

Calm yourself

1000's of scientific studies
including brain scans report
regular mindfulness

- Reduces stress, distress & pain reactivity
- Improves mood & ability to control emotions & behaviour
- Improves concentration & decision making

Overall psychological and
physical wellbeing¹



with

Practical Mindfulness Training

Designed and produced by the Involvement, Recovery and Wellness Centre.

Please contact 01625 505647 for further information.

Helping people to be **the best they can be**



References

Front cover: ¹ Burch, V. and Penman, D. (2013) *'Mindfulness for Health a practical guide to relieving pain, reducing stress and restoring wellbeing'* Piaktus, UK.

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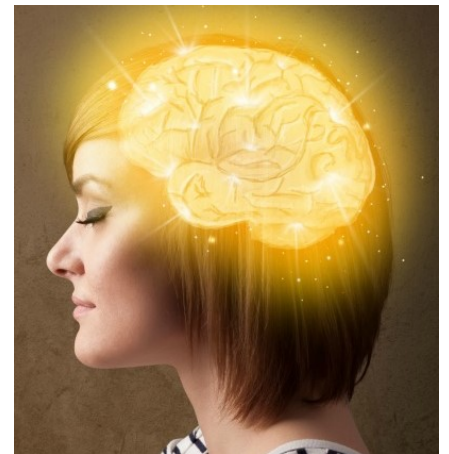
All meditations have been adapted from sources by Emma Naden. This workbook has been produced for the Involvement, Recovery and Wellness Centre by Emma Naden, Vivienne Banks, Tracey Williamson, – CWP NHS FT 2020, for review in August 2022 and pending consultation with people who use our services.

Welcome

We're glad you're here

You only make things change in your life if you take action and try to do things differently. This workbook is packed full of practical activities you can keep trying in your daily life to train your mind with practise that will:

- **Reduce stress, distress & pain**
- **Give you the skills & confidence in your ability to better calm yourself & control your own mind & body**



Part of self help is knowing when you need further support. If you find your symptoms continue to stay the same or worsen, including after repeated mindfulness practise please stop and seek support from your care team, health professional, or GP.



This booklet belongs to - if you find it please return to:

Name:

Contact details:

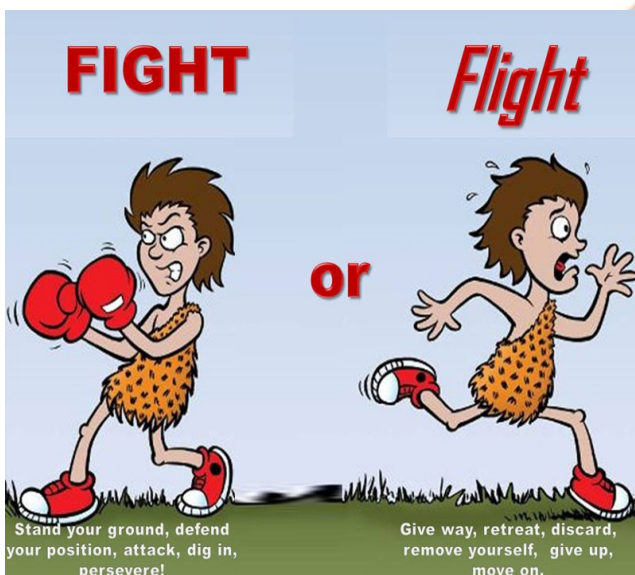
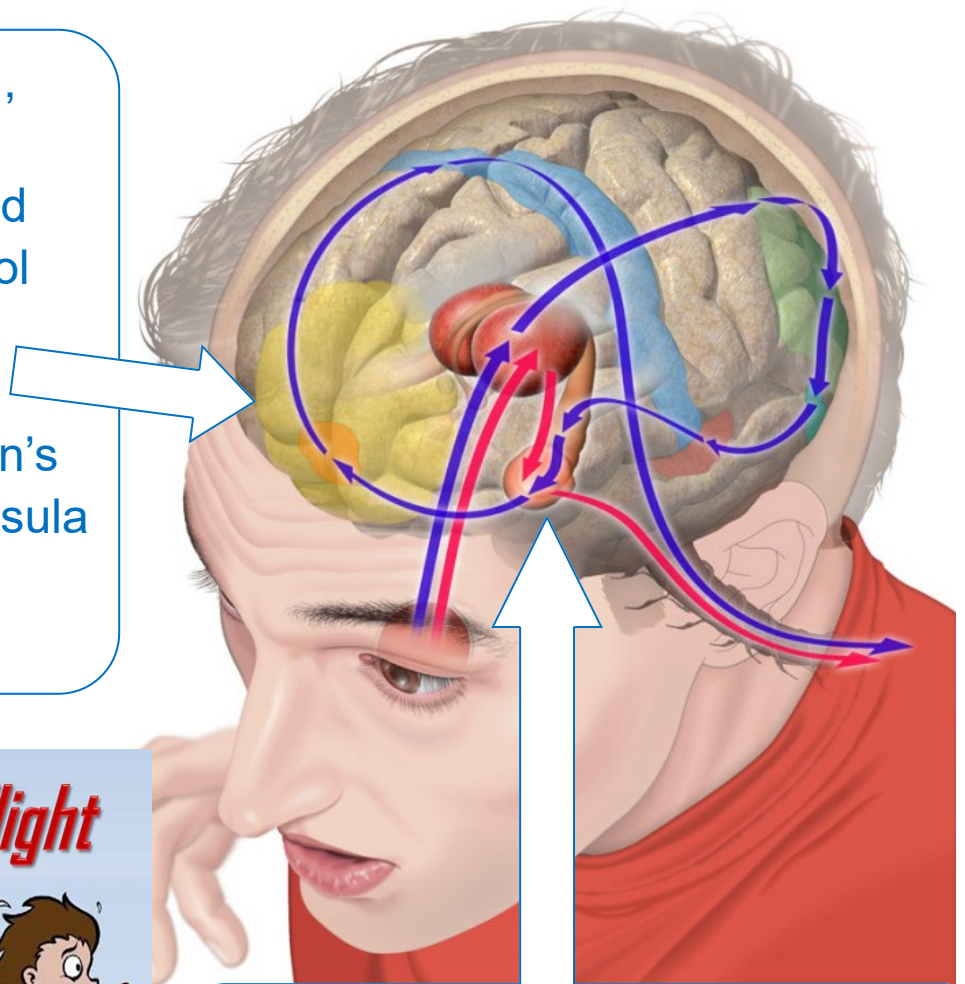
What is mindfulness?

