

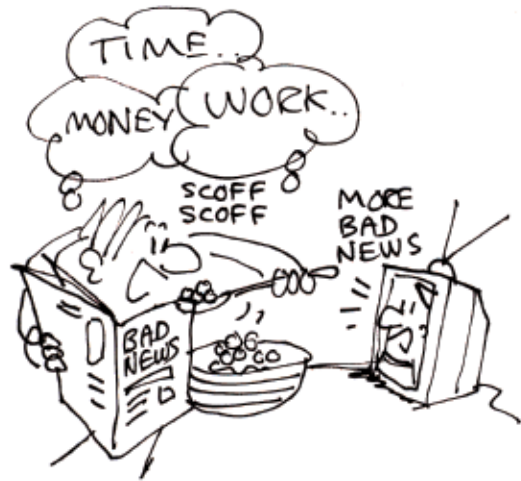
The Miracle  
of  
Mindfulness



# What is MINDFULNESS

Most people live on 'Auto Pilot'....

Very often we do things automatically, without noticing what we're doing. We churn out judgements about ourselves and others. We try to do ten things at once. We frequently get so caught up in thoughts and feelings about the past or future that we get lost in them, disconnecting from what is happening now right in front of us.



Mindfulness seeks to develop and nourish present moment awareness.

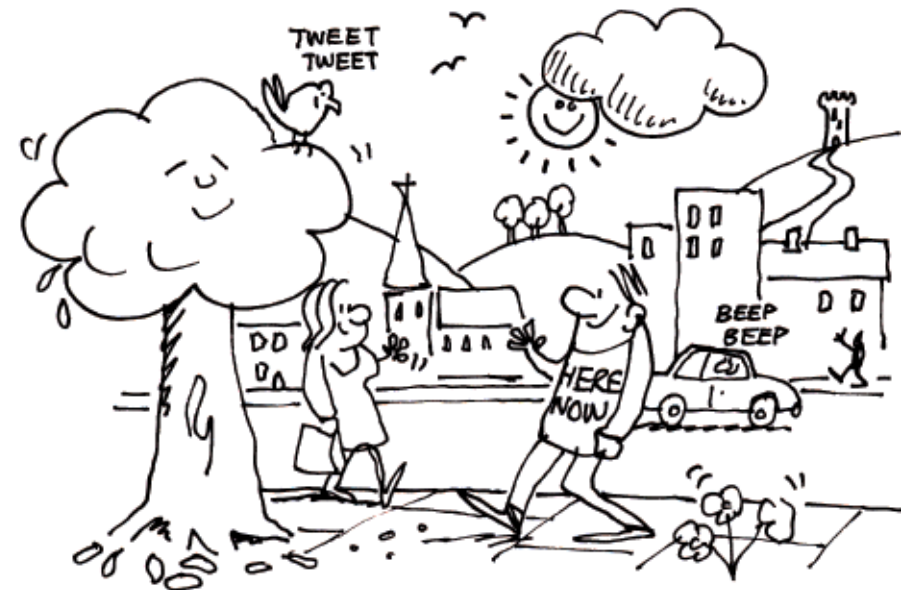
Mindfulness is the practice of paying attention, on purpose, deeply and without judgement to whatever arises in the present moment, either inside or outside of us.

It is non judgemental and open-hearted (friendly, curious and inviting / accepting of whatever arises in awareness)

By intentionally practicing Mindfulness individuals can live more fully and less on "automatic pilot", thus, being more present for their own lives.

Mindfulness also enables us to develop a different way of relating to and coping with sensations, emotions, thoughts and feelings.

Specifically, mindful acceptance and acknowledgement of unwanted feelings and thoughts rather than habitual, automatic reactions that tend to perpetuate difficulties.



Try it now  
A ONE MINUTE exercise in Mindfulness

- Bring your attention fully into the present moment
- Bring yourself into the room
- Listen to every sound (imagine you are in a house alone late at night and you hear a noise)
- Take it all in as if you had been transported to this place in your sleep and had just woken up
- Become aware of every aspect of your environment, shapes, colours, sounds, light/shade, space, textures
- Now bring your full attention to your body
- Feel yourself IN your body - 'let go' all over
- Become aware of your breathing by noticing your belly rise and fall
- Feel your body as PART of the whole environment
- Feel the space you occupy, the weight of your body on the seat, the air inside and outside your body
- Feel the 'life' all around you.
- For one minute be FULLY present HERE & NOW
- Try not to make any judgements - simply be aware
- Stay with this feeling until your mind takes you away from it



Notice

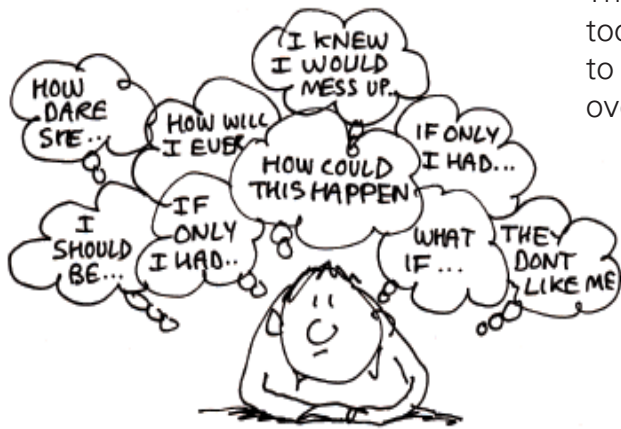
When you are so extremely concentrated in the present moment it is hard to worry about the past or the future.

You can see from being so mindful that this is NOT how you usually view the world. It makes you wonder where our minds *are* most of the time

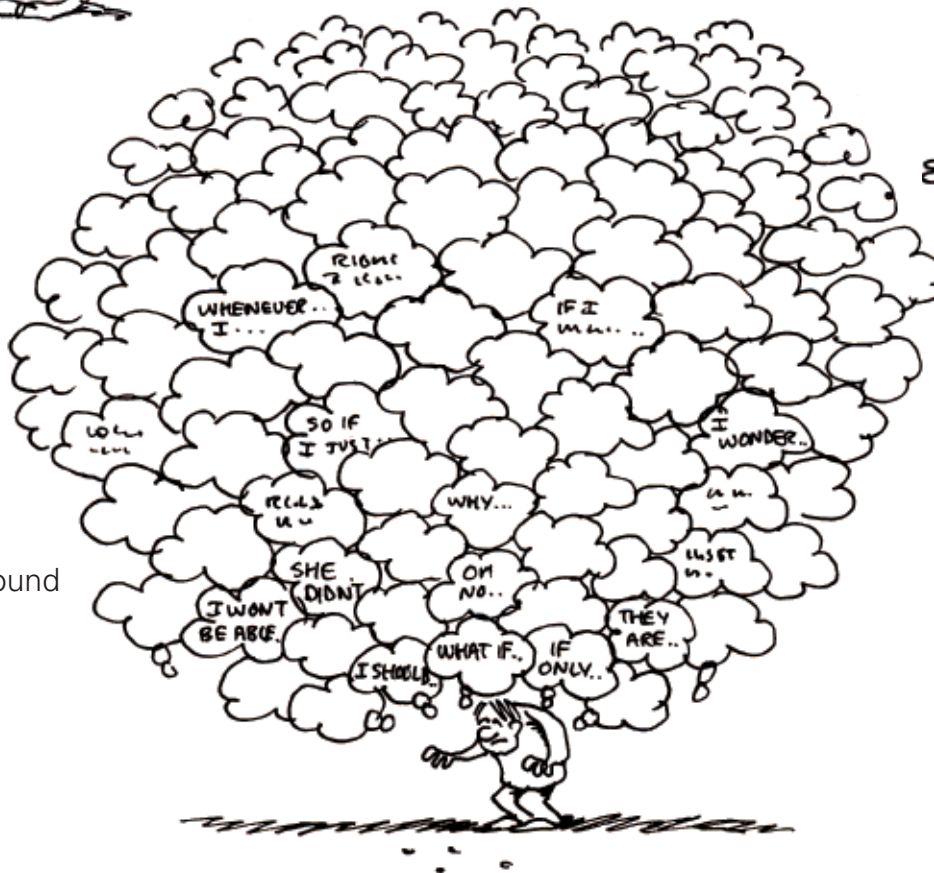
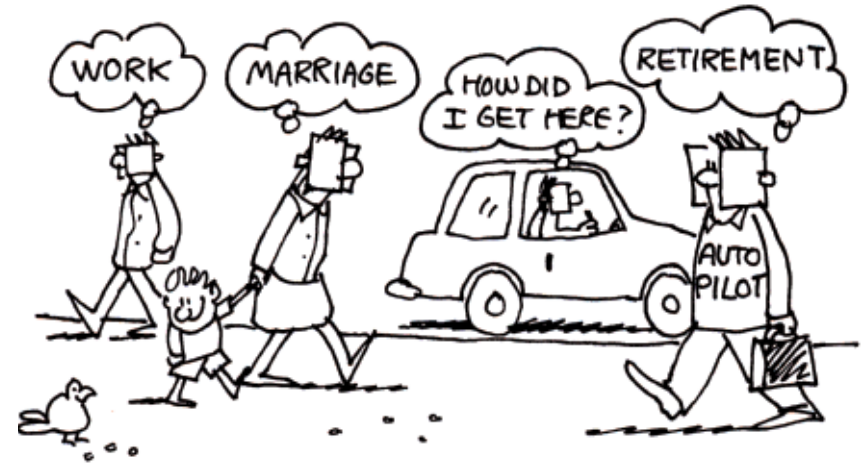
Practice this exercise as often as you can remember to do it.

