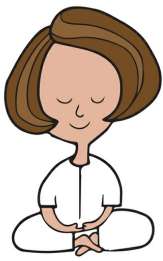


SIMPLE MINDFULNESS TECHNIQUES

from skyterrawellness.com

Mindfulness is the ability to focus awareness on the present moment. This is often done by connecting back to your breath and calming the mind so you can experience life fully as it happens without being overwhelmed by thoughts or emotions. Simple techniques such as these can improve your ability to be mindful throughout the day.



Sitting

Traditional Dedicated



Walking

While Moving



Drinking Tea

Quiet Moments



Doing Dishes

Daily Tasks

Sitting Meditation

Dedicated time is spent sitting on the floor in a cross-legged or lotus position. Rest your right hand in your left. Begin focusing on your breath. In. Out. In Out. You can count 1, 2. Or you can choose a mantra, "I breathe in and relax. I breathe out and smile." This is the most traditional form of meditation where you take time out of your day to follow your breath and quiet your mind. 30 minutes or more a day is recommended, but start with just 15 minutes if you are new to mindfulness.

Walking Meditation

Instead of listening to music or talking on your phone, simply walk. If you are walking the dog, you should be only walking the dog. Start to follow the breathe, counting it with your steps. In, two, three, four. Out, two, three, four. At the beginning your breath may not be even on the in-breath and out-breath. This is fine. You might also find a phrase to repeat that matches the counting of your steps. For example, if you breathe in for six steps you might say "My heart opens with each breath." On the out breath you might say "I breathe out and feel calm."



Drinking Tea

While drinking tea (or even drinking coffee or eating a piece of fruit), focus on just drinking the tea. Be aware of each step you take as you make the tea. If you find your mind drifting, just follow your breath. As you sip your tea, savor the taste. Feel the warmth of the cup in your hands. You are drinking tea to drink tea. This quiets the mind and brings you back to awareness of your body.

Doing Dishes

When you do the dishes or any household task (sweeping, dusting) don't think about getting the job done or what you will do later or did earlier. Don't watch TV. Don't think about anything except doing the dishes. Notice the feeling of the warm water and the smell of the soap. If you get distracted, come back to your breath, "I breathe in. I breathe out."

Why Be Mindful?

We tend to get caught up in the past or obsess about the future. This leads many to feel overwhelmed with feelings such as shame and anxiety. Mindfulness allows us to experience each moment and be truly alive. Start with these simple practices then try to spend a whole day being mindful. Research shows that when you train to be mindful, you actually change the physical structure of your brain.