resilience one of the greatest markers for personal growth.

If you are not resilient, it is impossible to overcome challenges and adversity. Resilience should be one of the most important personal attributes to grow and nourish since you simply will not succeed without it.

There are four main areas that we need to focus on to become more resilient. All of these areas benefit from mindfulness training, so be sure to focus on these areas when being mindful.

Compassion

Become more resilient by being compassionate to yourself and others. Although you need to hold yourself accountable for your own actions, be kind, supportive, and compassionate to yourself.

Do not say anything to yourself that you would not say to a friend. As you become more compassionate to yourself, you will also find that you are more compassionate to others as well.

Acceptance

Accept facts as they come and distinguish them from feelings or thoughts. Accepting a fact is not giving up. Instead, it is giving yourself a healthy perspective so you can deal with it actively, appropriately, and healthily.

Openness

Becoming resilient involves being open to new ideas and perspectives. Use your mindfulness training to get outside your comfort zone and be more open to new ideas, perspectives, and techniques for tackling all of life's problems.

Ask yourself where your comfort zones lie and figure out why they lie there.



Creativity



Creativity plays a vital role in building resilience by offering a unique outlet for expressing emotions, solving problems, and adapting to challenges. Engaging in creative activities such as painting, writing, or music allows individuals to process their feelings and experiences.

This process helps to reduce stress and provides a sense of accomplishment and control, creating a positive mindset. Furthermore, creativity encourages innovative thinking, which is essential for finding new solutions and perspectives when faced with adversity.

Chapter Seven

Mindfulness in meditation

The terms “mindfulness” and “meditation” are often used synonymously, but they are not exactly the same. There is a good reason they are often used together, though. You can use meditation to become more mindful and unlock all the benefits of mindfulness for yourself.



Mindfulness VS Meditation



Mindfulness is the act of being present in the moment. There are many ways to be mindful, such as through affirmations, mindful eating or sipping, a morning routine, or progressive muscle relaxation. It does not matter exactly what you do to be mindful, as long as you are being authentically in the present.

Meditation is a formal practice that involves being mindful, but it is only one example of a mindfulness practice. People often associate meditation with a spiritual practice, but it can be used by religious and nonreligious people alike to become healthier and more aware of the present.

When you think of mindfulness and meditation, recognise that meditation is a formal practice that involves being mindful, but mindfulness is not just meditation exclusively. Similarly, meditation is not just about mindfulness; there can be other goals of meditation in addition to mindfulness. It may be helpful to think of mindfulness as a general outlook on life that can be observed through a variety of practices, such as formal meditation.

How to Practice Mindfulness *meditation?*



There are a variety of meditation styles to choose from. If you already meditate, then you can continue meditating in the style you are most comfortable with.

For those who are new to meditation, here is a simple mindful meditation practice to try at home:



Set aside special time

Life can be overwhelmingly full of deadlines, jobs, and errands. Set aside special time for your mindful meditation to ensure that your practice does not get swept away in the sea of tasks. All you will need is a little bit of time, a quiet space, and maybe a pillow or blanket to make the experience more comfortable.

Create your space



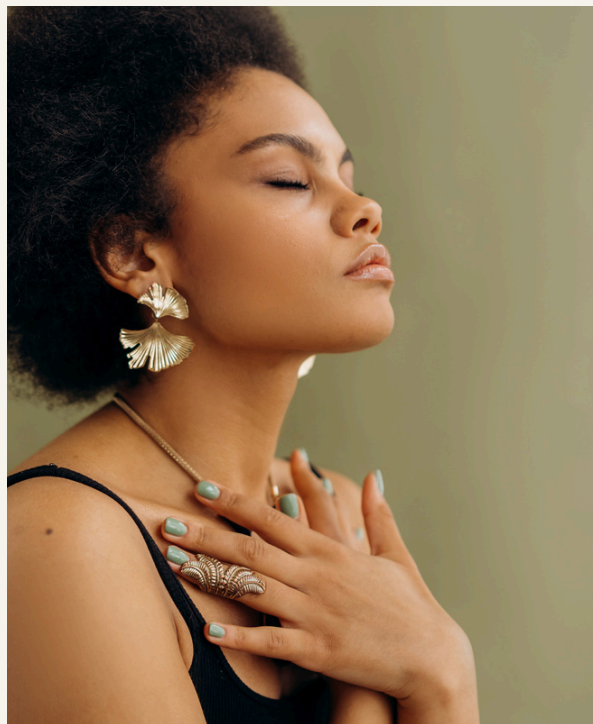
When it is time to do your practice, turn off all potential distractions. This includes setting your phone on airplane mode, dimming the lights, and telling family members to not enter your meditation space until you are finished.

