Mindfulness Exercises

InsightTimer

Explore free mindfulness practices:
Daily Mindfulness

Mindfulness is the practice of paying full attention to the present moment with openness and curiosity. In this worksheet, you will find instructions for different types of mindfulness exercises. These activities are designed to help you develop mindfulness skills that can reduce stress, improve focus, and increase overall well-being.

Mindfulness Meditation

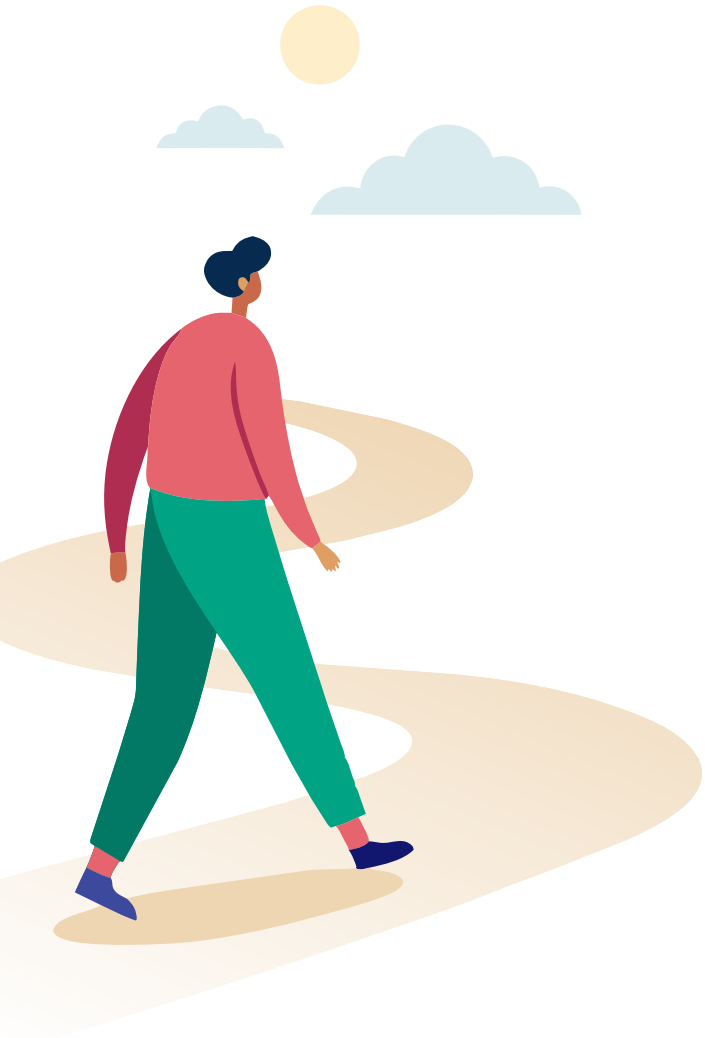
Mindfulness Meditation is a practice where you intentionally focus your attention on the present moment, often by observing your breath, bodily sensations, or thoughts as they come and go. The goal is to notice whatever arises without judgment, cultivating a calm and accepting awareness.

1. Find a quiet, comfortable place to sit, either on a chair or cushion.
2. Sit upright but relaxed, with your hands resting in your lap or on your knees.
3. Close your eyes or soften your gaze.
4. Bring your attention to your breath, noticing each inhale and exhale.
5. When thoughts, feelings, or sensations arise, acknowledge them without judgment and gently return your focus to your breath.
6. Continue for 5–10 minutes (or longer if you wish), simply observing the present moment.
7. When you're ready, open your eyes and take a moment to notice how you feel before moving on with your day.

Mindfulness Meditation
by Hugh Byrne

Walking Meditation

Walking meditation is a way to bring mindfulness into movement. By focusing on the sensations and rhythm of walking, you can cultivate presence and awareness in everyday activities.



1. **Choose Your Path.** Find a quiet, flat walking path about 10–15 paces long, indoors or outdoors. Somewhere you can walk back and forth without distractions.
2. **Begin With Awareness.** Stand still for a moment. Bring your attention to the sensations in your feet and legs. Notice how your body feels as you prepare to move.
3. **Walk Mindfully.** Begin walking slowly and deliberately, focusing your attention on the feeling of each step: lifting, moving, and placing your feet. Walk to the end of your path.
4. **Pause And Turn.** When you reach the end, pause for a breath or two. Turn around slowly and continue walking back with the same mindful awareness.
5. **Find Your Rhythm.** Walk at a pace that helps you stay connected to your body. Slowing down often helps quiet the mind.
6. **Return When Distracted** If your mind wanders, gently guide your attention back to your senses. Notice the feeling in your feet, or tune in to the sights and sounds around you.
7. **Optional Additions.** If helpful, breathe rhythmically with your steps or repeat a phrase of lovingkindness silently as you walk, such as “I am here” or “At ease.”

Walking Meditation Instructions
by Tara Brach

Body Scan Meditation

Body scan meditation involves slowly moving your attention through different parts of your body, noticing sensations, tension, or discomfort without trying to change anything. This practice helps increase awareness of physical sensations and can promote relaxation.

1. Lie down or sit in a comfortable position.
2. Close your eyes and take a few deep, calming breaths.
3. Begin at the top of your head and slowly move your attention down your body—forehead, jaw, neck, shoulders, arms, hands, chest, back, hips, legs, and feet.
4. At each area, notice any sensations, tension, or warmth.
5. If your mind wanders, gently bring it back to the part of the body you're focusing on.
6. Finish by taking a few deep breaths and noticing your whole body as a single field of sensation.