# Let's look at why Mindfulness is so important..

The mind is an amazing tool but if we are unable to switch it off, it can overwhelm us..



Few people live in the moment, we very often dwell on the past or imagine what good or bad the future will hold..

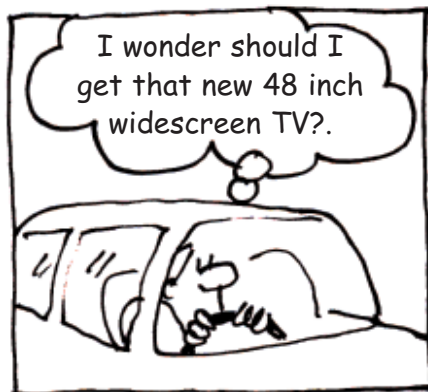
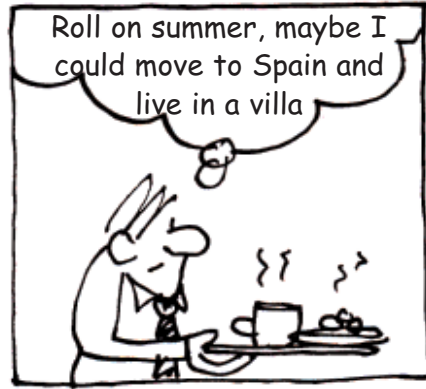
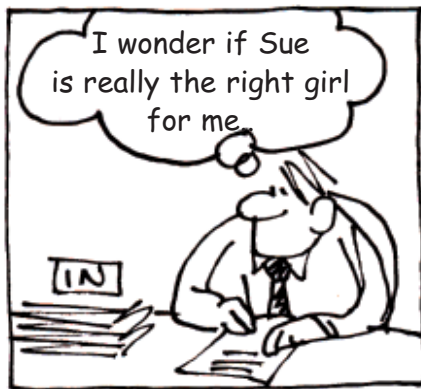


It is estimated that the average person thinks around 60,000 thoughts every day!

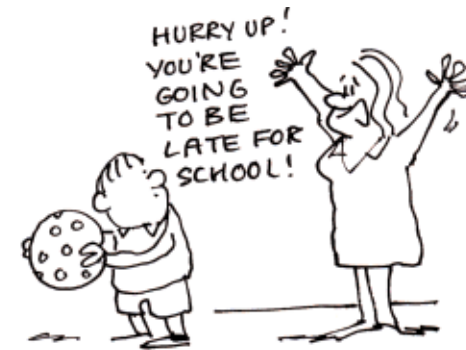
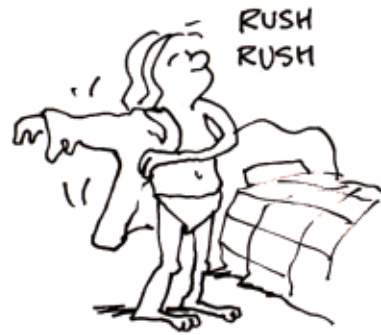
*"Yesterday is history, tomorrow is a mystery, and today is a gift; that's why they call it the present",  
Eleanor Roosevelt*



Thoughts can be with us from morning to night without a break

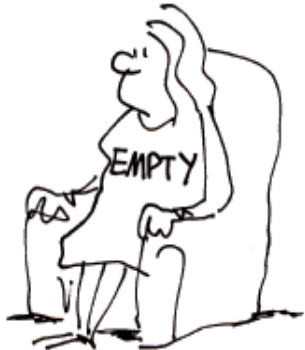
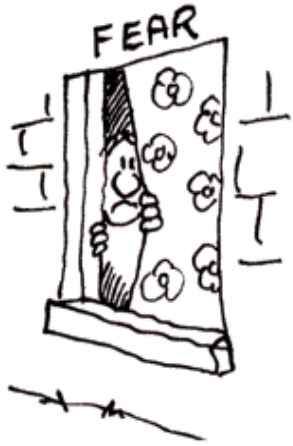


Sometimes we can be in such a hurry we hardly have time for life at all..



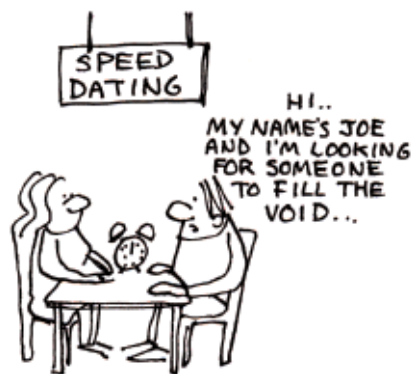
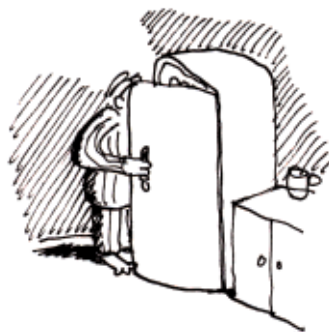
*"Life is what happens while we are busy making other plans" - John Lennon*

Painful feelings and emotions  
can overwhelm us too..





These thoughts and feelings can be so distressing we often understandably try to block them out, avoid them or cope with them in whatever way we can..





