

WAYS TO INCORPORATE MINDFULNESS INTO YOUR DAILY LIFE

In the morning:

- Take 5-10 minutes before you get out of bed to do a body scan from head to toe. Notice how your body is feeling today and set an intention to take care of yourself.
- Sit next to the window with a cup of tea or coffee. Gaze out the window, listen to the sounds of the world awakening or take a slow quiet walk in your yard before starting your morning routine.

While driving:

- Pay attention to your body as you drive. Notice any places of tension, such as hands gripping the steering wheel, shoulders raised, stomach tight, etc.
- At each stop light take 3 deep breaths to refresh yourself.
- Decide not to play the radio and just be with yourself. Reflect on your day and what lies ahead. How can you bring more joy and meaning to your day?
- On the highway, experiment with riding in the slow lane.
- Once you park your car, take in the sights and sounds and people you meet as you walk to your place of work. Take a new route to your workplace.

At work:

Many things happen in the day that we can use to bring us home to the present moment, including:

- The telephone (take two breaths before answering)
- Walking through a door (pause before entering the room)
- A Code Blue: send good wishes to the patient/family and team responding to that crisis.
- Walk intentionally, paying attention to the sensations of your body as you move through the halls.
- While sitting at your desk, keyboard, etc., pay attention to bodily sensations. Every hour get up, stretch, breathe, drop your shoulders and try to rid yourself of excess tension.
- Use your breaks to truly relax, rather than simply pausing. For instance, instead of having coffee to reenergize yourself, take a short walk or sit somewhere quiet and soothing and b-r-e-a-t-h-e.
- Eat one or two lunches per week in silence or spend at least 5 minutes of your meal in silence. Use this as a time to eat slowly and be with yourself. Take a few mindful breaths before you start eating. During the meal, be aware of chewing your food. Enjoy the textures and flavors of your food. If you do have a conversation, keep the topic light and supportive.
- At the end of the workday, acknowledge yourself for what you've accomplished and consciously leave tomorrow's to-do list for tomorrow.
- Pay attention to the walk to your car – breathing the crisp or warm air.
- Feel the cold or warmth of your body. Take in your surroundings.
- Consciously slow yourself down, preparing to make the transition to home.

At home:

- Try changing out of work clothes as soon as you get home. This simple act might help you make a smoother transition.
- Say “hello” to each of your family members or to the people/animals you live with and take a moment to look into their eyes and take in their presence. If you live alone, feel what it is like to enter the quiet of your home.
- If possible, take 5-10 minutes to be quiet and still. Reflect on the day, focusing especially on the things you did well.
- If you watch television at night, turn down the sound during commercials or between programs. Close your eyes, and take some mindful breaths. If you're reading, try stopping every half-hour. Close your eyes for a minute or so, and bring your attention back to your breath. Become aware of the noises or silence of your home.
- As you go to bed and prepare for sleep, take some deep breaths, become aware of the bed supporting you, and allow yourself a smile. Feel the muscles of your body relaxing as you sink into your bed. Let go of the day's activities and your anticipation of the next day by focusing on your breath and body.

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