Mindfulness is the skill that anyone can learn of gently training your attention and brain on the present moment, without judgment, to things just as they are ^{1, 2,}

Why do it?

Regular repeated mindfulness, attention and brain training can:

Improve your mood, concentration and decision making and your ability to control emotions and behaviour by improving your brain's prefrontal cortex, insula and hippocampus involved in this ^{5,6,7}



Reduce stress, panic, distress, anger, urges to attack or run away – our '**fight and flight**' response, due to shrinking the part of your brain involved in this; the amygdala ^{4,7}

How to do it?

Try these daily mindfulness activities

‘Train your attention to do one routine activity mindfully at the same time every day, even if for only 3 minutes, and it will soon become a habit, where you don’t even have to think to do it anymore, and your mind will find a little bit of calm each day’^{1,8}

Daily mindful indoor activities



1. Daily mindful showering or bathing

Changes your mind state for a better start to the day

Focus on the warm sensation of the water as it falls onto your head and runs down your body. Apply shampoo and slowly massage into your hair, feeling the bubbles and foam in your fingers. Slowly massage the soap on each part of your body starting from the top of your head working down to your feet.

Slowly rinse all the foam away as if rinsing all the stress away, and gently dry your body with a towel.

Notice and enjoy how it feels to have a clean body.³



2. Daily mindful teeth brushing

Really good for checking what state your mind is in every morning & keeping your teeth clean !

Slow down and carefully clean each teeth in turn, top and bottom around your mouth one by one, watching as you do it in the mirror if you can. Notice the feeling of the brush, the smell and taste of the toothpaste in your mouth, and feeling of the fresh water as you rinse your mouth at the end.⁹

Daily mindful indoor activities

‘Your mind will wander away, many times, as that’s what minds do! just gently bring it back to the activity each time as best you can, it will get easier if you keep trying’¹

3. Daily mindful hot drink



Really good for waking you up and soothing your worries

Pay attention to the kettle; boiling, bubbling and gurgling, wisps of steam. Notice how you make a drink, how the colour of the water changes. How the drink feels in your hands. Sip a little, feel the taste on your tongue, gently move it around your mouth. Is it pleasant? Or do you prefer it stronger or weaker, hotter or colder? Notice without judgement any desire to rush the drinking, and any impatience that comes, and savour the drink.¹⁰

4. Daily mindful eating



Take the time to really look at the food and describe it to yourself. What colours are there? What shapes and textures are there rough and smooth? Notice the smell and taste as you slowly bring the food to your mouth. Where does the food sit on your tongue? How does it feel and change as you move it around your mouth? How does it change when you chew? How do you swallow it? How does your mind and body feel after you’ve finished eating?¹¹

5. Daily mindful bed making



Slowly pay attention to how you take the covers off the bed, how you remove the pillow covers,. Watch with curiosity what you are doing and how the bed changes. How do you decide what covers will go on the bed? Notice how you make the bed, how you smooth the sheets down and how you feel at the end when you have made the bed.¹²

Daily mindful indoor activities

‘There’s no right or wrong way of practicing mindfulness, your way is the right way, as each time you try whatever happens is where you are in your training, and that’s just right for you ’ ¹³

6. Daily mindful phone & online use



If you are impulsively drawn to your phone, just STOP and ask yourself:

Am I using the phone to do something helpful for me and others ? OR

for something unhelpful ? Or Out of boredom? Or to escape the present moment?

If you don’t really need to pick up your phone, just leave it alone. Start to notice the urge to use your phone or get online and why you want to ? What reasons and feelings are there. ¹⁴

7. Daily mindful washing up



Notice the temperature of the water and how it feels on the skin, the texture of the bubbles, the scent of the washing-up liquid, the sounds of the water as we take out the dishes, the shape of the dishes, the smoothness of the plates, and the texture of the sponge. Just noticing what we might not normally take the time to notice ¹⁵

8. Daily mindful declutter



Clearing out your living spaces and years of stuff can be a very therapeutic activity that clears your mind and creates new fresh clean space at the same time. Perhaps put some music or comedy on and slow down, take your time, tackle one small area at once, and ask yourself do I really need this ? Is it helpful to me ? If you haven’t used it in 3 years, is it time to get rid of it ? Many humans love to keep stuff ! ¹⁶

**Did you know regular mindfulness:
improves working memory ¹⁷ & lowers blood pressure ¹⁸**

Daily mindful mood improvers

‘Different things work for different people so experiment try different activities until you find the one you like’⁸



9. Daily mindful listening

Take 5 minutes to listen to sounds around you, what can you hear, a train passing, birds singing, cars, other people, how loud are the noises, do they have a start, middle and end, notice your tendency to label each sound ?²

Listen to some favourite songs or music. How many different sounds can you hear? How many different instruments? can you hear the words? How does the rhythm change ? How does it make you feel in your mind and body, does it lift your mood ? Relax you ? Make you feel more able to cope ?¹³



10. Daily mindful art & crafts

Try drawing or painting an object, person, or landscape around you or any picture from your imagination, or colouring in a picture already drawn. Take the time to really notice the colours, shapes, strokes of your brush or pencil, the little details and it fits together to make a picture. Or make something, from card, wood, fabric or anything ! Notice if your mind and body get fully engaged ? Do you feel calmer ?¹⁹



11. Daily mindful joy & laughter

Make some time and space and put on some music or karaoke and sing and dance as if no one is watching.

Play a game mindfully - blow a balloon up and try to keep it in the air for as long as you can without it touching the floor ! Or play other games mindfully.

Watch or listen to something uplifting or funny or someone laughing or read something that is uplifting. Try smiling or online laughter yoga. Notice how this changes your mind and body, how does it make you feel ? Do you release any bottled up emotions ?²⁰

Daily mindfulness outdoors



12. Daily mindful walking

Rather than be "in your head", go for a walk and look around. Notice what you see, hear, and smell. Notice the sensations in your own body as you walk. Notice the sensations and movement of your feet, legs, arms, head and body as you take each step. Pay attention to how you contact the ground under your feet, how you change your body as you move forwards. Notice your posture and how you walk. Is your head and back straight? Do you like to walk fast or slow, with big strides or little steps? Are you finding it difficult to walk slowly and mindfully? Do you want to rush? ²



13. Daily mindful nature time

Spend a little time each day soaking up nature and natural things. Look out of the window and soak up the view or go outside onto a path. What can you see, hear and smell? How would you describe the scene? What is the weather like? Can you hear and feel the wind, or feel the sun or rain on your face? Can you see the sunlight reflecting all the different colours. Is it hot or cold? How many colours can you see? How many different objects can you count in the landscape? Can you see any animals or insects? Can you hear any noises? Notice how this makes you feel? ¹