If you want to use a pillow or blanket, place them where you intend to meditate. Though they are not necessary, they will make sitting more comfortable and relaxing. Also, set an alarm clock for however long you want the practice to be.

Observe the moment

Sit down in your meditation spot and gently close your eyes. Allow your breath to flow naturally and let it deepen on its own. Take this time to observe the moment, setting the tone for your mindfulness practice.

Remind yourself that the point of this practice is not to quiet your mind. Instead, it is to pay attention to the moment, which includes your thoughts, feelings, and sensations. If you try to quiet these things, your practice will not be effective.



Finish

Whenever your time is up, take the time to note if you feel any different. Doing this will allow you to learn from the meditation and do better in the future. If you need help understanding your feelings, take the time to journal about the experience, and reflect on it.

Be kind to your thoughts and let them come

Your mind is destined to wander during this time. Take the time to notice and appreciate your thoughts, no matter how big or small they may seem at the time. Be honest and kind to the thought as well, always remembering to talk to yourself the way you would talk to a stranger.

As soon as the thought comes to its natural end, come back to your present moment. In everyday life, it is easy to let our thoughts ramble like a never-ending ball of yarn. Prevent this happening by coming back to your present.

Chapter Eight

Bringing it all together

Why Holistic Mindfulness Matters

So far, we have looked at how to be mindful during chaotic times, as well as how to be mindful of the body, mind, spirit, and growth. What we have not looked at is how to put all of these pieces together to have a more holistic view of mindfulness.



If you only focus on one aspect of mindfulness, you will see some improvement, but you will not reach your desired results. Use a variety of mindfulness practices to focus on the body, mind, and spirit as equally important aspects of your wellbeing.

Several studies have shown that viewing the mind, body, and spirit as separate entities has several negative health effects on your body. For example, those who distinguish between the spirit and body are more likely to practice unhealthy habits such as avoiding exercise or eating unhealthily.

Though it might sound odd that separating the mind and body results in harmful practices, it is true. If you do not view them together, your mind does not think to connect your everyday lives and actions to either bodily consequences or mental consequences.

This should encourage you to view all three aspects in relation to one another. If your mind is not healthy, then your spirit and body probably are not either. Similarly, it can be difficult to be mentally and spiritually healthy if your body is not taken care of. Take care of your entire well being by placing significance and connectivity on the body, mind, and spirit.

HOLISTIC MINDFULNESS



*"Never forget
how wildly
capable you are."*

Mindfulness works in the same way. If you only focus on one aspect of mindfulness, the same will happen: your mindfulness abilities will be hindered, and you might not see the point in the practice anymore.

Avoid this mistake by viewing mindfulness as an intimate connection between the body, mind, and spirit. To improve any aspect of your self's mindfulness is to improve all aspects.

How to practice holistic *mindfulness?*

The easiest way to practice holistic mindfulness is to incorporate all aspects into every mindfulness practice. If you noticed in almost all of our mindfulness practice examples, we incorporated bodily senses, emotions, and mental clarity into the mindfulness practice. By incorporating all three factors, you are practicing more holistic mindfulness.

With that being said, some mindfulness practices are geared towards specific issues. Progressive muscle relaxation is one great example of a mindfulness practice that is more geared toward the body. There is absolutely nothing wrong with practicing progressive muscle relaxation and it is actually one of the best treatments for helping focus the mind.

With that being said, you should not only do progressive muscle relaxation. Instead, incorporate another mindfulness practice into your daily routine in order to have a more holistic perspective. If you like progressive muscle relaxation before bed, try creating a mindful morning routine to create more balance.

“

"When something is for you, it will bring clarity and alignment to your life; not chaos and confusion."



Meditation through yoga

Meditation can be a great way to focus on all three aspects of mindfulness. Since there are a variety of meditation practices, it will be easy to find one you like. Many people find yoga to be an incredibly helpful and enjoyable meditative practice for holistic mindfulness.

Yoga is a meditative practice that connects your body, mind, and spirit. Though it is rooted in ancient Indian philosophy and religion, it is often used today as an exercise for your mind and body.

By encouraging you to be in the present and connect your mind and body together, most often through the act of breathing, yoga allows you to take a holistic approach to mindfulness.

Most yoga practices recommend moving to your own breath. This will allow you to get your mind and body in sync through the naturally produced tempo of your breath.

Even though this may seem very alternative, moving to the sound of your breath and thinking in junction with it is an incredibly beneficial mindfulness and meditation technique.

