



*The Busy Person's
Shortcut to
Mindfulness:*

What to do when you roll
your eyes at mindfulness,
but need to de-stress

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What is mindfulness anyway?

It means **PAYING ATTENTION** to the moment you're in, right now, without judgment or trying to change it. To yourself. your life your relationships, etc., when you need to do so.

I want to help you go from being *mindless* to being able to pay attention when you feel stressed and overwhelmed, rather than hot-potatoing out of stress with more mindlessness.

Why should I care?

So, even if we were to call it mindfulness, why the hell should I even care?! Well, several researchers have found that practicing mindfulness can:

- Improve sleep
- Aid weight loss
- Reduce depression
- Reduce medical costs
- Lower blood pressure
- Improve relationships
- Reduce loneliness
- Increase self-acceptance
- Boost feelings of compassion
- Increase patience
- Strengthen relationships

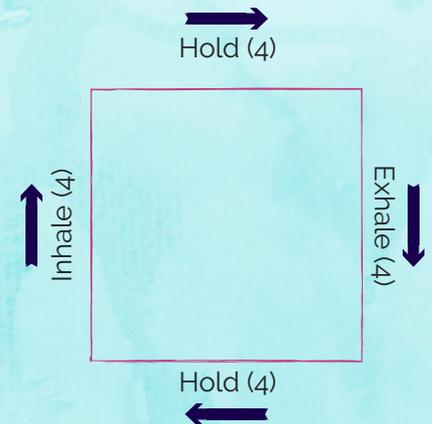
Breathing Exercises

Box Breathing

Used by Navy Seals as well as Yoga devotees.

Inhale 4 counts
Hold breath 4 counts
Exhale 4 counts
Hold 4 counts

Repeat for several minutes (set Insight Timer)



4-7-8 Breathing

Inhale for 4 counts
Hold for 7
Exhale slowly for 8
(as if blowing through a straw)

Why this works

When overwhelmed or flooded with feelings, our body can go into fight or flight mode. This triggers the release of adrenaline and other hormones that leads to your ability to fight or run away, but not stay and communicate rationally. Breathing is the fastest and most efficient way to slow your heart rate and help you get back to a place of being able to respond, rather than react.

APPS

Insight Timer has more than 4,000 guided meditations topics like self-compassion, nature, and stress. If you prefer a quieter meditation, you can always set a timer and meditate to intermittent bells or calming ambient noise.

Aura is a meditation app that sends a you new, personalized, three-minute meditation daily. The same meditation never repeats. It asks about your age and how stressed, optimistic, and interested in mindfulness you are to personalize your meditations.

Stop, Breathe & Think helps you get acquainted with mindfulness first. There is a section for learning that explains what mindfulness is, why it's beneficial, and what to expect. It even covers some of the neuroscience of mindfulness and the physiology of stress, in case you're still skeptical.

Why this works

We can access the apps anywhere we go with our phones. As beginners to practicing mindfulness, it's often hard to know what to do or how to do it. The apps provide an array of options to explore what works best for you in various situations. You may like one meditation for sleep and another for a stressful situation at work.

A mindful way to deal with overwhelm

RAIN

R- Recognize and label your feelings. This provides space between you and your feelings to create immediate separation so that *you are not* your feelings.

A- Accept them as part of your experience. We often do not want to accept them so we avoid, numb, or ignore them altogether. This fuels mindlessness cycle.

I- Investigate how the feeling affects you: your body, thoughts, and actions. Act as an outside observer.

N- Non-identification. Imagine the feeling as a car passing on the road rather than letting them define you. Feelings are temporary.

The whole point

When we are busy and overwhelmed, it's far too easy to get swept up in the frenzy of life and miss out on a lot of your life. When we're multi-tasking, we may be *checking things off* the list, but we are not *checking in* with ourselves.

Eventually, this pace catches up to us by migraines, getting sick, feeling exhausted, conflict-ridden relationships, etc.

These exercises and others can help you to start tuning in and paying attention to yourself more often. So that you can make decisions that are in your best interest. So that you can stay healthy. So that you can be the best you, partner, parent, employee, boss, coach, etc. that you can be.

It may seem like you don't have time to be "mindful," but really, you can't afford not to be.