14. Daily mindful driving

As you start your car, take a few minutes to sit and notice how you feel and what thoughts are going through your mind. Whilst driving, focus your attention on any areas of tension in your body, are your hands wrapped tightly around the steering wheel? Are your shoulders raised? Are you rushing? Now make a deliberate effort to release the tension in your body, relax your shoulders and arms, let go of your need to rush and just drive in the moment paying full attention to the act of driving safely and calmly. ²

Daily mindfulness at work²

15. Daily mindful good start to the workday



Take a few minutes in the morning when you arrive at work to settle and centre yourself. Listen to your mind and body and attend to their needs, whether it's making a drink, having a comforting conversation with a colleague, or setting up your work area. Then just take a few minutes to sit quietly and listen to the sounds around you, then turn your attention to your breathing, and let the tension flow away from the body to the ground before you start work ²

16. Daily mindful desk stress & tension release



Take regular mindful pauses whilst working at your desk, computer, etc. Take a few minutes to become aware of your breathing and bodily sensations, check your tension levels in your body and where you feel it most. Check your stress levels and where you feel that most. Then consciously attempt to relax and let go of excess stress and tension, let all work pressures just momentarily flow out of your mind, and gently loosen and move any tensed up parts of your body.²

17. Daily mindful breaks



Use your breaks to truly relax rather than just pausing. Go to a new environment e.g., go for a walk, have your lunch away from your desk in a different room, or outside. Use this as a time to recuperate, recharge and refresh your mind and body, and drink lots of water. Eat one or two lunches per week in silence, eat slowly and mindfully and just be with yourself. Take some time to talk to others about things that are not work related.²

When work finishes, acknowledge and congratulate yourself on what you have achieved and make a list for tomorrow.

Manage your work life balance carefully, going home on time and taking regular holidays²

Evening mindful calm practises

18. The 3 step Breathing Space meditation ²

A quick way to bring yourself into the present moment, check the state of your mind and body, and calm your mind in the evening for a better night's sleep



Step 1

Sit, stand or lie down in an erect and dignified posture, and if possible close your eyes.

Focus your attention inside your mind and body and ask yourself:

- What **thoughts**, images, memories are going through my mind?
- What **feelings** am I having?
- What **sensations** are in my body and

Step 2

Then redirect your attention to the changing physical sensations of your breath, as you breathe in and out, there is no need to control the breathing in any way, simply let the breath breathe itself and notice what changes in your body?

Step 3

Then expand your attention back out to the whole of your body, your posture and your facial expression. Slowly open your eyes and notice if you feel calmer

**‘Different brain states produce different thoughts, and feelings, which are always changing e.g., the voice of stress speaking, or depression - like a high temperature in flu this is a helpful source of information to listen to but not to be pulled in by
We are more than our thoughts - this takes regular practise ’ ¹**

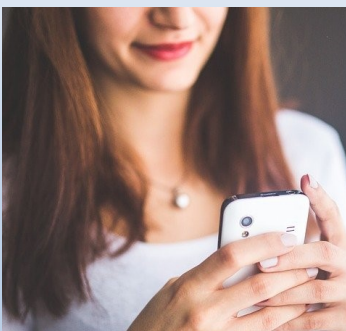
This **3 step Breathing Space** is famous across the world as a key skill in Mindfulness-based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) so you can find it on the internet where someone will talk you through it.

Evening mindful calm practises

‘Neuroscientists have a saying -

What we resist persists

If you do not listen to and resist the messages that your mind and body keep sending to you these will keep getting sent and you will keep feeling them until you acknowledge, accept, feel, allow and express them and then they will have done their job and their intensity can reduce or you will have listened and understood and found ways to help yourself’ ¹



19. Mindful stress reduction before bedtime²

Write down your thoughts, feelings, and emotions, straight after a 3 minute breathing space meditation. This helps you to improve your understanding of what's going on in your mind and body, so you can acknowledge, accept, feel and express these thoughts, feelings and emotions. Or if you prefer:

- Text yourself, blog, video yourself
- Use a mood/ thought tracking app.

The act of mindfully writing down your thoughts and emotions is a good way to start to distance yourself from your own thoughts and emotions, and to get them outside of your mind and body so the brain knows you are listening, which is much healthier than bottling them up inside

Evening mindful calm practises

20. Mindful appreciation practise - 3 G's



Every evening take some time to think of 3 good things about the day either:

- A good thing that has happened to you
- A good thing that you have done
- A good thing that you have seen
- A good thing that someone has said to you
- A good thing that you have in your life

If you regularly practise this it will train your attention and brain slowly towards seeing the good in each day

21. Mindful relaxation pure white light meditation ²¹

1. Begin by finding a comfortable position in which you can be relaxed and alert. Make sure that your back is straight, and close your eyes. Relax into this posture and let all your stress and tension fall away into the ground.
2. Now turn your attention inwards and become aware of your thoughts and other mental activity. Spend a few moments simply watching the flow of thoughts in your mind.
3. You may find at this stage that your mind is quite busy. The purpose of this meditation is to detach yourself from this mental business. To do this, begin by turning your attention to your breathing. Breathe naturally, keep the normal rhythm of your breath and follow the process of breathing in and breathing out with your mind.
4. Your mind will repeatedly wander, as this is what minds do, when you notice your mind has wandered, don't give yourself a hard time, just notice where the mind has gone, try to let go of what was on your mind or distance yourself from it and gently bring your attention back to your breath.
5. Now, as you breathe out, imagine you are breathing away all your disturbing thoughts and distractions as thick black or red smoke that will disappear far up into the sky. Imagine you're also breathing out all your stress, and tension, as thick black or red smoke, which disappears far up into the sky. Feel your mind and body becoming clearer and clearer, lighter and lighter as you breathe away all these disturbing thoughts and distractions.
6. And as you breathe in, imagine you are breathing in pure clean white light which fills your entire body. Feel this pure white light gradually filling up your body starting from your feet, up your legs, through your chest, and up through your neck and head. Continue in this way, breathing out black or red smoke – and breathing in pure cleansing white light. When you are ready you can open your eyes and come back out of meditation.