You can start practicing yoga by going to a local yoga studio near you. If that is too expensive for you or you want to stay home, you can go online for free options.

YouTube is a great source for thousands of free guided yoga sessions. Simply type "Yoga for mindfulness" in the search bar and select whichever video you want.



CONCLUSION

Mindfulness is an incredibly helpful practice to help you navigate through stressful or chaotic times. By practicing mindfulness, you will be able to improve the body, mind, and spirit to grow and become more resilient. You can try a variety of mindfulness practices, such as progressive muscle relaxation, affirmations, or meditation.

Always remember to connect all aspects of mindfulness, though. The body, mind, and spirit are equally important aspects to consider. If you only emphasise one aspect of your essence, you will not receive the full benefits of mindfulness for a healthy whole you. We recommend trying yoga for a more holistic perspective on mindfulness.

Now that you have finished our beginner's guide to mindfulness, you are probably eager to start trying out some of our techniques and tips. It is important to note that mindfulness takes time. Expect for it to take at least a month or longer to see any results of your mindfulness training.

Be patient and compassionate with yourself. Breaking habits is hard, and you are not a superhero. Be proud that you are taking this first step to prioritise your health during these chaotic times. If you continue with these practices for a substantial amount of time, that is when you will start to see the results.



Thank you



QUOTE

I am ready to transform old fears into
NEW POWERS

TODAY

"IF IT'S OUT OF
YOUR HANDS,
IT DESERVES

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a white ribbed sleeveless top and a green skirt, is shown in profile. She is smiling and holding a glass of iced coffee with a spoon. The background is a plain wall with a shadow cast by a window. A vertical line is on the left side of the image.

FREEDOM
FROM YOUR
MIND TOO."

*"Don't adapt to the energy in the room;
influence the energy in the room*

Guide to being mindful

”

A man with dark hair and sunglasses, wearing a grey t-shirt and blue jeans, stands with his arms outstretched, looking out at the ocean. The background shows a calm sea with a few people swimming in the distance under a clear sky. The text is overlaid on the image.

VISUALISATION IS
WHERE EVERYTHING
STARTS

Guide to being mindful

YOU BEING UNCOMFORTABLE, IS A SIGN OF YOUR TRANSFORMATION

GUIDE TO BEING MINDFUL



Feel the feeling but don't become the emotion.
Witness it. Allow it. *Release* it.





