

What is Mindfulness?

*What is Mindfulness and How to Practice It
A Beginners Guide*



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Welcome

Thank you for taking your first step toward a more mindful life!

I have created this little guide to help you begin to understand what mindfulness is and how you can start practicing it daily.

Let's dive in!

Kate





HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide features space as a journal/workbook so you can make notes as you learn more. I have also included a link to free downloadable mindful breathing meditation to get you started.

QUESTIONS?

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WHAT IS MINDFULNESS

Mindfulness is a way of looking at things differently and allows a way for you to relate to all of the experiences in your life which may be causing you to suffer. This, in turn, will allow you to personally transform yourself.



We, as humans, are constantly looking for ways to solve the causes of our suffering and then discover how we can alleviate it.

Sooner or later you end up asking yourself questions such as: “Why don’t I feel better?” or “Is there something I can do or something that can be prescribed so the pain go away.”

No one wants to be on pills for the rest of their life. As we age (and sometimes throughout your whole life) you can suffer with illness. Sickness, old age and death usually exposes us to pain.



Throughout your life you can struggle emotionally when you are confronted with adverse circumstances. When you don’t get what you want in life, if you suffer from great loss or have to deal with things you don’t want to deal with, you are constantly seeking ways to feel better.

Mindfulness is a 2500 year old tradition of Buddhist psychology. Mindfulness has to be experienced directly. Mindfulness comes from within because it is intuitive and pre-conceptual.

*Avoiding emotional pain is not the remedy
~ Mindfulness Exercises*

Mindfulness As A Practice

With practice over time you can figure out how to become more and more mindful in your everyday life. Mindfulness can help even if you are in the middle of significant suffering. Mindfulness has been compared to a deeply personal journey of discovery.

Mindfulness is meant to bring about awareness, attention, and remembering. Awareness means becoming aware and fully enjoying and appreciating the things around you no matter how small it is.

When you are attentive, it means that you are participating in *focused awareness*. That means that you are aware of what is occurring within and around you. When you participate in this “awareness” you can begin to free yourself from mental preoccupation and difficult emotions.



*Be about peace.
Live in harmony.
Spread Love.
Vibrate Higher
Daily. Journey
Light. Live
Mindfully. Grow
Daily*





The true purpose of mindfulness is to rid yourself of needless suffering. But how do you do this?

You do this by becoming aware and cultivating insights into how your mind works and the meaning of everything in the material world we live in. You are looking for ways to calm your mind and bring peace to your world.

Through mindfulness you are re-training your mind in order to manage it. Mindfulness allows you to develop other mental qualities including concentration, loving/kindness, effort and becoming more alert.





Mindfulness is not an end-all or doorway to happiness but it can provide you with the foundation you need to build those skills.

By allowing yourself to get rid of habits in your mind that can cause you unhappiness, the result will be letting go of anger, envy, greed or other harmful behaviors that serve no purpose.





Mindfulness brings about self-acceptance and self-understanding. We bring upon ourselves unwanted emotional and behavioral problems simply by trying to avoid discomfort and throwing ourselves into some other sort of change-seeking activity.

Mindfulness is about awareness and acceptance first and changes second.



PRACTICING MINDFULNESS

Developing mindfulness takes practice. We are so used to going through our days not really thinking or being aware that it will startle you once you start practicing the art of mindfulness. You will become aware of everything and experience it in the present moment versus the past or the future through deliberate mental practices.





All mindfulness involves some form of meditation practice.

There are lots of misconstrued ideas about meditation, especially in western civilization, so let's take a moment to understand what *mindfulness is not*.....



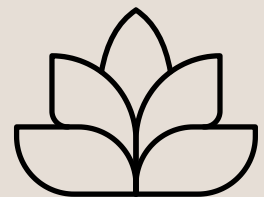


Mindfulness is not...

Not Having Any Emotion.

When you start to practice mindfulness, you will see that it does not relieve you from your emotions. If you are experiencing tough times in your life, it is easy to want to become *mindless* about everything surrounding you. That is not what mindfulness is about.

Because you are actually taking the time to stop and become aware of the contents of your mind, you are becoming aware of and noticing your emotions in a much more vivid fashion. It is amazing in that your ability to recognize how you feel will increase as you release your normal defenses. You will find that letting go of destructive distractions (i.e. over-eating) will make way for more thoughts about how you really feel.



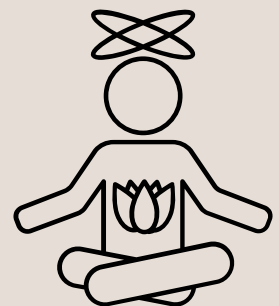


Mindfulness is not....

Wiping Your Mind Clean.

By practicing mindfulness you are training your mind to be aware of what it is doing all the time.

You will now become aware of what you are thinking in the present moment. We don't want you to empty your mind or loose your sense. You are going to be learning to use your mind in different ways.