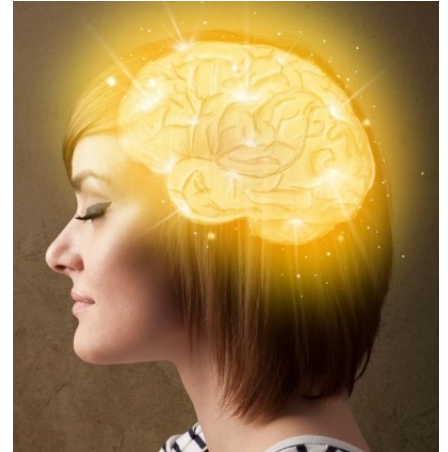
Regular mindfulness practise promise to myself

22. Mindful Action Planning²²

A little bit of Mindfulness practise each day builds a routine, which slowly becomes a habit and calms your mind but you have to do it !

So write a realistic Action Plan of how you are going to include a mindfulness practise in the week ahead

This week I will:



1. What are you going to do ? (e.g., try some mindful time in nature)

.....

2. How much are you going to do it? (e.g., for 30 minutes)

.....

3. When are you going to do it ? What time of day ? (e.g. every late afternoon)

.....

4. How many days a week are you going to do it? (e.g., every day)

.....

How certain am I that I will be able to achieve this action plan? (circle):

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

0 = not certain at all

10 = totally certain

If you choose 6 or below - are you not very confident about completing your action plan? if so either:

- Change you action plan (e.g. for 4 days and 15 minutes) so you are more likely to achieve it

Or

- Choose another action plan that is more realistic and achievable

Mindfulness gives you more control over your emotions and responses



A Mindless Reaction ^{2,23}

1. You react automatically to events, sometimes impulsively and get overwhelmed and lost in your reaction, feeling out of control
2. You believe all your thoughts and ideas are real facts .
3. Your mind is often full of thoughts about the past and worries about the future.
4. You judge yourself and others
5. You want things to be different than they are
6. Try to avoid or escape from unpleasant situations, thoughts and emotions



A Mindful Response ²³

1. You stop, think and calm yourself and take time to think how best to respond to events, feeling more in control
2. You distance yourself from your thoughts and know they are not real but mental events that pass through the mind.
3. Your mind is often focused on living each moment, day by day
4. You have opinions on yourself and others and respect others.
5. You accept things the way they are and let go of wanting them to be any other way.
6. You approach unpleasant situations, thoughts and emotions

‘When we are struggling with difficult or negative habits and patterns of thoughts and emotions it can be very hard to be aware of pleasant moments or even allow them in’ ^{2,24}

Common mental patterns or habits which stop us from noticing pleasant moments:



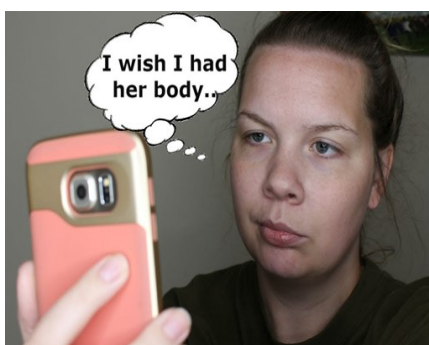
1. Being or keeping too busy

Rushing around in reactive stress, anxiety, avoidance, and distraction

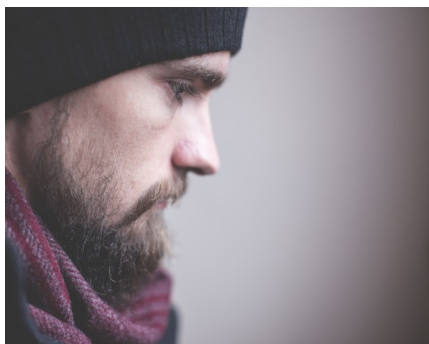


2. Not believing we deserve pleasure

Having a critical hard mind with high standards, e.g., we have not yet completed all our jobs so we don't have time, or feeling shame and guilt that we are a bad person and we don't deserve it.



3. Comparing ourselves - between how things are and how they should be ! Nothing is ever good enough or as good as someone else has done



4. Lost in thoughts - of past and future concerns so we do not even notice all the pleasant experiences that are happening all around us^{2,24}.

Keep a pleasant experiences calendar to train your mind to see the good²

For 7 days, notice one pleasant experience each day at the time it is happening and fill in the calendar below:

Day	What was the experience?	How did your body feel ?	What moods and feelings did you experience?	What thoughts went through your mind?	What thoughts are in your mind as you write this down ?
Example	E.g. walking back from appointment and hearing a bird sing	Lightness across the face, awareness of shoulders dropping and smiling	Relief, pleasure, lift	“how lovely the bird is , and it’s so nice to be outside”	It was a little thing which I never normally notice but I am glad I noticed it
Day 1					
Day 2					

Day	What was the experience?	How did your body feel ?	What moods and feelings did you experience?	What thoughts went through your mind?	What thoughts are in your mind as you write this down ?
Day 3					
Day 4					
Day 5					
Day 6					
Day 7					

What to do when your mind keeps wandering away from the present moment onto thoughts²

When you try mindfulness and bringing your attention to whatever is going on for you in the present moment, you will repeatedly notice that your mind keeps wandering off onto thoughts, images and memories, perhaps, or replays of the past and the future. This is not a mistake or failure, this is just what minds do.

Training the mind is the skill of bringing your attention back to the present moment and will improve with regular practise so each time:

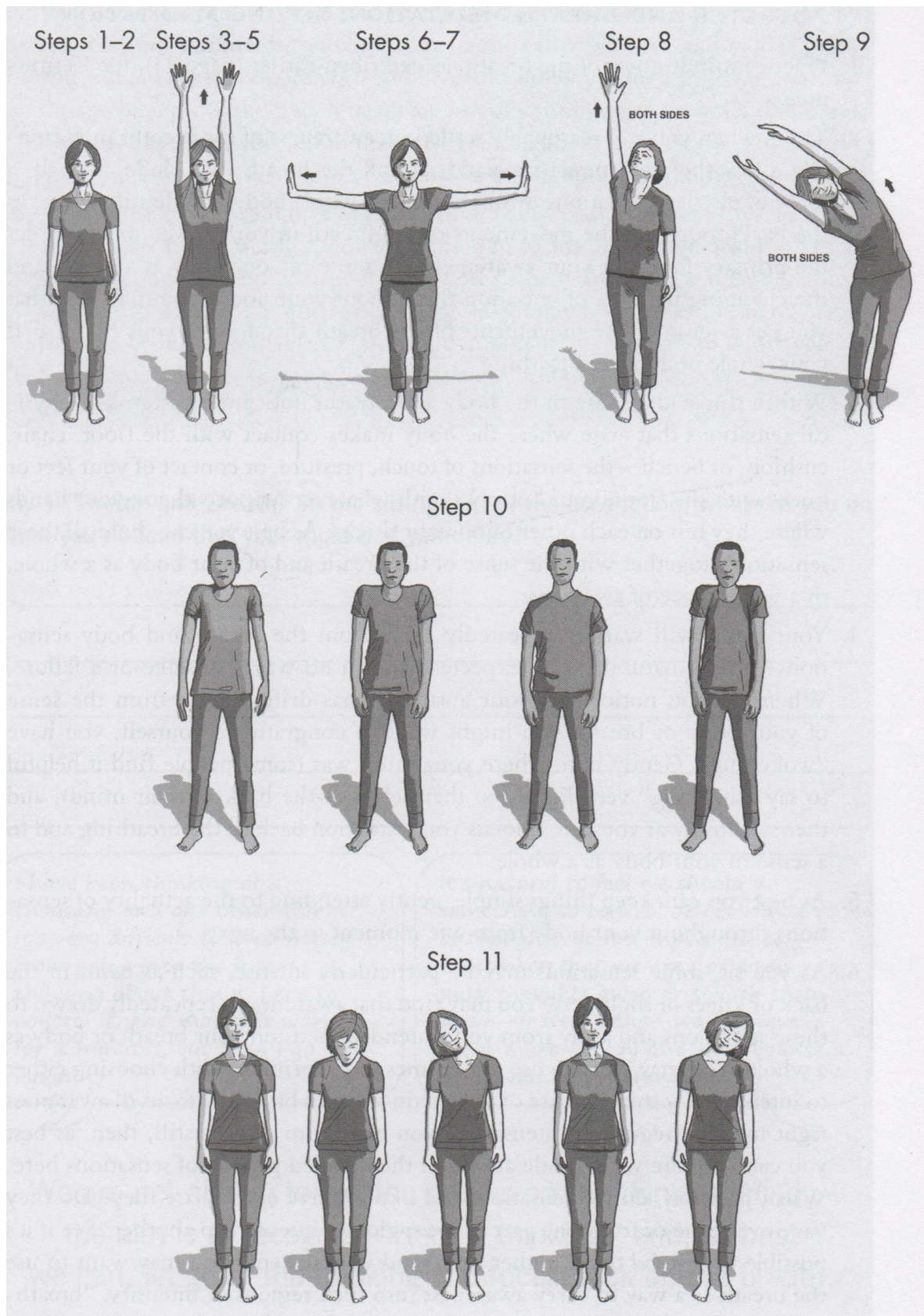
- **Recognise** when your mind has wandered without giving yourself a hard time
- **Notice** where it has wandered & note these are just thoughts, passing events.
- **Gently and kindly** bring your attention back onto the present moment.²

Mindful Stretching and Breathing^{2,24}

- This practise helps you to bring you out of your thoughts about the past and future and connect with your body in the present moment.
- Your emotions and feelings are often felt in your body without you knowing fully what is happening. You can become far more aware of your emotions as you learn to tune in and recognise body sensations coming up and passing through mindful stretching and breathing.
- Moving your body also allows to connect with your body and practise an attitude of gentleness, kindness, acceptance and compassion towards yourself - rather than judgement, criticism, pushing yourself hard beyond your body's limits.^{2,24}

This mindful stretching involves a series of gentle standing stretches — please remember to take good care of your body. If you have any problems with your back or other health difficulties, first listen to the instructions without following them and then think carefully about whether you should do all or any of the practises described. Feel free to skip those that may be too difficult at this time and simply imagine yourself doing them along with the instructions.²

Mindful Stretching and Breathing^{2,24}



Figures adapted from Kabat-Zinn, J. Full Catastrophe Living (Second Edition) 2013, New York Bantam Books taken from Williams, M., Teasdale, and J., Segal, Z. (2014). The Mindful Way workbook. An 8 – week program to free yourself from depression and emotional distress. Guildford Press, UK.²⁴

Mindful Yoga Movement ^{2,24}

This mindful yoga body movement involves a series of gentle exercises — please remember to take good care of your body. If you have any problems with your back or other health difficulties, first listen to the instructions without following them and then think carefully about whether you should do all or any of the practises described. Feel free to skip those that may be too difficult at this time and simply imagine yourself doing them along with the instructions.^{2,24}

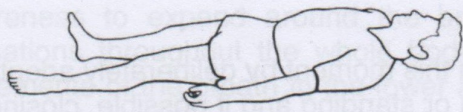


Figure 1.

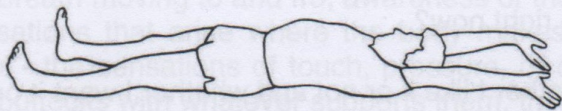


Figure 2.

Lower back pressed
against the floor

Lower back arched pelvis
stays on the floor

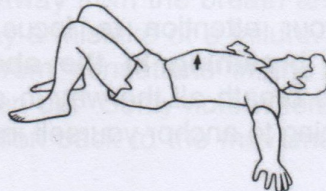
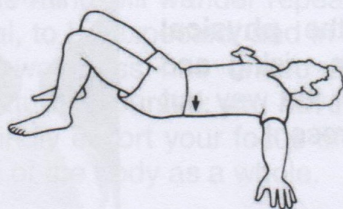


Figure 3.

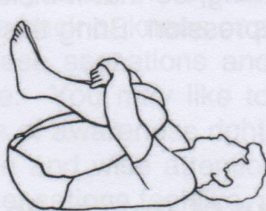


Figure 4.

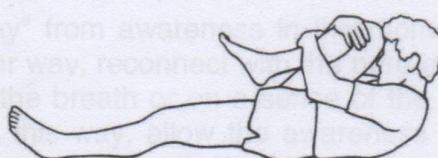
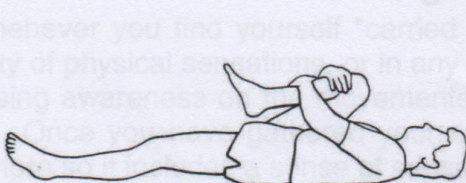


Figure 5.

It's not easy to do mindful yoga from written instructions so they have not been included—you can find audio instructions at <https://oxfordmindfulness.org/for-you/resources/>

Mindful Yoga Movement ^{2,24}

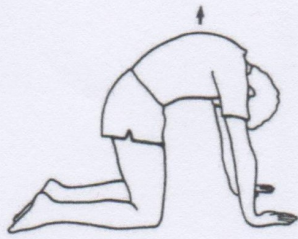


Figure 6.