*let go of the illusion that it could
have been different*

Guide to being mindful

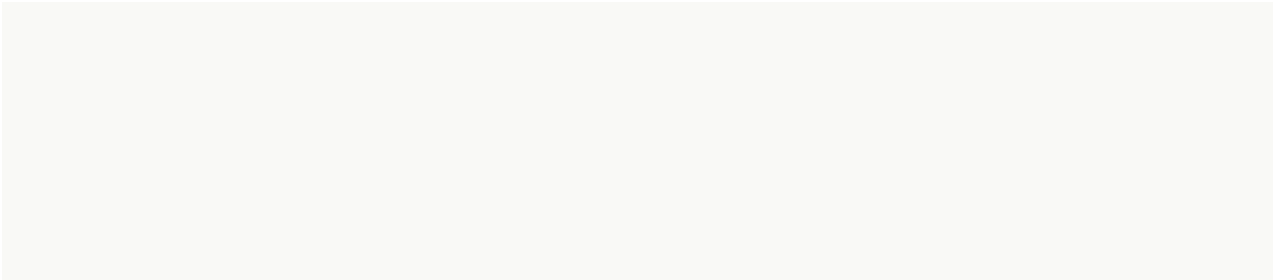


MINDFULNESS

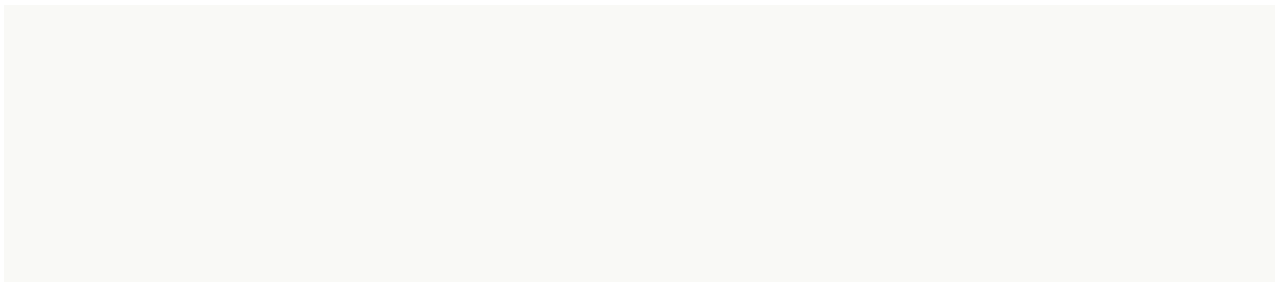
WORKBOOK

UNDERSTANDING *mindfulness*

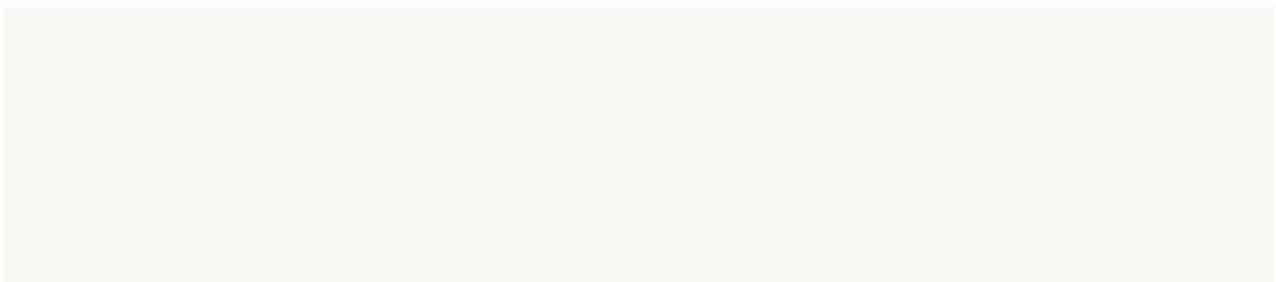
How would you define mindfulness?



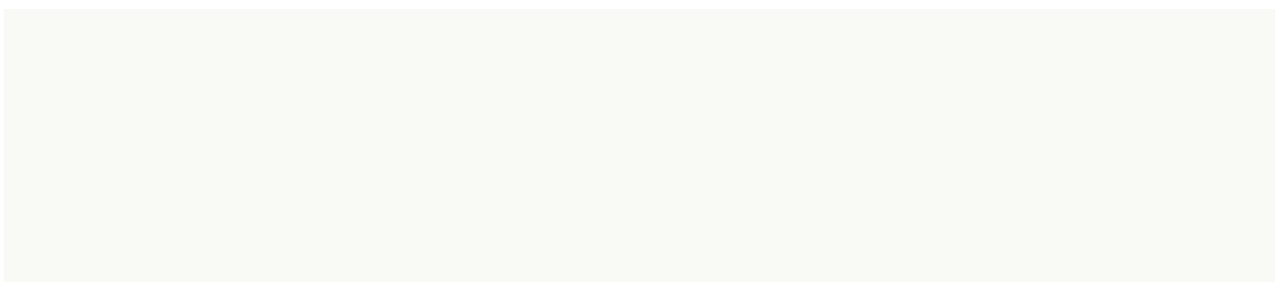
How have you started to be more mindful during your day?



How do you feel about being more mindful?



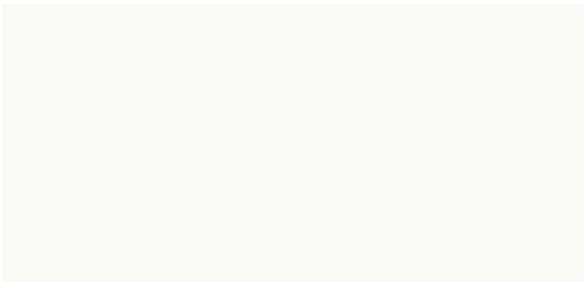
Why have you decided to incorporate mindfulness into your life?



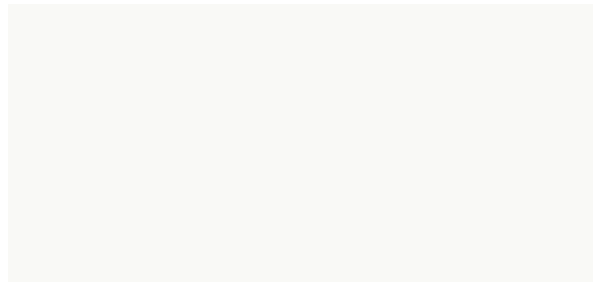
BEING PRESENT

Sit quietly and pay attention to what is going on right now using your five senses. Reflect on your experience below.