## Mindfulness can help to change all this..

- To begin with you become aware of how little attention is usually paid to daily life and how you normally operate in 'automatic pilot' mode



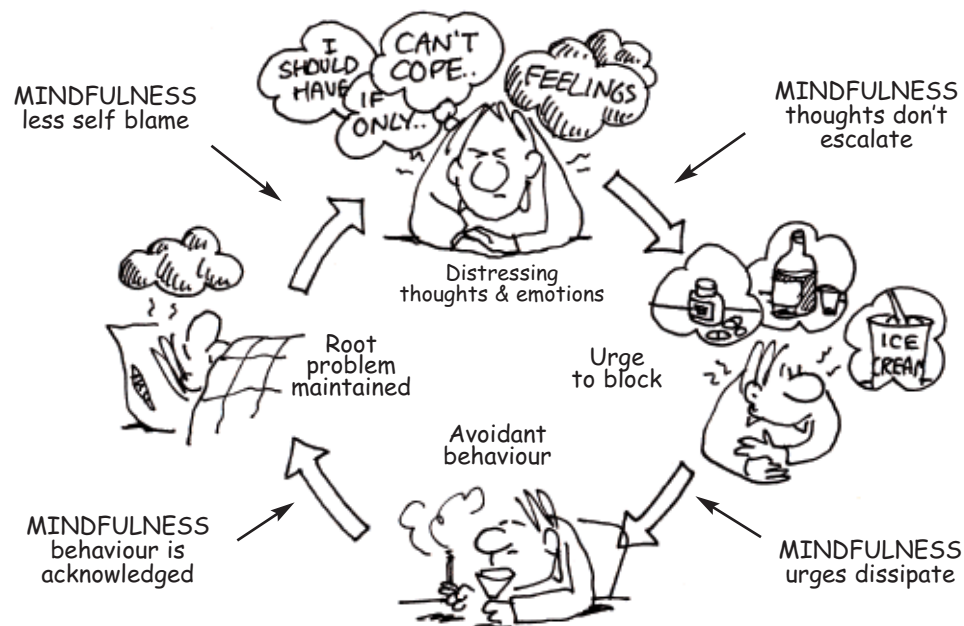
- You learn first hand how much the mind wanders, how it continuously shifts from one topic to another and how this mind wandering can allow negative thoughts and feelings to spiral out of control



- You then learn how to bring the mind back to the present moment



- You also learn to develop a different way of relating to and coping with sensations, emotions, thoughts and feelings. Specifically, mindful acceptance and acknowledgement of unwanted feelings and thoughts rather than habitual, automatic reactions that tend to perpetuate difficulties.



- Throughout the practice you learn how to bring mindfulness into your daily life not only to help control your thought processes but to enhance your overall experience and enjoyment of life in general.

It's all about BALANCE..



Some people think that the aim of Mindfulness is to eliminate all thought. Thinking isn't the problem. Endless NON-PURPOSEFUL NEGATIVE thinking is the problem.

**Unnecessary thoughts are the greatest obstacle on our way to the NOW.**

*'Our intuitive mind is a present from the gods, and our rationality is a faithful servant. We live in a society that adores the servant and forgets the present', Albert Einstein*

Thinking and using your common sense are absolutely necessary if you use them for the functions for which they are needed. A race-car engineer that designs a car has to think carefully about the design, the construction, the materials, etc. However, when his thinking process is disturbed because during his work he is not fully concentrated, then he does not function well, his creative impulses are hampered and at the end of the day he will feel a lot less satisfied and probably more tired than he usually feels.

Unnecessary thoughts and bad concentration divert us, exhaust us and make us fail to achieve our goals.

In "Doing nothing - an art of living" by E. Zelinski we find a table about wasted worries. The table indicates that 96% of our worries are wasted time.

Wasted Worries (E. Zelinski)

40% of our worries have to do with events that will never take place

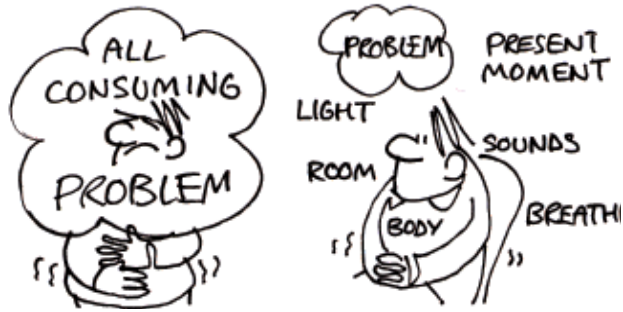
30% of our worries have to do with events that have already taken place

22% of our worries have to do with unimportant events

4% of our worries have to do with events that we cannot change

4% of our worries have to do with events that we can do something about

The many ways in which MINDFULNESS  
can help to change your life.



You get a break from the intensity of distressing thoughts and emotions because you see that they are only PART of your ACTUAL present moment experience.



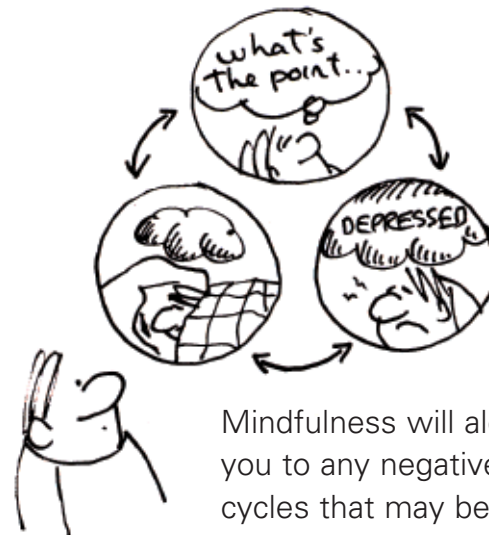
As you gain some distance from the intensity of a problem - solutions are much easier to arrive at.



Mindfulness enables you to process emotions in a manageable and non-destructive way



You will more easily be able to catch negative thought patterns before they spiral out of control..



Mindfulness will alert you to any negative cycles that may be maintaining a problem



Sitting Mindfully with thoughts and feelings often clarifies any underlying deeper fears or beliefs



You will feel more at peace in your own company - therefore...  
Less need for distraction  
Less fear of isolation  
Less fear of rejection  
Less fear of abandonment  
Less dependence on others  
Less feelings of jealousy



You will relate better to other people and will have a greater capacity to listen



By 'observing' thoughts rather than 'identifying' with them you will discover that your thoughts don't have to 'define' you as a person.



Non judgemental self observation leads to less self criticism and greater empathy towards others



Situations that previously caused a great deal of irritation become easier to deal with





With less distraction from your mind, your concentration improves and your work becomes easier and more enjoyable



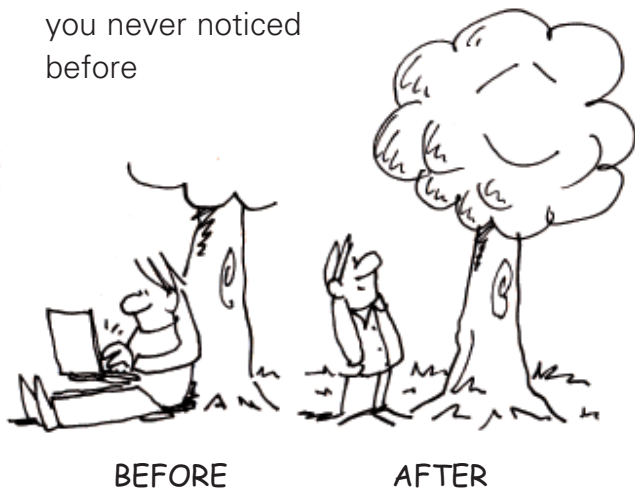
Your health will improve

- Blood pressure normalised
- Heart rate lowered
- Cardiovascular effectivity increased
- Enhanced immune system
- Reduced stress and anxiety
- Improved sleep and concentration
- Stomach and Bowel function improves
- Pain is easier to cope with
- Aging process decreased



Your creative and intuitive capacities will improve dramatically.

You will notice things you never noticed before



You will realise that you can never REALLY be bored..



You will simply feel HAPPIER for absolutely no reason whatsoever!..



