

# Mindfulness for Everyone

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If you're new to the idea of mindfulness, this is a good place to begin exploring. This corner of mindful hub is dedicated to giving you the most basic definitions, and simplest instructions to enable you to start your mindfulness practice right now. We know you don't have a lot of time to read, and we want to encourage you to actually practice mindfulness, not just read about it. Having said that, here is the most basic information you will need to start a mindfulness practice, right here, right now. When you are ready and have more time to deepen your understanding of the practice,

## ***What is mindfulness?***

Mindfulness has been described as intentionally watching the moment to moment thought activity of the mind, without judging or attaching to the thought activity. Many scientific studies

have proven that mindfulness calms the mind and body.

## ***How do I practice mindfulness?***

**1. Breathe.** Focusing on the breath is the easiest way to begin because we always carry our breath with us. Deep, even breathing has the added benefit of calming the nervous system and engaging higher order brain activity.

**2. Begin Watching your thoughts.** Begin to watch your thoughts as though you were watching a movie. When you watch a movie, you don't typically jump into the film. You usually stay somewhat detached from the movie. This is how you treat your thoughts in mindfulness.

Your thoughts will wander from topic to topic. Practice watching them with detached interest. There will be time after your practice to actually do something about the thoughts if necessary. But for the length of your practice, just continue to breathe deeply and evenly, and stay detached from the activity of the mind.

It's that simple, but sometimes quite difficult! If you begin to get frustrated with the activity of the mind, remember, the goal is not to empty your mind, although you may experience some moments of thought-free bliss. The goal is to come back to the breath, and detach from your thoughts over and over again. This is how we make change in the mind and the body. This is mindfulness.



### ***Why is everybody talking about mindfulness?***

Call it mindfulness, meditation, or self-examination, contemplative practices have been a part of almost every culture and every spiritual tradition. However, these practices have taken a back seat to the high-technology and rapid change our culture has seen over the past two centuries. Although the benefits of our evolution are many they have also led to an epidemic of distraction and dissatisfaction.

The Scientifically proven benefits of mindfulness meditation include a resetting of the nervous system, more attuned communication, and an increased ability to regulate emotional states.

### **Great news! You don't have to be a monk or even devote hours of your day to gain the benefits of mindfulness!**

Research conducted by Richard Davidson at the University of Wisconsin Neuroscience lab has shown that advanced meditators have more activity in the frontal lobe region of the brain. Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging shows that this part of the brain, associated with positive emotions is incredibly active in the Buddhist monks the researchers used as subjects. However, even more exciting is the fact that follow up studies conducted on individuals new to the practice of mindfulness also show more activity in the frontal lobe region compared to pre-tests conducted before a six week course in meditation. **This means that you and I, the overworked, over stimulated masses can benefit from the simplest of mindfulness practices.**