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# 10 WAYS TO BE MORE MINDFUL

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## Introduction

The word mindful, like a lot of English words, was created by combining 2 words. "Mind" and "full" combine to create a word which could literally be interpreted as having a "full mind". If you have recently taken in any information about mindfulness and how it can deliver so many wonderful mental and physical benefits, you may be thinking, *"My mind is already jammed full!"*

And in truth, the hectic, information overload experience that makes up most people's daily routine probably does have your mind working in overdrive just to keep pace. Your brain probably really is full. But is it full of the right things? Mindfulness is actually defined as *"the quality or state of being conscious or aware of something."* Oxford Dictionaries also points to mindfulness as...

*"A mental state achieved by focusing one's awareness on the present moment, while calmly acknowledging and accepting one's feelings, thoughts, and bodily sensations, used as a therapeutic technique."*

When you are intentionally mindful, you are being honest about your present moment and situation. Your mind is full, but it is filled with understanding your present situation, environment, and feelings, and using this knowledge to achieve mental and physical benefits. This is a nonjudgmental accepting of your emotions, sensations and ideas in "the present moment".

**The Sutra on the Four Establishments of Mindfulness reveals that there are 4 areas for mindfulness practice:**

- Mindfulness of the emotions
- Being mindful of your body
- Practicing mindfulness in your mind
- Being mindful of the objects in your mind

Mindfulness as a meditative practice can be summed up as "paying attention on purpose" to the present moment. An intentionally mindful attitude, meditating and focusing on your current experience, has been shown to reduce stress and improve cardiovascular health. It can even bolster your immune system and deliver other physical rewards as well as mental benefits. Practice the following 10 ways to be more mindful on a daily basis and you can find yourself conquering many mental and physical issues in your life.



## 1 – Clean up Your Home and Organize Your Workstation

The human brain craves order. It doesn't deal well with distractions. When you finally get your hands on that new book you've been dying to read, do you find a noisy, cluttered area full of distractions to read it? Of course you don't. You probably seek out your favorite chair or settle into your sofa for some quiet, focused attention and reading.

When was the last time you performed exceptionally well on a test, work assignment, spiritual or emotional area in your life? Did you just happen to luck across your success? You very well may have. But most likely, you focused your attention on getting that promotion or improving some relationship. You didn't let any distraction keep you from focusing on the result you desired.

**That is because the human brain is incredibly efficient when it focuses its attention.**

That is all that mindfulness is. You're focusing your acceptance of the current situation. This is very difficult when your cubicle, office or home workstation is filled with distractions and clutter. Since the human mind is programmed to be orderly and organized, even as you are trying to focus on any task or activity, your mind is subconsciously working on solutions for cleaning up your messy desk or sink full of dishes.

When you practice to be mindful, you consciously recognize that your workstation is full of distractions. You don't judge yourself for letting it get this way. But you do accept that you have created a cluttered work experience. If you are living quarters in a row cleaning and organizing as well is your work environment. This is a simple but especially effective way to allow yourself to focus what mindfulness by calling your brain with fewer distractions.

## 2 – Unplug From Society

You're probably reading this eBook on your smartphone or computer. So you may think it ironic that one of the easiest ways to be more mindful is to unplug from time to time. However, that's exactly what you must do to practice mindfulness. Technology has created a wonderful experience for human beings in the 21st century. Virtually any piece of information is at your fingertips when you need to access it.

Visual, mental, and auditory stimulations and experiences are available 24/7. They're as close as your nearest piece of personal electronics, and lead to an addictive behavior that causes you to consume all of the data and information you can get your hands on. That's why we are called consumers, because we consume entertainment at an incredible and unhealthy rate.

That can be a problem. Just as physical clutter and distractions fight very hard for your attention, electronic messages do the same. You have probably heard the estimates from one trustworthy source or another that each person receives thousands of advertisements and marketing messages every day. So it can be very difficult to focus on the present, since your present environment may be filled with so many contrasting thoughts and ideas begging for your attention.

Just because your phone rings doesn't mean you are required to answer it. Turn off your e-mail notification that rings a bell or buzzer every time you receive incoming mail. Turn off your phone, tablet and smart watch, and find a quiet place with few visual distractions to spend a little time each and every day.

You will find yourself intentionally making more time for these mindful moments, while simultaneously realizing that being constantly "plugged in" is not a naturally healthy state of being.

### **3 – Make Time for Intentional Meditation**

There is a practice called mindfulness meditation. This allows you to get into touch with distracting feelings and thoughts. When you're mindful, you don't ignore feelings or realities. You accept them as they are, noticing their presence in the present moment. Mindfulness meditation makes you aware of distracting and negative thoughts, feelings and environments with detached vision.

This way, you're able to gain insight on those things in your life that could be hampering progress in any number of areas. Since mindfulness is defined as focused thought, you must intentionally focus time during your day to practice this powerful healing technique. You can't simply hope you will have some time for meditation today, next week or this month. You must plan it.