You will feel a greater sense of connectedness to life as a whole

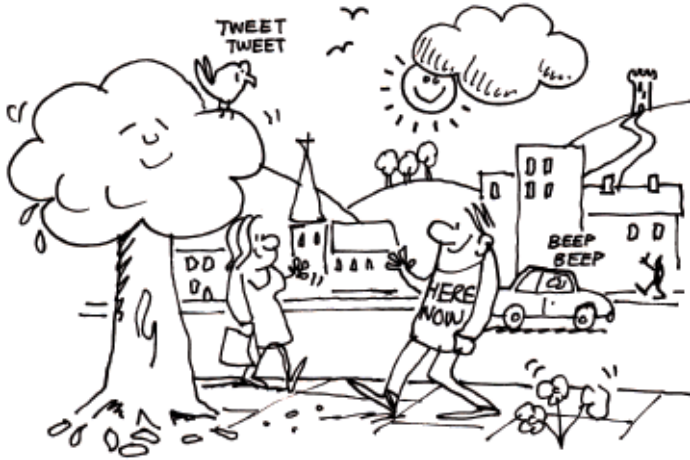
# Mindfulness in practice

There are two forms of practice

## 1. Informal practice

### Mindfulness in Everyday Life

Bringing Mindfulness into your daily life activities, work, home, relationships, etc



## 2. Formal practice

Mindfulness Meditation



# Mindfulness in Everyday Life

The great thing about Mindfulness is you can practice it 'anytime, anyplace, anywhere'. Try not to see it as something to 'add' to your life like learning the Piano. Living Mindfully means being more aware of being alive.

## The basic premise

When engaged in any activity try to bring as much present moment awareness to the experience as you can.

- Be aware of yourself being 'lost in thought' and disconnected from your experience.
- STOP - LOOK - LISTEN and BE HERE NOW  
(The Mindfulness code)
- Be open to as much of your actual present moment experience as you can
- Be present WITH the experience - BE ALIVE
- Come 'back to your senses' notice sights, smells, sounds, tastes and touch
- Try to directly EXPERIENCE rather than judge or manipulate everything
- Acknowledge any unpleasant thoughts or feelings but again try not to judge them as



## Mindfulness in Everyday Life

### Preliminary Exercise - THE BODY SCAN

Most people are completely out of touch with their body. We live so much in our 'heads' we rarely even notice the body (apart from judging it by it's cover!) unless something goes wrong with it.

Bringing your awareness into the body reconnects you not only with yourself but with your environment in which your body exists. This in turn helps to bring your mind back into the present moment.

Practice mindfulness of body any time you remember. If you find yourself getting 'carried away' in thinking or talking bring your attention into your body and you will feel calmer and more in control.

You aren't trying to relax your body (though that might happen). The object is to strengthen your ability to be mindful and to get more in touch with your body.

## THE BODY SCAN

- Sit comfortably or lie flat on your back with your arms by your sides.
- Take a deep breath. Let it out slowly. Let go all over
- Feel your body first of all as one unit all over
- Observe what is happening in the body? Feel any sensations or tension.
- Feel the weight of your body and the contact with the chair or floor
- Scan slowly through the body beginning with your feet - moving up to your ankles, calves, thighs, midriff, stomach, back, chest, shoulders, down your arms into your fingers and then up to your neck, throat, head, face, and scalp. Explore each area of your body at whatever speed feels comfortable.
- Then feel your body as a single unit again
- If your mind settles rest in the stillness



# Mindfulness in Everyday Life

Exercise 2. Begin the day MINDFULLY  
(Set your alarm clock ten minutes early)

Most people start thinking or problem solving as soon as they open their eyes in the morning. The earlier in the day you practice Mindfulness the more likely you will be able to maintain it throughout the day. Your life is happening NOW - try not to miss it!



Be open to the whole present moment. Be aware of your body, the room, sounds, temperature, silence / noise



Wait until you feel anchored in the present moment - even if only for a second

Catch thoughts drawing you in..



**STOP -  
LOOK  
LISTEN and  
BE HERE  
NOW**



Try to maintain the sense of being here now as you start the day. Be present with each experience

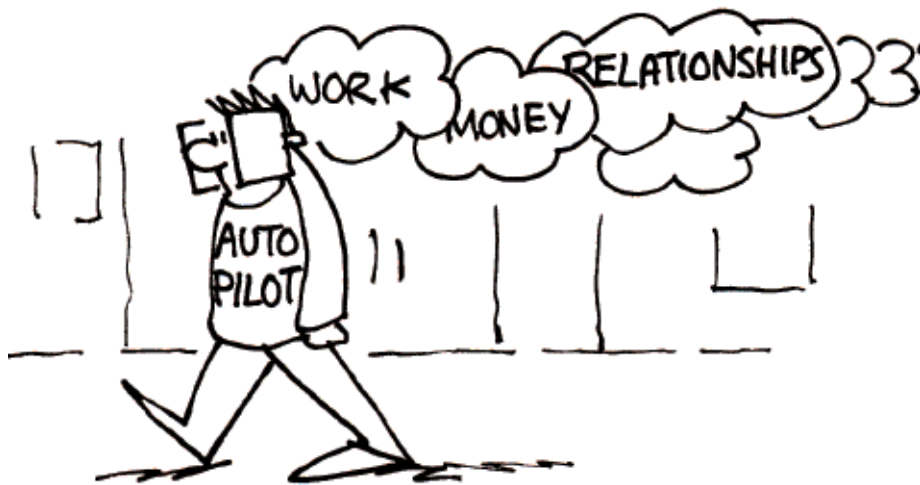


# Mindfulness in Everyday Life

## Exercise 3. Mindfulness of Walking

### Mindless Walking

This is the way most people walk around. It's amazing we don't bump into one another. How much of our ACTUAL life do we miss?



### Mindful Walking

First of all be aware if you are walking around lost in thought like the chap above.

Then remember The Mindfulness Code -

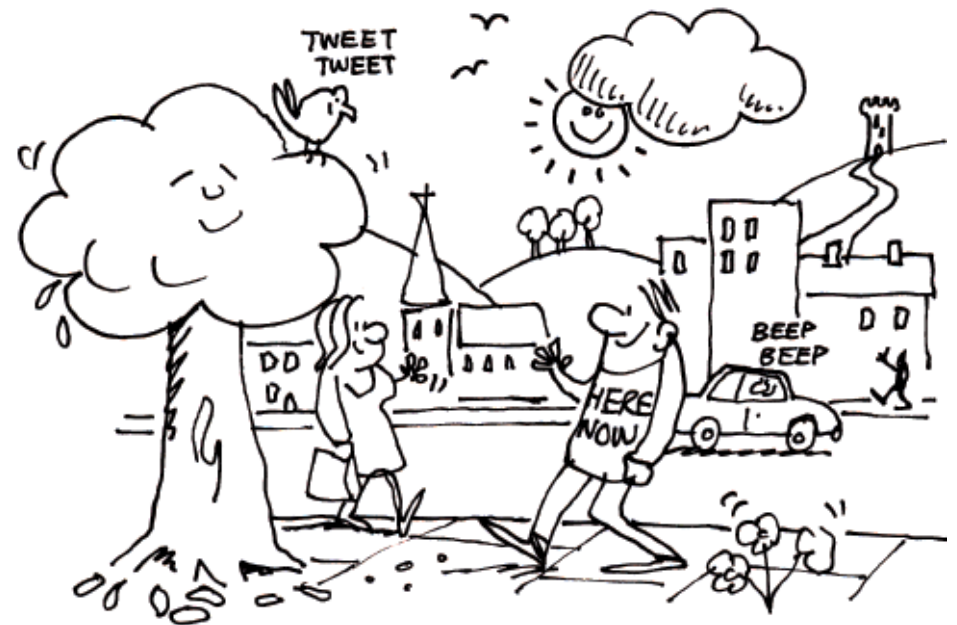
STOP - being lost in your mind

LOOK - at life all around you, happening right now.