Beginner's Body Scan
by Dora Kamau

Mindful Breathing

Mindful breathing is the practice of focusing your full attention on the natural rhythm of your breath. This exercise helps anchor you in the present moment, calms the mind, and can be used anywhere to reduce stress or regain focus.

1. Sit or lie down comfortably in a quiet space where you can relax.

2. Begin to breathe slowly and deeply.
   - Inhale gently through your nose for about
   - 4 seconds. Exhale slowly through your mouth for 6 to 8 seconds.
   - Let each breath flow smoothly, without holding or pausing between breaths.

3. Alternatively, try balanced breathing:
   - Inhale for 4 to 6 seconds.
   - Exhale for the same length of time.
   - If helpful, count silently to stay consistent.

4. Keep your attention on the breath. Feel the movement of air. Allow your body to soften with each exhale.

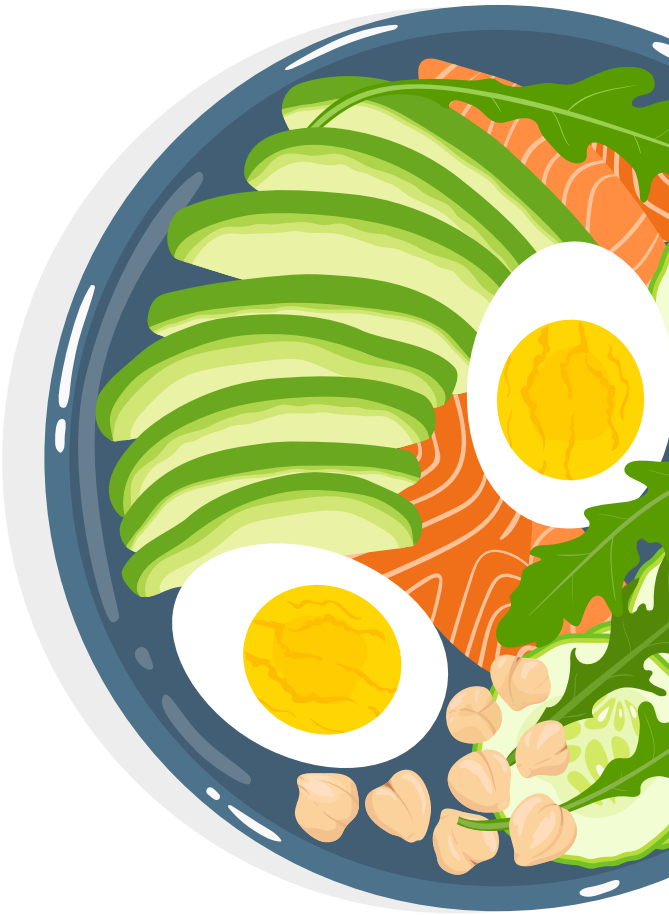
5. Repeat for a few minutes, or as long as feels comfortable.

Short Mindfulness of Breathing Meditation
by Hugh Byrne

Mindful Eating

Mindful eating is the practice of paying close attention to the experience of eating, using all your senses. It encourages you to slow down, notice flavors and textures, and become more aware of hunger and fullness cues.

1. Sit down at a table without distractions like TV or your phone.
2. Look at your food, noticing its colors, shapes, and arrangement.
3. Smell your food and notice any reactions in your body.
4. Take a small bite and chew slowly, focusing on the taste, texture, and temperature.
5. Pause between bites, putting down your utensil if you wish.
6. Notice how your body feels as you eat, and stop when you feel satisfied.



Mindful Eating Meditation
by Michelle DuVal

Mindful Listening

Mindful listening means giving your full attention to the sounds around you or to another person speaking. It helps you become more present in conversations and can deepen your connection with others.

1. Set an intention to listen with complete attention.
2. Take a few slow breaths to settle your mind.
3. Focus on the sounds you hear or the words, tone, and body language of the person speaking.
4. Notice any judgments or urges to interrupt, and gently let them go.
5. Stay present, returning your attention if your mind wanders, and respond only after the other person has finished.

Mindful Listening
by Tamara Russell

Five Senses Exercise

The Five Senses Exercise is a grounding technique that uses your senses to bring your attention fully into the present moment. It can be especially helpful during times of stress or anxiety.

1. Notice five things you can see. Look for details you might not usually observe.
2. Notice four things you can feel, such as the texture of your clothes or the air on your skin.
3. Notice three things you can hear. Listen for sounds in the background.
4. Notice two things you can smell. Inhale deeply to pick up any scents.
5. Notice one thing you can taste, perhaps the aftertaste in your mouth or a sip of a drink.
6. Move through each sense slowly, focusing your attention fully on each one.

5 Senses Grounding Meditation
by Colleen Barrows

Conscious Relaxation

Conscious relaxation is a practice where you intentionally focus your attention on relaxing your body and calming your mind. The goal is to activate your body's natural relaxation response, helping to reduce stress and promote a sense of physical and mental well-being.

1. Settle into a comfortable position: sit or lie down in a way that allows your body to feel supported.
2. Bring gentle attention to areas of tension.
3. Notice any tightness or holding in the body, without judgment.
4. With each out-breath, invite softening.
5. Imagine the tension loosening as you exhale. Let the sensations float in awareness.

   Focus on key areas:
   - Shoulders: Let them drop away from your ears.
   - Hands: Unclench and rest them with ease.
   - Belly: Soften through the abdomen with each breath.
   - Face: Relax your forehead, jaw, and especially the tongue, from the tip all the way to the root.
6. Stay with the sensations.
7. Let your awareness be light and kind, allowing the body to soften gradually.

Mastering The Art Of Relaxation
by Rick Hanson