

Building your connection with the “now”

September 2016 Newsletter



Here’s a short experiment: For the next minute or two, try to focus only on reading this article. See if you can be right here, right now.

If your mind wanders off, it’s okay. Just notice what’s drawn your attention away and gently bring it back to reading this article.

Enjoy the present through mindfulness

This experiment is about mindfulness. Mindfulness is “awareness that arises through paying attention, on purpose, in the present moment, non-judgmentally.”¹

“Mono-tasking” instead of “multi-tasking” is one way that we practice mindfulness. While trying to read this article, you can get distracted by thoughts about last night’s TV shows, your next meeting or what you’re making for dinner. Part of being mindful is noticing your mind is elsewhere and coming back to doing just this one thing right now.

Benefits of mindfulness

Mindfulness can help you enjoy life more. When you pay attention to what you’re doing and how you’re doing it, you can feel calmer and more in charge.

People who practice mindfulness have been shown to have²:

- Better ability to manage pain and fight off illness
- Less obsessive thinking
- Sharper focus
- Better decision-making skills
- Less overall stress

Ways to practice mindfulness

- **When in a meeting, stay focused on it.** When your mind wanders, just bring it back to your breathing and to what’s happening within you and around you. The benefits? You can improve your communication, problem-solving skills and creativity because you’re really present.
- **Try eating alone once a week or more.** Have you ever “inhaled” a meal and then had trouble even remembering what you ate? Try this: While eating, think about the taste, smell and look of your food. It may take less to satisfy you — and you may get more pleasure from the meal.
- **Spend time with someone and think only about what the two of you are doing and saying.** Being with someone — and not taking phone calls or checking messages — can help you enjoy each other more. It gives you space to bond.

It’s easy to get started with mindfulness

With regular practice, you can build your ability to be “here” right now. Start by trying to be mindful for just three breaths. Do it for one, five, or ten minutes a day. Then aim for a few more times a day.

As you make it more of a habit, you’ll find mindfulness can create a positive difference in your life. Try it and see!

¹www.mindful.org. Accessed July 2016.

²www.psychologytoday.com. Accessed July 2016.