LISTEN - to all the sounds that life is creating

BE HERE NOW - be PRESENT with the experience of walking

This moment won't come again!



# Mindfulness in Everyday Life

## Exercise 4. Mindfulness in Daily Activities

### Mindfulness 'Cues'

Because the idea of Mindfulness is foreign to our usual way of living life it can be helpful to use certain everyday experiences as 'cues' to remind us to be mindful



One of your first 'cues' in the day can be when you are brushing your teeth. Notice how 'automated' this activity has become. When you realise how frantically you are brushing - whilst completely lost in thought - pause for a second, slow down, smile at yourself and brush your teeth 'mindfully'



Be mindful of how you interact with other people. Do you really listen or are you just waiting to say your piece? Observe how much of your time is spent making judgments about others or how much time is spent worrying about how others see you.



Eating is a great time to practice Mindfulness. - Notice how you have barely finished one mouthful before you are shoving another one in. Does thinking, talking or watching TV take over at mealtimes? Enjoy eating for a change.

Bring Mindfulness to tasks you normally see as menial or boring. Washing dishes, vacuuming, etc. Each moment in life is what we make of it



Driving is another wonderful opportunity to practice Mindfulness. Switch off the Radio for a change. Bring your attention to the experience of driving. Feel the car moving along the road. Notice how you react if the traffic is heavy or if the lights are always red or if someone in front of you is interminably slow - use these moments as 'cues' to practice Mindfulness

Intensifying the healing  
power of Mindfulness



Mindfulness Meditation  
Practice



# Mindfulness Meditation Practice

(find somewhere quiet if possible)

## JUST SIT

BACK STRAIGHT / EYES OPEN (but relaxed)

BE OPEN TO THE ENTIRE PRESENT MOMENT

WITHOUT JUDGEMENT OR MANIPULATION

GENTLY be aware of / open to

Body / Breathing

Environment / sounds / objects / colours /

shapes / textures

The space around you

Imagine life beyond the room

Allow any thoughts or feelings to be as they are

Notice how thoughts come and go

Rather than judge emotions mentally -

experience how they feel physically in the here and now

just observe without judgements of 'good' or 'bad'

If you get lost in thought

GENTLY return to the here and now

See the thoughts as part of that experience

Don't try to get rid of them or change them



Stay open to the entirety of your present moment  
experience for as long as you can

Some things that may happen..

- **You may get bored or restless**

Use boredom as a practice. Consider why your mind feels compelled to be entertained all the time. How does this affect your life? Think how useful it would be to feel content in your own company without the need for distractions. Boredom can be very interesting if you explore it for a while

- **You may have strange thoughts or sensations**

This can happen sometimes - the mind is not used to sitting in this way. If you feel overly uneasy, stretch, readjust and try again. If the feelings persist, give up and try later. Don't turn it into an endurance test.



- **You will try to manipulate your experience**

Everyone has their own idea of what mindfulness is all about. Some try desperately to be relaxed or blank their mind or slow down their breathing. Some try to get rid of any unpleasant thoughts or feelings. The list is endless. These things are not 'bad' but they aren't Mindfulness - just observe the manipulation with curiosity.

- **You will try to achieve something..**

It's hard to break a life long habit! For instance, you will TRY to be very calm, you will TRY to be good at Mindfulness, you may be waiting for something to 'happen'. Again, just observe this.



- **You will think it is all a waste of time**

Sitting doing nothing does not seem very 'practical'. Just try it for a while and see what happens. Mindfulness practice has a cumulative effect. The more you practice, the more you will notice change in your life

- **You will wonder are you 'doing' it right**

Don't 'DO' anything - just BE.

- **Your thoughts will reach mania level!**

See the next few pages..

- **You may feel GREAT!**

That's a nice bonus - just don't turn that into a goal each time.



## What if thoughts get out of control?

When we try to sit without distractions our mind feels a great need to fill the void with endless chatter..



And the more we try to stop the thoughts or 'blank the mind' the more they grow and grow..



So what CAN we do about thoughts?..

We're going to look at several ways in which you can help to settle the endless chatter of your mind

1. See thoughts AS thoughts
2. Let thoughts BE AS THEY ARE (The 'Don't Think Of A Red Rose' Trick)
3. Using an 'Anchor'
4. Give thoughts an overall 'label'
5. Negotiate with the mind

## 1. See thoughts AS thoughts

We have a tendency to 'think' that thoughts are 'who we are'. "I think therefore I am". This is one reason we get so caught up in them.

Try seeing your thoughts AS thoughts. Observe them coming and going (don't judge them 'good' or 'bad' just observe).

Imagine them drifting in and out like clouds. Notice how they build up or change direction or drift from one topic to another.

Be aware of the gap (silence) BETWEEN each thought. And then just let them be.



## 2. Let thoughts BE AS THEY ARE!

The 'Don't Think Of A Red Rose' trick

I want you to try your hardest NOT to think about a beautiful Red Rose.. Go ahead..try really hard..DON'T think about that beautiful Red Rose..

Can you see that when you try really hard NOT to think about something you HAVE to bring it to mind in order to know what it is you're NOT meant to think about! It's a TRAP

Now try this

I want you to think about nothing else BUT the beautiful Red Rose. Don't allow ANY other thought or image to enter your mind. HOLD the image of the Red Rose in your head

Can't do it for long, can you?

When we instruct the mind to hold onto something it wanders off in next to no time. Think about the last time someone asked you to remind them of something - did you remember to remind them?

Use this trick with your thoughts in Mindfulness practice

The more you try NOT to think so many thoughts the more you think them. It's the same TRAP

But if you ALLOW yourself to think as many thoughts as you wish and even willingly OBSERVE them coming and going they tend to fade into the background.

### 3. Using an ANCHOR..

Sometimes the mind pulls you about so much it is helpful to 'anchor' it to some point of reference. This stops it getting lost in endless distraction.