Take a look at your typical day. Focus on regularly scheduled activities which deliver the most stress or negative feelings. Schedule meditation and mindful thinking immediately before or after these periods of time. Finding time for mindful meditation at the start and the end of your day gives you a positive start each morning, and develops a healthy sleep pattern at night.

#### **4 – Discover And Focus on Your “Big Why”**

What is your reason for waking up every morning? What legacy do you want to leave? What is your big reason “why” you do anything? Being mindful of the present moment also means becoming aware of your motivations. Many times, human beings are contrary.

You will work in the exact opposite of the direction you want to head. This is simply a fact of human nature. Take some time to recognize your most powerful reason why you move throughout your day. Your honest appraisal of that fact can help you focus your efforts in your intended direction.

#### **5 – Be Mindful of Common, Routine Experiences**

Often times, new practitioners of mindfulness will try to focus their attention on special or exceptional occurrences. However, mindfulness applies to every moment you exist. This includes routine, everyday experiences, thoughts and feelings. How can you become more mindful of changing your child's diaper, picking the kids up from school or boiling rice for dinner? Easy, trick yourself.

Today when you see your spouse, partner, child, neighbor or favorite coworker for the first time of the day, imagine you have not seen that person for a month. Yes, you will be “faking” this experience. However, it's a great way to understand that there is no such thing as a routine or common occurrence. Everything is special when you appreciate it by mindfully focusing on its present involvement in your life.

#### **6 – Recognize Who You Are**

You can never become truly mindful if you're lying to yourself. You know who you really are, even if you are not willing to put that assessment into words. Connecting with your true self means an honest admittance of your faults and positive traits. Take some time to meditate on who and where you are in life.

There is a reason you're unique, a reason why no human being in the history of mankind has ever or will ever be just like you. Recognize your amazing uniqueness, embrace who you are, and you can become the best "you" that you can be.

## **7 – Breathe and Walk With Focus**

Mindfulness is nothing more than being conscious of the present moment without judging it. People walk without even realizing they are going from point A to point B. It's an unconscious behavior that we take for granted. However, you can't be present in your body if you're not consciously aware of what it's doing.

Focusing on the non-judgmental state of your breathing and walking helps you live in the present physically. Through this honest acceptance of your physical being, you can create the physical reality that you desire. When you're honestly mindful of the physical body you have created, you'll begin to be more aware of your body on a regular basis.

### **How do you breathe more mindfully?**

This simple miracle shouldn't be taken for granted. Throughout your day, look at some beautiful, peaceful vision and tell yourself, *"Breathing in, I am aware of my green garden."* You can experience the same mindful breathing while regarding a body of water, your workstation monitor or any other object. Then tell yourself, *"Breathing out, I smile to my green garden."* This is an expression of your awareness of the moment. You can practice the same exercise anywhere and anytime you walk.

## **8 – Slow Down When You Eat, and Enjoy Your Meal**

Do you wolf down your food? Many people do, and this leads to a long list of health problems in some cases. Be mindful of your food. Consciously taste each bite, the flavor and texture of every meal you eat. Chew slowly, and let your digestive system do its job properly. Not only will you experience fewer diet-related health problems, but you'll also realize the incredible blessing that is delivered with even the simplest of meals.

## 9 – Recognize the Stressors in Your Life

When you are truly mindful, you do not judge. You simply take note. Recognizing stress is often tough, because nobody wants to admit that a family member, friend or loved one is a constant cause of stress and anxiety. Often times when you mindfully and nonjudgmentally locate the cause for stress in your life, you find out it is you.

No matter what causes anxiety, depression and stress in your life, you need to give it its due. Recognize it, and you become more aware of how to eliminate it. Multiple studies on intentional mindfulness show that it increases positive emotions while reducing negative emotions and stress at the same time.

## 10 – Stop Multitasking Immediately

Multitasking became a business buzzword in the latter part of the 20th century. And no wonder. Businesses increasingly add to the duties and requirements of even simple job positions. Factor in your family and personal lives and responsibilities when considering your workday to do list, and multitasking starts to look like more than just a good idea. It seems to be an absolute requirement for life these days.

The problem is that every bit of research on multitasking as opposed to focusing your efforts reveals it to be incredibly frustrating and ineffective. The reason why mindfulness is so effective at creating your dream reality, mentally, spiritually and physically, is that it focuses on one thing at a time. Multitasking is the polar opposite of mindfulness.

**Multitasking should actually be called incomplete tasking or task switching.**

You flit from one project or responsibility to the next, never completing any one of them. Each time you focus your attention on a new project or chore, your brain has to quickly switch gears. Research has shown that it takes longer to complete everything on your to-do list when you multitask. And the efforts are less productive. You know what is needed from you to get through your day. Take tasks in order, completing them and moving to the next. Your business and personal lives will be more productive as you become more mindful of each individual project or chore you are handling.