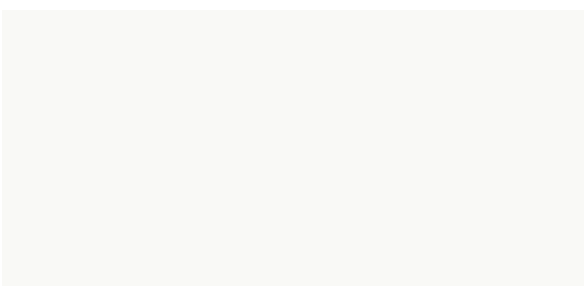
Right now I see...



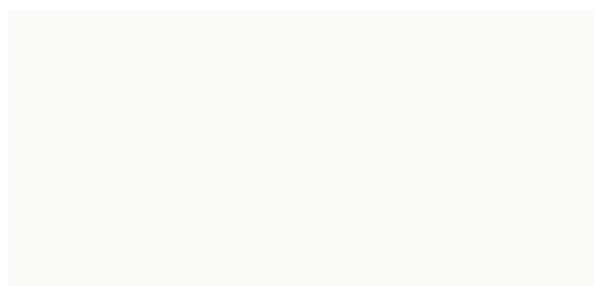
Right now I hear...



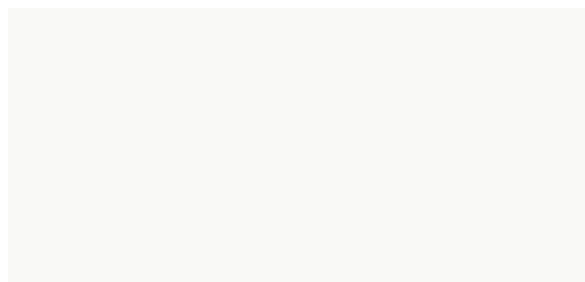
Right now I am touching...



Right now I smell...



Right now I feel...



BEING PRESENT

Take a moment to observe what is going on around you. With your eyes open, use your five senses to pay attention. This refers to the 'outside present'. Now close your eyes and turn your attention inward. This is the 'inside present'. Write your impressions.

What do I notice outside?

What do I notice inside?

What is similar about the outside and the inside present?

What is different about the outside and the inside present?

Is it easier to observe the outside or the inside present? Why?

Present in the *moment*

This moment right now...

TIME

PLACE

ACTIVITY

Three things you might have not noticed if you weren't paying attention..

One reason to be grateful about the things you've just noticed..

One source of joy you've discovered/rediscovered in this moment..

One thought to take with you in the next moment..

In this moment, one way in which you are strong...

In this moment, one way in which you are wise...

In this moment, one way in which you are beautiful...

One sensation you're
experiencing right now...

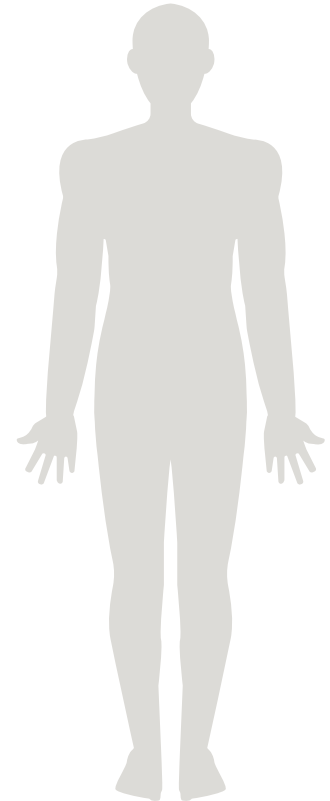
One emotion you're
feeling right now...

One thought you're
thinking right now...

BODY SCAN

Using the emotion body diagram below, use different colours to signal each of the different emotions, then show where you feel these emotions in your body using those same colours. For example, 'Yellow' could be the colour for happiness. If you feel happy in your feet, then colour your feet yellow. Then, complete the sentences below by stating where you feel certain emotions in your body.