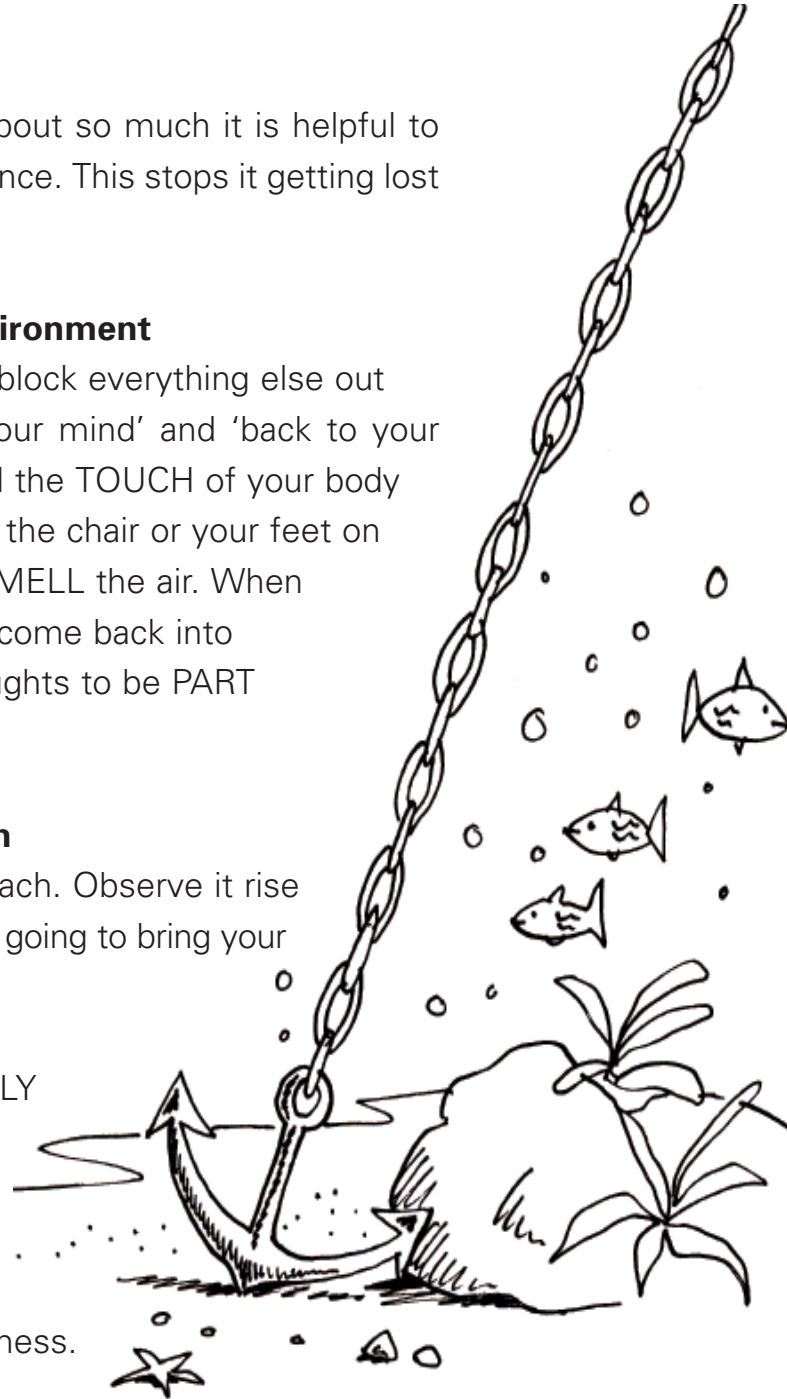
#### **Anchor 1 - Your immediate environment**

When we are lost in thought we block everything else out of our awareness. Get 'out of your mind' and 'back to your senses'. SEE life around you; feel the TOUCH of your body in your clothes or your weight on the chair or your feet on the ground; HEAR any sounds; SMELL the air. When your mind draws you in GENTLY come back into the life all around you. Allow thoughts to be PART of that experience.

#### **Anchor 2 - Following the breath**

Bring your attention to your stomach. Observe it rise and fall with each breath. You are going to bring your attention to each **out-breath**.

If the mind wanders, try to GENTLY bring your attention back to the out-breath. If you find the mind has settled, ease your attention back from the breath and open up to full present moment awareness.



#### **Anchor 3 - The Body Scan**

Scan slowly through the body beginning with your feet, moving up to your legs, stomach, back, chest, shoulders, down your arms, into your fingers and then up to your neck, throat, head, face and scalp.

Then feel your body as a single unit. If you find the mind has settled, open up to the full present moment awareness.

You aren't trying to relax or manipulate the body in any way - just bring awareness to each part. Do this at what ever speed you wish.

*One of the world's top golfers uses this practice during major tournaments. He does a quick body scan while he is walking to his next shot. This cuts out any worry about what might happen if he made a mistake.*



#### 4. Give the thoughts an overall 'label'

Instead of getting involved in the 'details' of a train of thought - give it an overall 'label' - for instance - "thinking about *the argument* again" - this wakens you up and stops you from getting pulled in.



#### A similar idea is used in Cognitive Therapy

Cognitive Therapy calls this Cognitive Distortions. These are inaccurate ways in which our minds think sometimes.

- Mind reading
- Fortune telling
- Catastrophising
- Discounting the positive
- 'Should' and 'must' statements
- All or nothing thinking
- Emotional Reasoning
- Overgeneralization
- Labelling
- Personalisation

#### 5. Negotiate with the mind

Try negotiating with your mind if it **INSISTS** on thinking, planning or figuring something out. Tell yourself that you will be able to resume thinking in ten minutes time and that this period of mindfulness will help you think in a far more effective and purposeful way.

## Mindfulness can help you process painful feelings and emotions

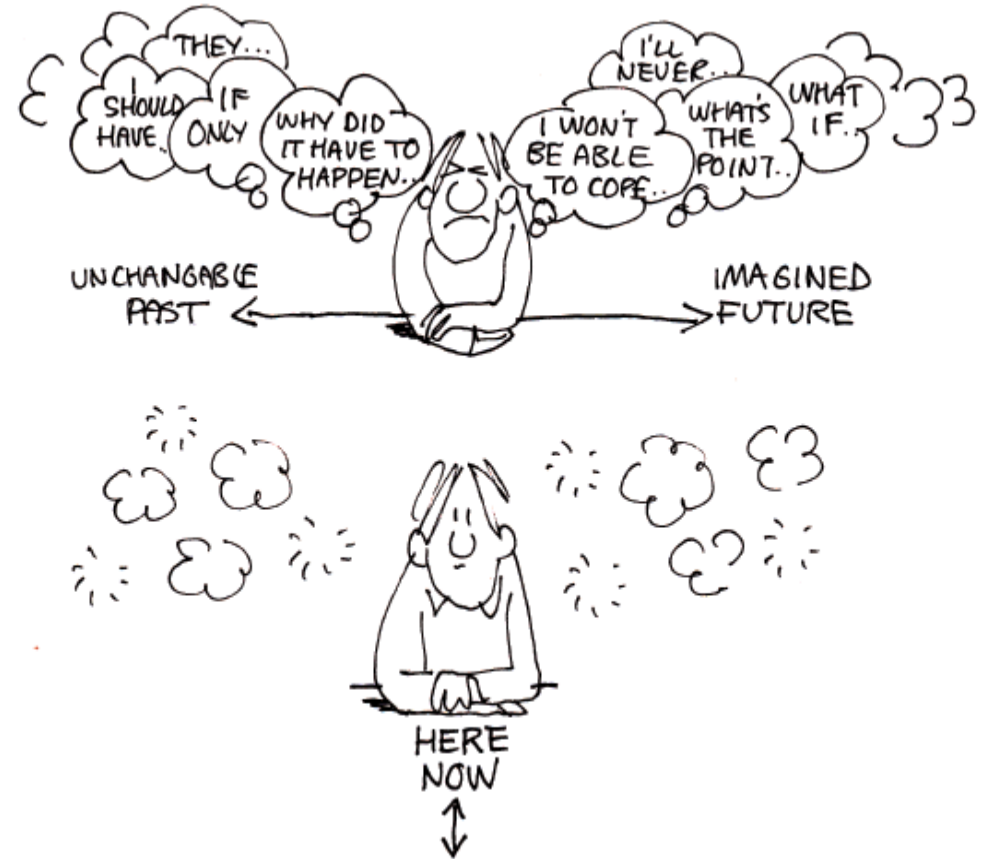
The key to using Mindfulness with distressing emotional feelings is to translate the feelings into purely PHYSICAL sensations experienced in the present moment.

Emotions become more overwhelming when we extend them into the past or future. - "Why did this have to happen" - "If only she had told me.." - "This pain will NEVER go away" - "Things will NEVER be the same again" etc. Each time we think in this way we increase our distress.

Alongside these thoughts we feel incredible fear of the physical sensations - the knot in our stomach, the nausea, the tightness in our head, the black cloud we feel in times of sadness or regret. We may be clenching our fist after an argument or just feel an overall sense of weariness or fatigue.

