



7 Strategies for Making Mindfulness a Way of Life



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Mindfulness is a popular subject these days. While there are many proponents of mindfulness extolling its many virtues, there's a lack of information on how to make mindfulness a part of your life.

Mindfulness is a skill and a way of life. It's one thing to learn the skill. It's another to make it part of your life. For example, you can know how to read without being a "reader."

Take advantage of these ideas to incorporate mindfulness into your daily life:

1. Start your day with mindfulness. If you want to make mindfulness a habit, it's important to practice being mindful throughout the day.

- Begin your day with mindfulness before you even get out of bed. Notice all the physical sensations of your body. Do you have any aches or pains? What part of your body feels the most pressure on your bed?
- See how long you can lie still before your thoughts drift to something other than your body or your immediate surroundings.

2. Be mindful of your body. Continue to be mindful of your body throughout the remainder of the day. **This is a great way to anchor your attention to the present.** When you find your attention wandering, put your focus on your breath. Or notice the parts of your body that are touching the floor. Are you hot or cold?

3. Use routine activities to hone your mindfulness skills. One of the best ways to create a mindfulness habit is to be mindful during your daily tasks. This includes things like brushing your teeth, using the restroom, showering, driving, mowing the grass, and so on.

- **Eating.** Be especially mindful during eating. Chew your food slowly and be fully aware of how your food tastes and smells.
- **Conversing.** Give your full attention to your conversations and the other people involved. Are you listening with your full awareness, or are you impatiently waiting to speak again?

4. Use music as mindfulness practice. Listening to music is another great opportunity to practice mindfulness with your sense of hearing. Try to identify each instrument in the song. See how well you can keep your focus on the music instead of allowing other thoughts to intrude.

5. Ride out cravings. When you suddenly have an urge to do or eat something you know you shouldn't, resist that urge. Notice your thoughts and body sensations. Keep your attention on them until they fade away. **It happens quicker than you think.**

- This can be helpful when you have the urge to eat unhealthy food or text your ex.

6. Put your phone away. Your smartphone can be a huge distraction and obstacle to mindfulness. Avoid checking your email or social media accounts until a suitable time. This is another opportunity to ride out your urges, too.

- Do a little experiment and see how long you can go without checking your

phone. See how long you can go without thinking about your phone. You might be surprised by the results.

- 7. Set a reminder.** A timer can be an effective way of cueing you to be mindful. When the timer alerts you, remind yourself to be mindful and immediately practice mindfulness. Refocus your attention on whatever you're doing at that moment.

Mindfulness is a wonderful thing. **It can relieve stress, increase enjoyment, increase productivity, reduce anxiety, and help you to build a more accurate view of the world.**

Knowing how to be mindful isn't enough. You have to make it a habit that you rely on throughout the day. Make mindfulness a part of your life and watch the transformation.

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