- Happiness
- Anger
- Boredom
- Love
- Loneliness
- Gratitude
- Sadness



When I feel anger, I can label it by saying in my mind,

When I feel happy, I can label it by saying in my mind,

When I feel bored, I can label it by saying in my mind,

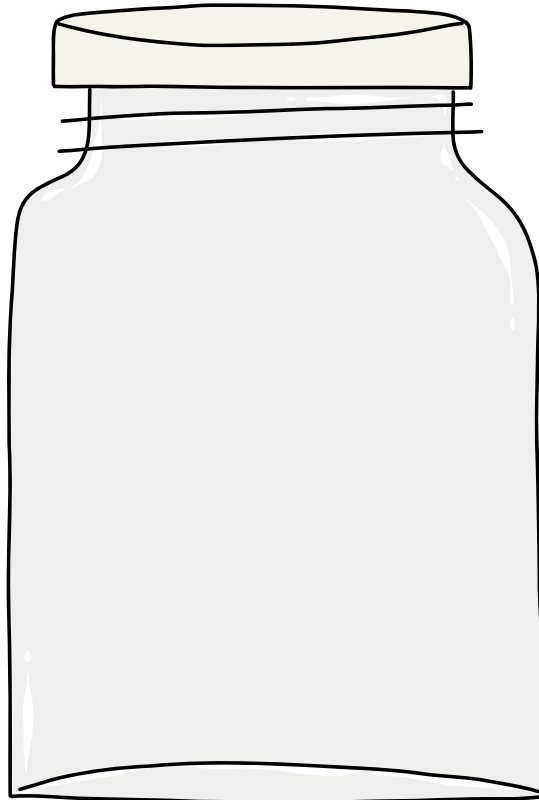
When I feel love, I can label it by saying in my mind,

When I feel lonely, I can label it by saying in my mind,

When I feel sad, I can label it by saying in my mind,

JAR OF FEELINGS

Feelings are reflection of the thoughts that we're holding. All feelings are okay! Check in with yourself right now and see if you can figure out your feelings. Then, fill this container with feelings colours to show how much of each feeling you have right now.



PURPLE = NERVOUS

YELLOW = HAPPY

ORANGE = CALM

PINK = BRAVE

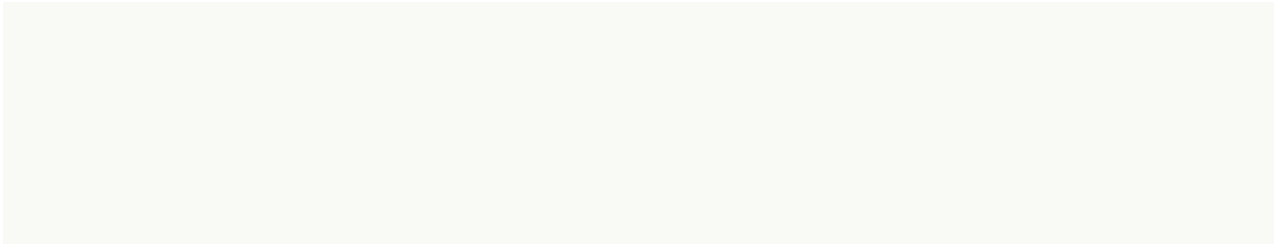
GREEN = EXCITED

BLUE = SAD

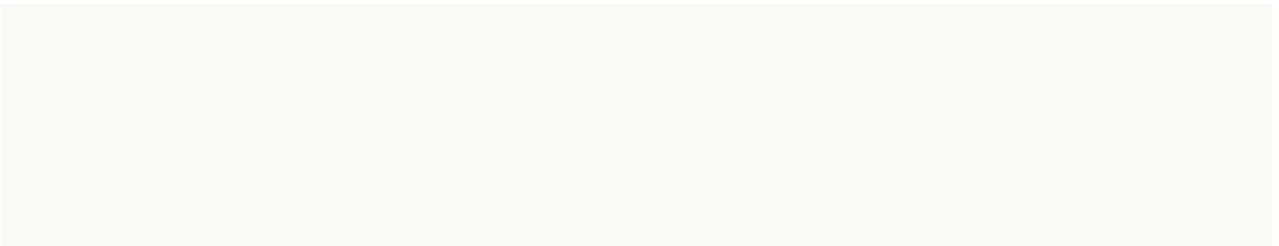
RED = ANGRY

Navigating *fear*

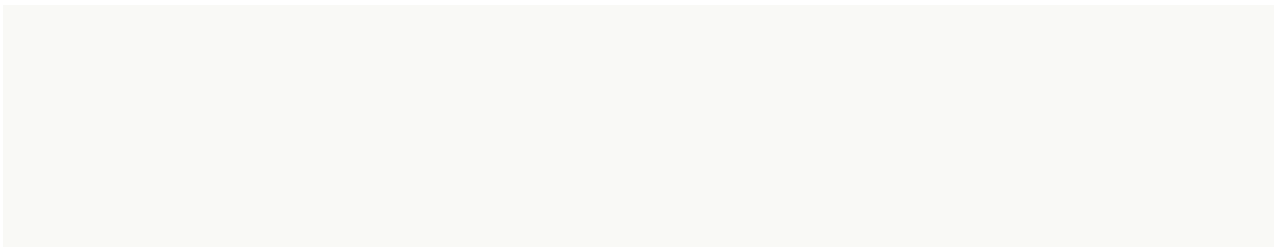
List times in your life when you felt afraid.