It is at this point where many people turn to outside means in an attempt to avoid the feelings or block them out.

We may not realise that a lot of our thoughts are related to the fear of these physical symptoms and when we sit Mindfully in a SPECIFIC way (see next page) with these feelings we discover that we CAN actually cope with them. This helps to bring our distress down and in the long term we have less fear of life's problems because we know we have an incredibly powerful coping mechanism.



It is easier to cope with one moment at a time rather than be swamped with the vastness of time

## Sitting Mindfully with Emotions

1. Use one of the anchors to first of all reduce the intensity of the feelings enough that you will be able to face them.



**Environment**  
**Counting Breaths**  
**Body Scan**

2. Feel where the emotion is in the body. Feel it as a purely PHYSICAL sensation. Try to withhold any judgements that involve the past or future such as "this SHOULDN'T have happened" or "I WON'T be able to cope". Just bring it right back to this exact moment you are in. What does it feel like physically here and now. Treat it as if it is a scientific investigation.

- Where in your body are the feelings located?  
Stomach / shoulders / head / back / chest ?
- Do they have a center point? How far do they extend?
- Are they dull / sharp / hot / cold / large / small?
- Do they have a colour / a shape?
- Do the feelings move about, are they like a cloud hovering around?
- If you feel nothing at all is it because you feel ok or do you feel 'numb'?

If the intensity of the feelings diminish as a result of this practice open your awareness to the full present moment. Sit Mindfully in this way for as long as you can.

If your mind drifts into past or future GENTLY return to the present moment in whatever way you can. You need only sit for a few minutes at a time but repeat the process whenever needed.

By doing this you are FACING the emotions in a controlled and gradual way. This practice lets you see you that you have a greater capacity to cope with emotions than you might have imagined - as long as you translate them into ACTUAL present moment physical feelings.



**BE CAREFUL !**

Don't make the mistake of thinking that 'sitting with the emotions' means you are to sit and focus on the endless past and future THOUGHTS about the emotions - this results in increased anxiety.

## FAQ's

### **When should I practice sitting Mindfulness and how long should I sit?**

Three times a day if you can and for no longer than ten or fifteen minutes. Only extend this time if you instinctively 'feel' it would be beneficial

### **Is this not just avoiding reality and problems?**

On the contrary. Mindfulness is DIRECT contact with reality. It is the ultimate exposure to feelings and thoughts that cause so many of our problems.

### **So mindfulness doesn't really solve problems it just makes you feel calmer about them?**

In one way, the aim of Mindfulness is not to manipulate your experience but that doesn't mean it won't lead to CHANGES in your life. For instance, if, through mindfulness, you see clearly that your avoidant behaviour is maintaining certain problems you are far more likely to change that.

### **Is mindfulness a safe practice for anyone?**

For nearly all people Mindfulness is useful or at least not harmful. However, people that suffer from schizophrenia or other serious mental illness should be careful. If a person with a serious mental illness practiced mindfulness in a certain way - for instance with their eyes closed or for hours at a time - they might get further caught up in destructive thinking patterns. Anyone who has a serious mental illness should only practice under strict supervision or at least make sure they stick to the guidelines laid down in this booklet.

### **What if the 'present moment' is horrible for me, why would I want to be more aware of it?**

To begin with, although avoidance can bring temporary relief it usually stores up more trouble in the long run because we never learn how to cope with our feelings.

But it is also very important to remember that sitting Mindfully in the present moment does NOT mean that we should focus MORE on distressing thoughts or feelings.

Thoughts become more distressing if we take them into the past or future. We can then be consumed by regret or fear. To stay in the present moment gives us much less to have to deal with. We also see that our thoughts and feelings are only a PART of our actual overall experience.

# A 4 Stage Mindfulness Schedule

Each day .. attempt some or all of the following..

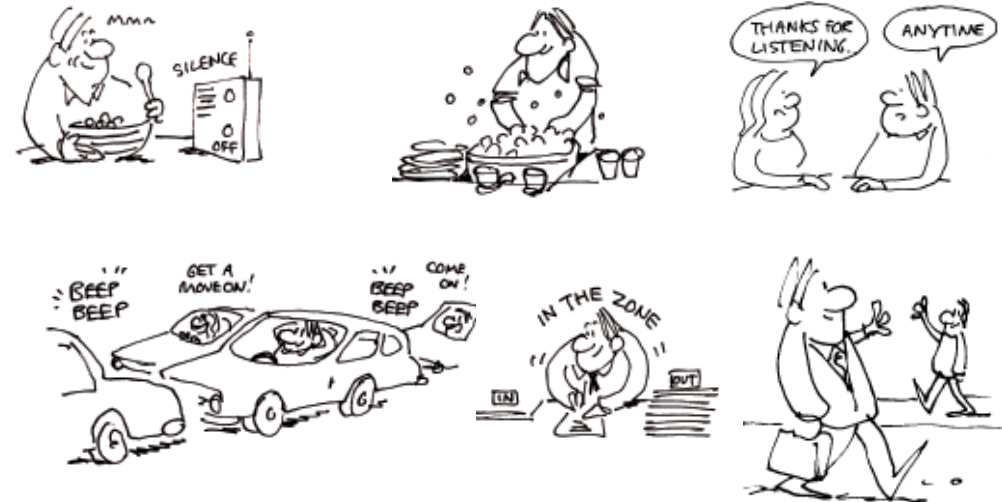
- Begin the day Mindfully



- Practise One Minute Mindfulness  
'anytime, anyplace, anywhere'



- Bring Mindfulness into your daily activities



- Mindfulness Meditation  
one to three times a day for ten to twenty minutes



Remember The Mindfulness Code  
STOP - LOOK - LISTEN & BE HERE NOW



# Mindfulness Practice Schedule

(Photocopy as required)

WEEK

DAY	PRACTICE	COMMENTS - ie. no. of times / type / observations etc
MON	Morning <input type="checkbox"/>	
	1 minute <input type="checkbox"/>	
Date	Daily Life <input type="checkbox"/>	
	Sitting <input type="checkbox"/>	
TUE	Morning <input type="checkbox"/>	
	1 minute <input type="checkbox"/>	
Date	Daily Life <input type="checkbox"/>	
	Sitting <input type="checkbox"/>	
WED	Morning <input type="checkbox"/>	
	1 minute <input type="checkbox"/>	
Date	Daily Life <input type="checkbox"/>	
	Sitting <input type="checkbox"/>	
THU	Morning <input type="checkbox"/>	
	1 minute <input type="checkbox"/>	
Date	Daily Life <input type="checkbox"/>	
	Sitting <input type="checkbox"/>	
FRI	Morning <input type="checkbox"/>	
	1 minute <input type="checkbox"/>	
Date	Daily Life <input type="checkbox"/>	
	Sitting <input type="checkbox"/>	
SAT	Morning <input type="checkbox"/>	
	1 minute <input type="checkbox"/>	
Date	Daily Life <input type="checkbox"/>	
	Sitting <input type="checkbox"/>	
SUN	Morning <input type="checkbox"/>	
	1 minute <input type="checkbox"/>	
Date	Daily Life <input type="checkbox"/>	
	Sitting <input type="checkbox"/>	

Taking  
it further

## 'Insight Meditation'

The practise of  
Self Enquiry



## Insight through Self Enquiry

Mindfulness practice will naturally lead to increased insight in all aspects of your life

To begin with you see that many of your thoughts and behaviours are automatic and habitual.

With non judgemental self observation you may also discover how these thoughts and behaviours came about.

You may then see that many of your most deeply held beliefs, ideas, hopes, aspirations, and fears have been 'added' from outside - parents, teachers, peers, the media, government.