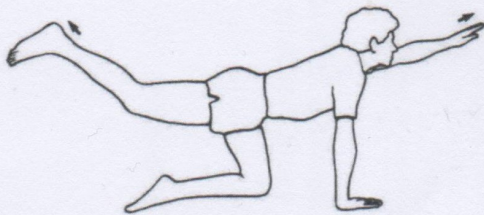
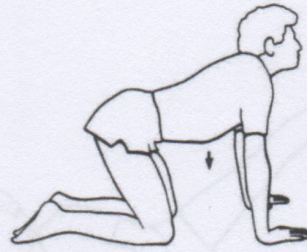


Figure 7.

Do both sides

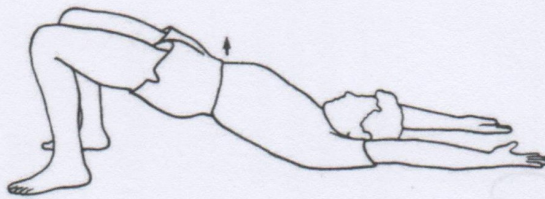


Figure 8.

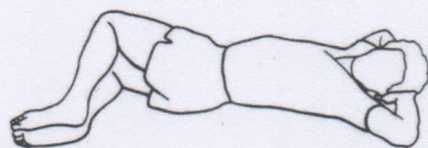


Figure 9.

Do both sides

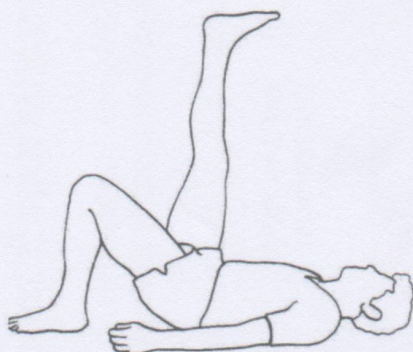


Figure 10.



Do both sides

Mindful Yoga Movement ^{2,24}

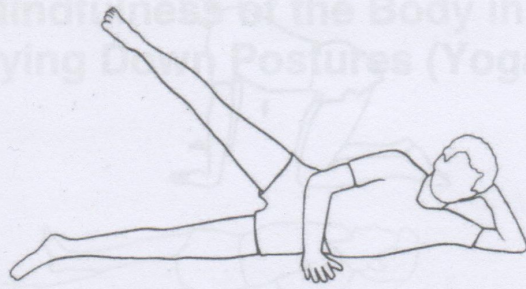


Figure 11.

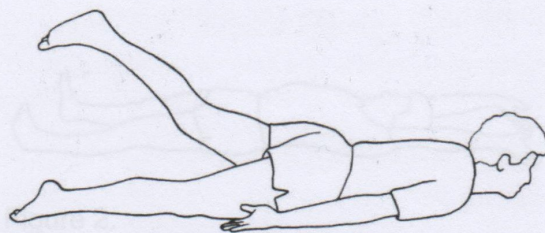


Figure 12.

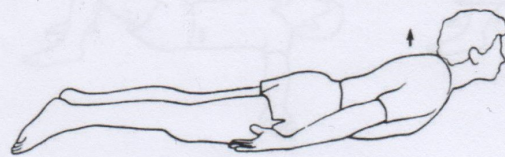


Figure 13.

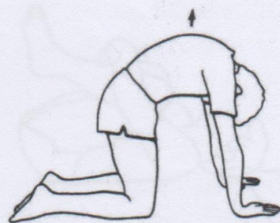


Figure 14.



Figure 15

Figures taken from Oxford Mindfulness Centre (2020). *'Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy Course Handbook'* University of Oxford Department of Psychiatry, UK.

Mindful Body Scan ^{2,24}

‘Just try it – if you fall asleep, keep thinking of other things, focus on the wrong bit, or don’t feel anything - it does not matter - there is no right way to do this - only regular and frequent practise’ ^{2,24}

1. Lie down, making yourself comfortable, in a place where you will be warm and undisturbed. Allow your eyes to close gently.
2. Take a few moments to get in touch with the movement of your breath and the sensations in the body. When you are ready, bring your awareness to the physical sensations in your body, especially to the sensations of touch or pressure, where your body makes contact with the floor or bed. On each outbreath, allow yourself to let go, to sink a little deeper into the mat or bed.
3. The aim of this practise is not to feel any different, relaxed or calm; this may happen, or it may not. Instead, the intention of the practice is, as best you can, to bring awareness to any sensations you detect, as you focus your attention on each part of the body in turn.
4. Now, bring your awareness to the physical sensations in the lower abdomen, becoming aware of the changing patterns of sensations in the abdominal wall as you breathe in and as you breathe out. Take a few moments to feel the sensations as you breathe in and as you breathe out.
5. Having connected with the sensations in the abdomen, bring the focus or ‘spotlight’ of your awareness down the left leg, into the left foot and out to the toes of the left foot. Focus on each of the toes of the left foot in turn, bringing a gentle curiosity to investigate the quality of the sensations you find, perhaps noticing the sense of contact between the toes, a sense of tingling, warmth, or no particular sensation.
6. When you are ready, on an in breath, feel or imagine the breath entering your lungs and then passing down into the abdomen, into the left leg, the left foot and out to the toes of the left foot. Then, on the outbreath, feel or imagine the breath coming all the way back up, out of your foot, into your leg, up through your abdomen, chest and out through your nose. As best you can, continue this for a few breaths, breathing down into your toes and back out from your toes. It may be difficult to get the hang of this—just practice this ‘breathing into’ as best you can, approaching it playfully.

Mindful Body Scan ^{2,24}

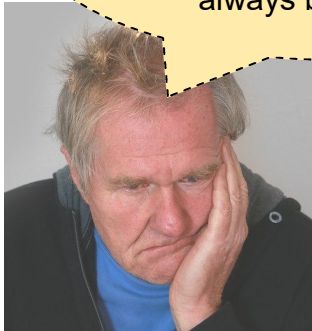
7. Now, when you are ready, on an outbreath, let go of your toes and bring awareness to the sensations on the bottom of your left foot—bringing a gentle investigative awareness to the sole of the foot. Experiment with ‘breathing with’ the sensations—being aware of the breath in the background, as, in the foreground, you explore the sensations of your lower foot.
8. Now allow the awareness to expand into the rest of your foot—to the ankle, the top of the foot and right into the bones and joints. Then, taking a slightly deeper breath, directing it down into the whole of your left foot, and, as the breath lets go on the outbreath, let go of the left foot completely, allowing the focus of awareness to move into your lower left leg—the calf, shin, knee and so on, in turn.
9. Continue to bring awareness and a gentle curiosity to the physical sensations in each part of the rest of your body in turn—to the upper left leg, the right toes, right foot, right leg, pelvic area, back, abdomen, chest, fingers, hands, arms shoulders, neck, head and face. In each area, as best you can, bring the same detailed level of awareness and gentle curiosity to the bodily sensations present. As you leave each major area, ‘breathe in’ to it on the in breath and let go of that region on the outbreath.
10. When you become aware of the tension or of other intense sensations in a particular part of the body you can ‘breathe in’ to them—using the in breath gently to bring awareness right into the sensations and as best you can, have a sense of their letting go, or releasing on the outbreath.
11. The mind will inevitably wander away from the breath and the body from time to time. That is entirely normal. It is what minds do. When you notice it, gently acknowledge it, noticing where the mind has gone off to and then gently return your attention to the part of the body you intended to focus on.
12. After you have ‘scanned’ the whole body in this way, spend a few minutes being aware of a sense of the body as a whole and of the breath flowing from in and out of the body.