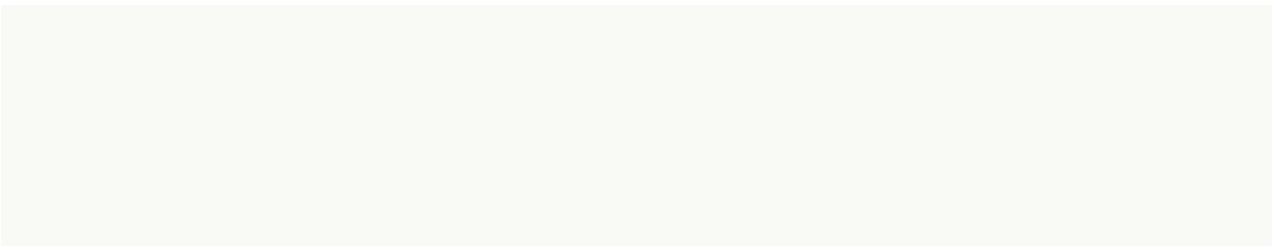
Describe what was going on at that time that caused you fear.



Was there a cause for the fear when you experienced it, or was it based on a previous experience?



Was there another time in the past that you experienced that same fear?



ACCEPTING *feelings*

Mindfulness involves non-judgemental acceptance of one's thoughts and feelings. In practice, however, this can be hard to do. This worksheet will help you to better understand the degree of control you believe you have over feelings and thoughts.

Struggles → Acceptance

I need to control my emotions to achieve things and be successful.	I can be successful without controlling my feelings.
Anxiety is a bad thing.	Anxiety is neither good nor bad; it's an uncomfortable feeling that comes and goes.
I make a concerted effort to suppress unwanted thoughts and emotions.	I allow emotions and thoughts to come and go without trying to suppress them.

MINDFULNESS *challenges*

Turn off all notifications on your phone today



Eat one meal alone today, without any distractions



Declutter part of your house or office today



Rather than text someone, call them and have a proper conversation



Commute without music today, and see how much you notice



GLOW UP

Am I levelling up and in what terms?

What steps should I take to reach my destination?

Something I'll do to level up..

mentally

spiritually

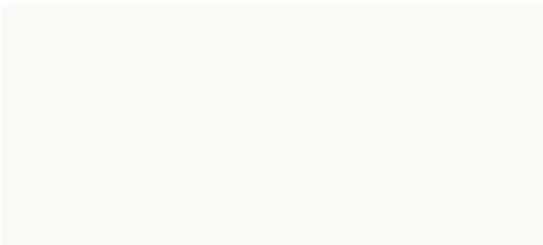
emotionally

Actions I should be taking

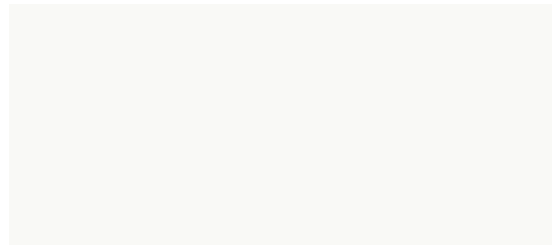
Why am I not doing it yet?

DAILY *thoughts*

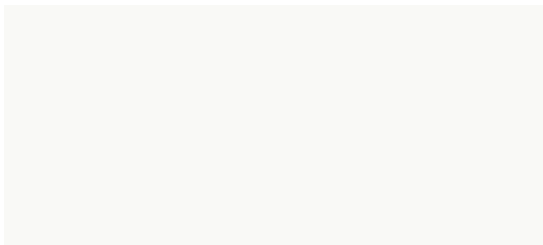
Thoughts that made you smile
today...



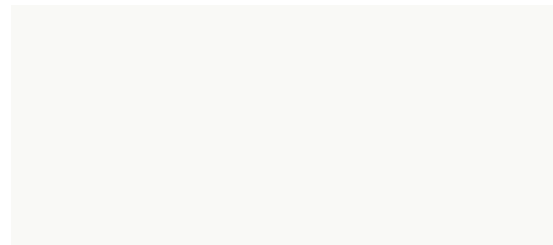
Things that challenged you
today...



