

Mindfulness Practices



Walking Mindfully

Do you walk around on autopilot, completely lost in thought? Cultivate a mindful way of being by walking with full attention in the present moment. Feel your feet touch the ground, notice the different sensations of different surfaces and pay attention to the feeling of your muscles moving as you take each step. Walking mindfully with bare feet on a textured surface like grass or carpet can help to calm unhelpful or anxious thinking.

This short video explains in more detail:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bEYb8MvHMP0>



Body Scan

Stress and tension impacts on the mind, emotions and the body. Our bodies can help us to recognise and release tension. The body scan exercise is about using the body to give attention to and release stress. Find a quiet and calm place to do this exercise and follow the steps outlined below.

- When you are feeling overwhelmed, frazzled or tense a simple practice like a body scan can help you to find a space to make a choice about how you react to the tensions in your life.
- Sit comfortably with your feet flat on the floor and your spine straight. Allow your breathing to fall into a natural rhythm, do not try to control it.
- Starting at the top of your head and scanning down your body, notice any place where you might be holding tension (hint jaws, neck, shoulders, hands, lower back are all common places for stress and tension to reside).
- Whenever you notice physical tension, take a deep breath in clenching the muscles in that area as tightly as possible – the as you release the breath left the muscles relax and soften all the way through the out breath.
- Repeat as many times as needed to feel the tension leave your body and continue scanning down the body until you have released the tension you can feel in your body.



Finger Tip Meditation

This simple and short meditation is an ideal beginner meditation to build up your mindfulness practice. Follow the directions given in the video below.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n-QmzS82y9g>



Mindful Eating

Eating is an activity we do routinely and is therefore a great opportunity to cultivate increased mindfulness. Most people do not eat mindfully, they eat on autopilot, not truly tasting their food or being aware of bodily signals of satiety, enjoyment or dislike.

1. Eat sitting down.
2. Take a few moments to notice to colour and smell of the food before starting to eat.
3. Eat your food in small bites, savouring the tastes in each bite.
4. Eat slowly.
5. Notice when you begin to feel full.



Mindful Listening

Listening is another daily activity that is often done with a busy, cluttered and preoccupied mind – half listening our kids tell us about their day, or our partner sharing something that happened to them or sitting in a meeting planning work or making internal comments about people in the meeting. Choosing to practice mindful listening as often as possible will help you cultivate a mindful way of being.

This short video will help you to bring mindfulness to your listening.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JbLbHaBzNUY>

Resources

Mindfulness and Stress

<https://mbsrtraining.com/jon-kabat-zinn-mbsr-training/>

The Brain That Changes Itself (Book and documentary) Norman Doidge

<http://www.normandoidge.com/>

<https://www.richardj davidson.com/>

<https://www.smilingmind.com.au/>

<https://www.mindfulness.org.au/general-public>

Self Compassion Resources

<https://self-compassion.org/self-compassion-kristin-neff-brene-brown/>

The Gifts of Imperfection (book) Brene Brown

Strengths Questionnaire

<https://www.viacharacter.org/>

Practicing Gratitude

<https://www.health.harvard.edu/mind-and-mood/in-praise-of-gratitude>