If you find yourself falling asleep, you might find it helpful to prop your head up with a pillow, open your eyes, or do the practice sitting up rather than lying down. Feel free to experiment with doing the practice at a different time of day.

Ways you can see your thoughts differently

‘It is enormously liberating to realise that thoughts are just thoughts that come and go and not facts, even the ones that say they are because they come with strong feelings ! ’ ^{2,24}

“ What I think is true, I am a bad, angry, or anxious person, it doesn’t matter what you say or what I do I will always be like this”



“ At the moment I have an angry or anxious mind, so I need to do something to calm myself, things will look different tomorrow.”



Stop and take a breathing space when you notice your thoughts keep repeating themselves, keep going round and round in your mind, are constantly negative, difficult, or upsetting then try looking at your thoughts in the following ways:

1. **Thoughts are not facts** - they may feel like the ‘truth’ because they feel so powerful and overwhelming at times and are accompanied by strong feelings but they are a representation of your way of looking at things at any one moment of time.
2. **Watch the thought**, without feeling you have to follow it, avoid it, suppress it, get involved in it, react to it you may find that they move on eventually in their own time.
3. **Write it down or do some drawings that reflect how you feel**
4. **Label the thoughts**, e.g. this is the voice of grief talking, or the voice of depression, stress, anger, anxiety, and distress.
5. **Ask yourself with a non judgmental mind :**
 - Is this a natural reaction to a challenging situation or event?
 - Is this confusing thoughts with fact ? Or jumping to conclusions?
 - Is this getting caught up in harsh judgment or myself or others?
 - Is this expecting things to be other than they are?
 - Is this treating myself harder than I would if a friend was troubled by the same thoughts and had gone through what I have gone through?

Train your brain in opposite states of mind by regular mediation²⁵

**If you have an angry
mind & body**



**Regularly try a
compassionate acceptance
meditation to soften the
anger – page 29**

**If you have a stressed,
anxious mind & body**



**Regularly try a
relaxation meditation to
calm the stress and
anxiety - page 31**

**If you have a critical
judging, depressed mind
shame & guilt**



**Regularly try a loving
kindness mediation to
learn how to love yourself
again**

**If you have a serious
joyless mind**



**Regularly try a child like
humorous laughing mind
- page 33**

**If you have a
distressed, fight, flight,
panicking mind**



**Regularly try visualising a
safe place - page 34 &
grounding mindfulness
strategies - page 38**

Compassionate acceptance mediation ¹

‘In this meditation you’re going to learn how to very gently turn toward your experience of pain or difficulty and to handle it with tenderness, kindness and compassion, instead of resisting it, avoiding it, judging it or trying to make it any different than it is. e.g., being angry, anxious, etc.’ ^{1,2,24}

1. Find a comfortable position – we suggest either sitting or lying if it’s comfortable, but you can choose any posture that is suitable for you.
2. Take a few moments to get in touch with the movement of your breath and the sensations in the body. When you are ready, bring your awareness to the physical sensations in your body, especially to the sensations of touch or pressure, where your body makes contact with the floor or bed. On each outbreath, allow yourself to let go, to sink a little deeper into the mat or bed.
3. And now, with an attitude of great tenderness, notice what is uppermost in your mind and body that you are finding challenging or stressful at the moment. Perhaps you feel a pain or ache in your body, or emotional distress as a tightness in your chest, or an uncontrollable anger or frustration bubbling up through your body, or a racing mind full of critical thoughts of yourself and or another person, event or situation.
4. Softly breathe with this experience for a few moments. If this feels frightening, then breathe with the fear with gentleness, coming back to rest your awareness on the breath in the body, over and over.
5. Now, allowing your awareness to become a little more precise, investigate the exact sensations of pain or discomfort. What do you feel? Do you notice the way the sensations are always changing and how no two moments are precisely the same? And maybe as you come close to your actual experience, you realise for example that it’s just your lower back that’s hurting rather than your whole back as you’d previously thought. Can you apply this close investigation to whatever your particular difficulty is?

Compassionate acceptance mediation ¹

6. You may feel a sense of relief in your heart, now that you're finally turning towards your difficulty and meeting it with kindness and curiosity rather than being locked in battle with it, which just leads to more suffering and tension.
7. And what about your thoughts and emotions? Are you having any thoughts and emotions about your pain or difficulty? Can you let them come and go moment by moment, neither suppressing them or getting involved and reacting to them. Just sitting with them and watching and experiencing them.
8. Imagine breathing in what you need right now in this moment, perhaps it's tenderness, understanding, and kindness , or patience, courage, and strength, or calm, relaxation, and gentle soothing.
9. Imagine the words that you need to hear which would help you, say those words in your mind as you breath in and out.
10. Give yourself permission to give yourself understanding and kindness, life is hard sometimes, try and soften any critical thoughts and judgements you may have going round your mind, even if it is just a tiny bit.
11. If your experience is a little overwhelming, turn your attention to sounds, smells, the temperature in the room perhaps. And if you're feeling a little blocked or numb, you may like to turn towards your experience with a little more focus.
12. And now saturate the breath with self-compassion: as you breathe in, imagine a sense of kindliness flowing into your whole body; and as you breathe out, imagine the kindness seeping ever deeper, saturating the body with warmth and compassion. Imagine you are floating in a limitless supply of kindness and compassion. If you still feel dominated by resistance, allow and accept all of your experience with great tenderness for yourself.
13. Very gently begin to bring his meditation to a close. Expand your awareness to include sounds inside and outside the room. Open your eyes and then, very gradually, re-engage with the activities of the day, seeing if you can bring this quality of self-compassion and kindness with you.