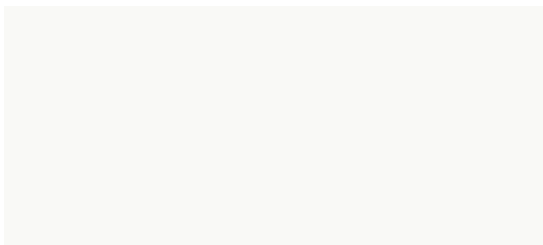
Urges that you resisted today...



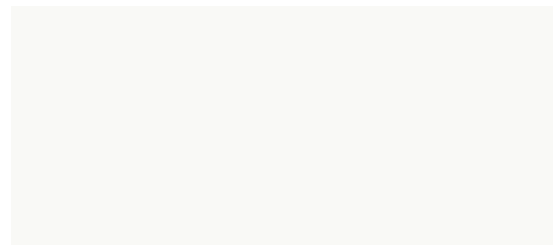
Events that made you feel
productive today...



Beautiful things that you heard
today...



Experiences that made you
feel brave today...



If you only had one more day to live, what would you have the courage to do now?

A large, empty rectangular area with a light beige background, intended for the user to write their response to the question. It occupies the majority of the page below the text.

Moving on

The thing

*why should i let
go?*

*how will it
positively affect
me?*

A light green circle intended for writing the thing to be let go of.A light green rounded rectangle intended for writing why one should let go.A light green rounded rectangle intended for writing how letting go will positively affect the person.A light green circle intended for writing the thing to be let go of.A light green rounded rectangle intended for writing why one should let go.A light green rounded rectangle intended for writing how letting go will positively affect the person.A light green circle intended for writing the thing to be let go of.A light green rounded rectangle intended for writing why one should let go.A light green rounded rectangle intended for writing how letting go will positively affect the person.A light green circle intended for writing the thing to be let go of.A light green rounded rectangle intended for writing why one should let go.A light green rounded rectangle intended for writing how letting go will positively affect the person.

Mindfulness *Tracker*

DATE:

What is my intention today?

Today I will be mindful when...

- walking
- eating
- driving
- exercising
- talking
- resting
- drinking coffee
- other

Hourly Mindful Moments

Daily Gratitude

Meditation

TIME

DURATION

COMMENTS

Daily Check in

DATE:

Dream log

Hours of sleep:

Sleep quality:

TOP 5
MOMENTS
OF TODAY

DAILY
ACHIEVEMENT

DAILY
GRATITUDE

BREAKFAST	SNACKS	LUNCH	SNACKS	DINNER	WATER
					OZ.
CAL.	CAL.	CAL.	CAL.	CAL.	TOTAL

EXERCISES

TOP TO-DO
LIST

Weekly Emotions

DATE:

WEEK:

Sunday:

Monday:

Tuesday:

Wednesday:

Thursday:

Friday:

Saturday:

Summary of the week

Mood Tracker

DATE:

MOOD: 🥲 😡 😞 😐 😊 😍 😄

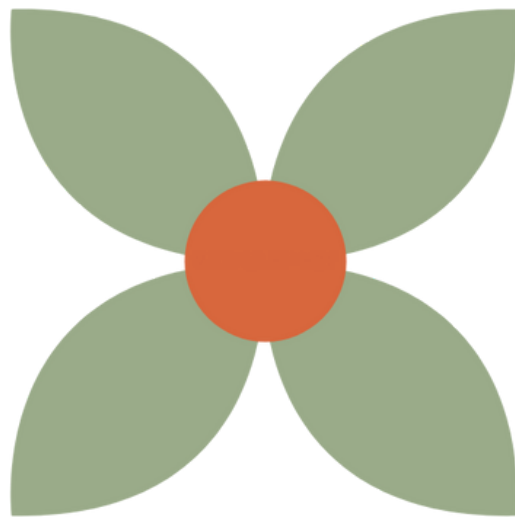
WAS TODAY ENOUGH OF:

	YES	NO
SLEEP	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
REST	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
WORK	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
EXERCISE	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
VITAMINS	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
MEDICINE	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
FOOD	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
FRESH AIR	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
SELF-CARE	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Today's Affirmations

TODAY'S CHALLENGES

TODAY'S HIGHLIGHTS



M I N D F U L E F F E C T

For more tips on mindfulness and wellbeing, please visit mindfuleffect.net and explore our resources designed to help you lead a balanced and fulfilling life.

"Mindfulness means paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally."

Dr Jon Kabat-Zinn
Founder of Mindfulness-Based Stress
Reduction (MBSR)

M I N D F U L E F F E C T . N E T