Mindfulness is not...

Seeking a Blissful Life.

While everyone would love to live in a state of utopia, thinking that they have hit upon a spiritual being higher than themselves (and God-like spiritual is not what we are talking about), we can feel that way, but don't think everyone else is struggling within their reality.

Many people who practice meditation become distressed when they find their minds wandering. They can feel a sense of agitation or become unsettled at the thought.

If you are practicing mindful meditation, you allow pleasant states of mind to come and go, not holding onto blissful states or rejecting unpleasant ones.

You are simply just being present and observing.



Mindfulness is not...

Withdrawing from Life.

If you practice Mindful meditation, you are not going to become a monk, a nun nor a hermit dwelling in a cave somewhere (unless of course, you would like to!).

Instead, you are fully experiencing moments at a time and paying attention to the present.

It's that simple.



Mindfulness is not...

Escaping Pain.

Practicing mindfulness meditation is not going to take away your pain completely. Rather, it is going to help you to manage it.

As you go through your life, you will ultimately feel levels of physical and emotional pain. The more you experience and practice mindfulness, the more capacity you will have to understand, endure and control the pain.

Painful sensations are one part of the equation and the suffering caused by the pain is another. In order to alleviate the pain from suffering you need to let go of resisting the pain, protesting the pain and the avoidance of it. This way, you can experience the pain in a moment-to-moment awareness and acceptance.



Now that you know the basics of what mindfulness is and what it isn't, you can begin to think about how you want to incorporate mindfulness into your daily life.

Use the journal entries in the following pages to write out your thoughts and set your intentions for your practice.



DATE	Mood
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DAILY JOURNAL

YOUR THOUGHTS

MINDFUL GOALS	HOW WAS I MINDFUL TODAY

DATE	Mood
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DAILY JOURNAL

YOUR THOUGHTS

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DAILY JOURNAL

YOUR THOUGHTS

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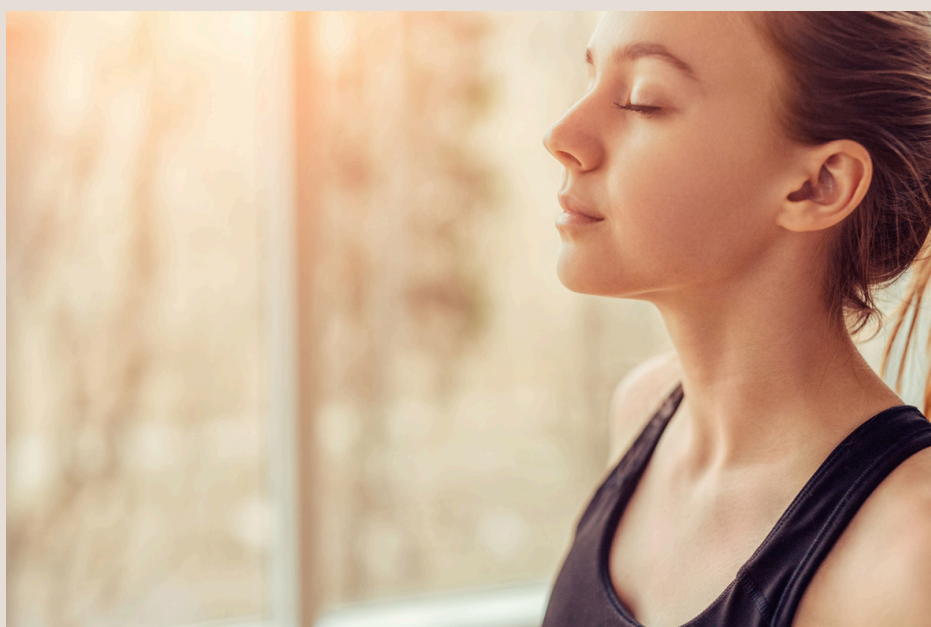
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DAILY JOURNAL

YOUR THOUGHTS

MINDFUL GOALS	HOW WAS I MINDFUL TODAY

START WITH MINDFUL BREATHING



Throughout much of our modern way of living, we tend to forget that we're breathing. While the breath continues on without our conscious effort or awareness of it, drawing our attention to it can deepen our sense of peace and ease by easing the body's stress response.

Mindful breath awareness and deep breathing practices can help to reduce cortisol levels, one of the body's primary stress hormones. So it goes without saying that the breath is a powerful tool that is worthy of our fullest attention.

[Click here to download a free mindful breathing meditation.](#)

CONCLUSION

Mindfulness Guide

Mindfulness is indeed an ongoing practice. The benefits you will enjoy from using mindfulness daily are immeasurable.

Mindfulness will ease your stress, calm you anxiety, and promote more balance in your life.

Need more support?

Contact me to learn more about how to begin your Mindful Life Practice.

[Click here to learn more and reach out!](#)



Thank you,

Kate