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8 Ways to Add Mindfulness to Your Life



**“Nourish
the inside,
flourish
on the
outside.”**

Mindfulness is becoming increasingly popular because our culture is craving this kind of balance. Between politics, social media, and technology, not to mention to our to do lists, hectic schedules and trying to be perfect, we are becoming more stressed and anxious than ever before.

Mindfulness is paying attention to what is happening right now, without judgment. Here are 8 simple ways to train the brain to become more mindful, present, clear and productive.

#1. Reframe

Gratitude always starts your day off right and will retrain your brain to scan for the positives instead of the negatives. Think of 3 things you are grateful for upon waking.



#2. Focus on the present

When you are in the shower, feel the water and soap on your body instead of thinking about your first meeting at work. Start your day with a clear head by focusing on your body.



#3. Eat mindfully

Pause before you eat, think about where the food came from, smell it and eat it slowly, one bite at a time. Try to eat without any devices or distractions.



#4. Use your car

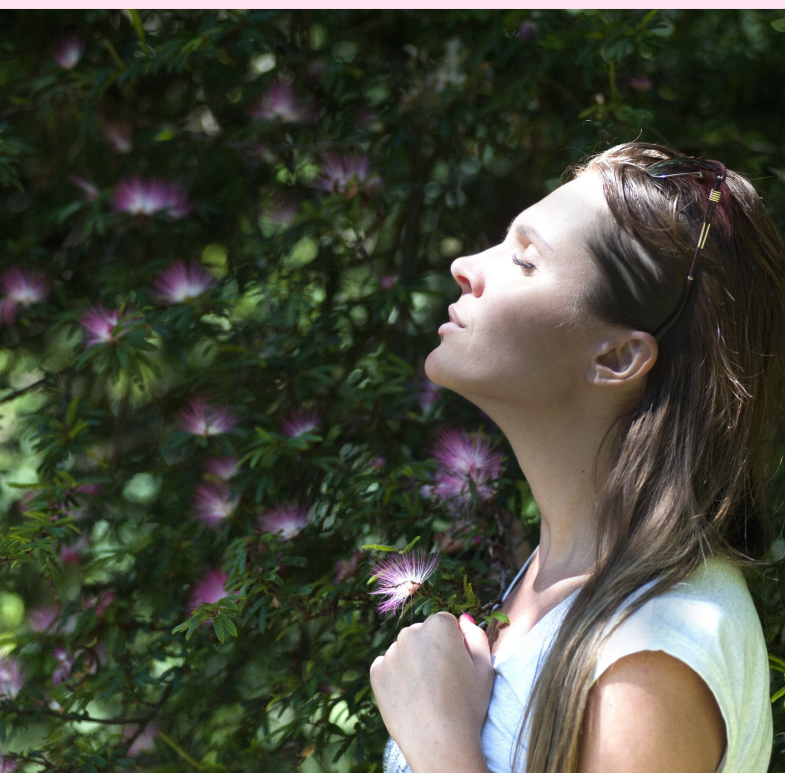
When you are in the car, take time to notice the trees, feel your hands on the wheel and pay attention to the road- instead of being lost in your mind. Use traffic as a natural break to your busy day. Notice your speed.

What is it like to go a little slower?



#5. Breathe

Before you go into work, the gym, or running errands, take a few deep breaths. Use your breath when you are feeling stress arising in your body or need to relax.



#6. Strike a pose.

Try a yoga class if you don't practice already. In yoga, you are using your breath to relax and mindfully focus on the movement, to get in touch with your body. We often live in our heads, and need to get in touch with how our bodies feel.



#7. One thing at a time.

When you are checking emails, just check emails. When you are doing the dishes, just do the dishes. Multi-tasking does not exist, causes stress and cannot be done properly. We think we are being productive, but all we are doing is a lot of tasks poorly.



#8. Formal meditation

Time is scarce, but 10 minutes can make a big difference. Focus on your breathe and when you have a thought, label it "thinking" and come back to your breath. You are not going to be able to block out thoughts, and that is not the idea. Gently returning to your breath without judgment is the key to meditation.



For more ways to lighten up inside and out, check out my new book, "Mindful Is the New Skinny" jodibaretz.com