Some of your beliefs may even only be as a result of wanting to do the *opposite* of what others were telling you to do.



"Hello and welcome to Life..  
Your name is .....  
Your race is .....  
Your Religion is .....  
Your political preferences are ..  
Your nationality is .....  
The school we will send you to is ..  
You must achieve .....  
You can do ..... but don't ever do ..  
We don't like people who .....  
We only want what's best for you..  
Any questions?"

Eventually you may wonder which beliefs or ideas - if any - are truly yours. This is when 'Self Enquiry' alongside your Mindfulness practice can be very useful

The most traditional method for Self Enquiry is to contemplate the question

"WHO AM I?"

As you ask yourself this question it is easier at first to contemplate who (or what) you are 'not'. The key is to remember that the question is more important than the answer.

You won't necessarily find an answer that you can write down, you may just get an 'intuitive' sense of who you 'are' that deepens the more you contemplate the question.

## The Practice of Self Enquiry

Sit Mindfully for 5 or 10 minutes and then bring the question "Who Am I?" to mind.

Below are some areas for exploration ...

"WHO AM I?"

Am I this body?

This body is in a constant state of change - cells die and are then renewed each second - within 7 years my body will be completely renewed. My skin, nails, hair all grow and then fall away - do 'I' fall away too? If I lost a limb, am I then less who I am? My breath is part of my body - when I breath out do I lose a part of 'me'. The food I eat becomes my body - at what stage does an Apple or a Donut become 'me'? Which body am I - the child, the teenager, the adult, the corpse?

Am I my mind?

I can observe my mind - I can improve my mind, fill it with new ideas - WHO is doing these things. I can even observe myself observing myself - why is this possible?



Do I define myself or others by job, career, wealth, stature, looks, gender, religion, nationality? - If I got amnesia and forgot all my personal history who would I be then - would I be 'nobody'? Would I still have the same set of problems or goals?

Who am I in relation to the natural world from which I arise and without which I cannot even exist? In order to exist I need the energy from the Sun, gravity, food, water, the Earth, space.. - are these things separate from me - could I survive without them? Is this important?

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Remember that the questions are just POINTERS to a deeper understanding of who you are.

You don't need to find 'definitive' answers. Intuitively 'feel' what the questions are pointing at - then stay open to that feeling.

Should your mind settle down then rest in the silence until your mind draws you in again.

## Some interesting facts about Meditation

- The University of Cambridge found out that Insight Meditation halved the relapse ratio of chronically depressed patients
  - \* In the Dutch town of Lelystad there is an elementary school where the children meditate twice a day for 10 minutes. The results are fantastic. The children get quieter and more stable, they achieve better in the national tests. Source: De Telegraaf, a Dutch daily, 22/01/04
  - \* Dutch business woman of the year 2003 Jeanette van den Ingh-van Wijk says in the Dutch daily De Volkskrant that she would never have won this title without her daily hour of Meditating.
  - \* Deepak Chopra estimates that people who Meditate for many years often have a biological age that is between 5 and 10 years lower than their chronological age.
  - \* When sleeping your use of oxygen drops 8%, during Meditation it drops 10 to 20%
  - \* Hormones with a calming effect like melatonin and serotonin increase as a result of Meditating, whereas the stress hormone cortisol decreases.
  - \* Meditating has an immense positive effect on the three great indicators of ageing: our sense of hearing, our blood pressure and our eyesight.
  - \* People that Meditate recover more quickly from diseases and will not often experience situations as stressful. Time Magazine 27/10/03
  - \* "Every day I train myself mentally by means of meditation techniques. It is a matter of listening to your deepest feelings, seeing who you are and start from that. You develop during your

lifetime and you see the results of this in the way you skate" (Bart Veldkamp, champion iceskater)

- \* Just before winning Wimbledon the famous tennis player Richard Krajicek read the Zen book "Nothing special" by Ch.J. Beck four times. In this way he learned to let go of an error very soon and concentrate right away on the next ball.
- \* In the U.S.A. 10 million people Meditate every day (Time Magazine, 04/08/03)
- \* Research has demonstrated that well trained meditators could not even be pulled out of their concentration by gunshots.
- \* The University of Wisconsin discovered that employees that Meditated have a higher frustration tolerance, more joy in their work, a more cheerful and more optimistic attitude and higher energy levels. It is also clear that conflicts and unpleasant relationships among employees decrease when they start to Meditate.
- \* In more and more airports you find special Meditation and contemplation centres.
- \* The university of Cambridge has discovered that insight Meditations halved the relapse ratio of chronically depressed patients.
- Famous meditators - Oprah Winfrey, Keanu Reeves, Halle Berry, Harrison Ford, Brad Pitt, Susan Sarandon, Tim Robbins, Paul McCartney, Justin Timberlake Shania Twain, Goldie Hawn, Richard Gere, former U.S. vice president Al Gore, Gwyneth Paltrow the managing director of Ford, Hilary Clinton, Albert Einstein, the Dalai Lama...



## BOOKS

### **Present Moment Awareness** by Shannon Duncan

This great little book expands on all of the areas described in this booklet. Easy to read. Great exercises.

### **Diamond Mind: A Psychology of Meditation** by Robert Nairn

Excellent, easy to follow book filled with golden nuggets of information and exercises

### **Everyday Zen** by Charlotte Joko Beck

Every line in this book teaches you something invaluable. Could be re-read a million times.

Most western Mindfulness practitioners swear by this book.

### **Zen O'Clock: Time to be** by Scott Shaw

A pocket book that will save your life if you're ever caught waiting in a queue or on a long journey.

Jolts you back into the here-and-now. Brilliant!

### **Wherever You Go There You Are** by Jon Kabat-Zinn

Excellent book that explores mindfulness techniques in short easily digestible chapters.

### **Full Catastrophy Living:**

*How to cope with stress, pain and illness using mindfulness meditation* by Jon Kabat-Zinn

There is a lot in this but it is also a VERY big read (470 pages)

### **The Zen Path Through Depression** by Philip Martin

Lots of succinct chapters dealing with various aspects of depression. Excellent meditation exercises

### **Awareness** by Anthony De Mello

I would rate this as one of the most inspiring and practical books I have ever read.

### **Meditation: a foundation course** by Barry Long

Short, sweet, to the point, practical yet poetic.

### **The Power of Now** by Eckhart Tolle

Terrific book. Apparently Meg Ryan recommended it to Oprah Winfrey. There is a shortened version called Practising The Power of Now - if you don't like a big read.

### **What is Meditation** by Osho

This brilliant little book is unfortunately out of print but they may bring it back so keep checking.

You can read one chapter per week at [www.deeshan.com](http://www.deeshan.com)

### **Stop Thinking Start Living** by Richard Carlson

Does exactly what it says on the cover. Great if endless thinking is your number one problem.

### **Mindful Recovery: A Spiritual Path to Healing from Addiction**

by Thomas Bien & Beverly Bien

Excellent book combining mindfulness and psychology. This will help anyone suffering from ANY addiction - alcohol, shopping, relationships, sex, eating etc

## WEBSITES

[www.umassmed.edu/cfm/](http://www.umassmed.edu/cfm/) Centre for Mindfulness (Jon Kabat-Zinn)

[www.mindfulnessstapes.com/](http://www.mindfulnessstapes.com/) Recordings by Jon Kabat-Zinn

[www.abc-of-meditation.com](http://www.abc-of-meditation.com)

[http://dukehealth1.org/int\\_med/stress.asp](http://dukehealth1.org/int_med/stress.asp)

[www.deeshan.com](http://www.deeshan.com) Get the daily meditation tip/quote

[www.springwatercenter.org](http://www.springwatercenter.org) Check out Toni Packer's articles