10 minute sitting relaxation mediation ^{2,24}

Try this meditation regularly and often for at least 2 weeks to reduce mind and body states of stress and anxiety

1. Settle into a comfortable sitting position, sit with your back as straight as possible in a dignified and comfortable posture, with an intention to be present and awake. If on a chair, place your feet flat on the floor, with your legs uncrossed and gently close your eyes.
2. Bring your awareness to any physical sensations you may be having right now in your body, this might be focussing your attention on the sensations of touch and pressure in your body where it is making contact with the floor, seat or cushion. Spend a minute noticing what you feel in this part of your body.
3. Now bring your awareness to the changing physical sensations in your lower tummy as the breath moves in and out of your body.
4. Focus your awareness on the sensations of the slight stretching as your tummy wall rises with each in breath and of the gentle release as your tummy wall falls with each outbreath. As best you can, keep your attention on the changing sensations in your tummy all the way through as the breath enters your body on the in breath and all the way through as the breath leaves your body with the outbreath. Perhaps try imagining that your tummy is a balloon that keeps getting blown up with each breath you take and then goes down with time you breathe out.
5. There is no need to try to control your breathing in any way—simply let the breath breathe itself naturally as your body knows how to do this on its own as it has been breathing all by itself for every day of your life without you ever having to think about it. Trust in your body as it can breathe for itself.
6. As best you can, simply sit with what you are experiencing right now and allow it, do not try to resist it, just sit with it. There is no particular state you are supposed to be achieving, whatever you are feeling right now in this moment is right as it is what you are experiencing. As best you can, simply allow your experience to be your experience, without wishing it was, or needing it to be other than it is.

10 minute sitting relaxation mediation ^{2,24}

7. Sooner or later, your mind will wander away from the focus of your breath going in and out of your tummy to perhaps thinking about other things, replaying images and conversations, remembering things from the past or perhaps thinking of things that may happen in the future. This is perfectly okay — as this is what minds do. When you notice that your attention is no longer on the breath, gently congratulate yourself — as you have noticed that you are no longer in the present moment and that your mind has wandered away. You may want to take note briefly of where your mind has been, and think ah that's what my mind keeps thinking about. Then gently return your attention back to focusing on your breath and on the changing physical sensations in your tummy. Starting afresh a new intention to keep your attention for as long as you can on the your tummy as and how it changes as you breathe in and as you breathe out.
8. No matter how often you notice that your mind has wandered, as best you can, congratulate yourself each time on noticing that it has wandered and then gently bring your attention back to the breath and again focus your attention on the changing physical sensations that come with each in breath and outbreath.
9. As best you can, bring a quality of kindness to yourself, perhaps seeing the repeated wanderings of the mind as opportunities to be able to see your thoughts more clearly and understand what travels through your mind a bit better. And also practise being patient with yourself, as your mind will repeatedly wander and by trying to patiently sit, as best you can, and keep trying to bring your attention back to your body you are training yourself in the skill of mindfulness and being in the moment.
10. Continue with the practice for 10 minutes or longer if you wish, perhaps reminding yourself from time to time that the intention is simply to be aware of your experience in each moment, and to try to keep bringing your mind back as best you can if you notice it has wandered away. Using your breath as an

You may find on some days your mind might be very busy and hard to train, often called a 'wild mind' , do not give up just keep trying, you may find your mind is easier to work with on other days.

Child like humorous mind ¹³

21. Mindful child time

Consider choosing an afternoon at the weekend for example, and noticing all the little wonders and surprises occurring, as if you're a child, E.g., a serious adult might look at a garden and see all the jobs that need doing, such as weeding, cutting the grass, whilst a child may see all the tiny ants carrying leaves across the garden path and the magical butterflies landing on the flowers, just like David Attenborough talking about the planet¹³

OR

Do something you used to love doing as a child that you had forgotten about, e.g. flying a kite, playing frisbee

OR

Imagine you have just arrived on earth from another planet, as if from a Dr Who episode and you are seeing for the first time what earth is like and the creatures who inhabit it.



10-minute laughter yoga mediation ²⁰

1. **1-2 minutes:** Stand with your feet hip-width apart and stretch your arms high above your head. Rock your body from side-to-side from your torso, and then bend over and touch your feet with your hands. Next, massage your jaw and yawn at least two times to loosen your mouth and relax the muscles in your jaw.
2. **3-5 minutes:** Find a comfortable position to sit or stand. Start by slightly smiling and then begin laughing without too much effort. Move to deep belly laughs. (Hint: try different types of laughs to encourage your true laugh to come through. Even if it begins as a forced feeling, most people find the forced laughter will trigger some real laughter in no time.)
3. **3-5 minutes:** Sit or lie on the floor in stillness and silence. Be mindful of what comes up for you—how your body feels, emotions that present themselves, and thoughts that arise. (Optional: share what comes up with a trusted friend or write it down in a journal.)

Laughter can change dopamine and serotonin activity in your brain, 2 'feel good' chemicals & help you release emotions you did not know were bottled up, critical to your health & wellbeing.

Safe place visualisation meditation ²⁶

Try this visualisation meditation regularly and often for at least 2 weeks to help you feel safer and secure in your own mind and body.

All visualisations can be strengthened by ensuring you engage all your senses in building the picture in your mind's eye. If you notice any negative links or images entering your imagery, then discard that image and think of something else. Avoid using your home (or bed) as a 'safe place'. You can create a new 'safe place' in your imagination.

1. Start by getting comfortable in a quiet place where you won't be disturbed, and take a couple of minutes to focus on your breathing, close your eyes, become aware of any tension in your body, and let that tension go, with each outbreath.
2. Imagine a place where you can feel calm, peaceful and safe. It may be a place you've been to before, somewhere you've dreamed about going to, somewhere you've seen a picture of, or just a peaceful place you can create in your mind's eye. Look around you in that place, notice the colours and shapes. What else do you notice?
3. Now notice the sounds that are around you, or perhaps the silence. Sounds far away and those nearer to you. Those that are more noticeable, and those that are more subtle. Think about any smells you notice there. Then focus on any skin sensations - the earth beneath you or whatever is supporting you in that place, the temperature, any movement of air, anything else you can touch. Notice the pleasant physical sensations in your body whilst you enjoy this safe place.
4. Now whilst you're in your peaceful and safe place, you might choose to give it a name, whether one word or a phrase that you can use to bring that image back, anytime you need to.
5. You can choose to linger there a while, just enjoying the peacefulness and serenity. You can leave whenever you want to, just by opening your eyes and being aware of where you are now, and bringing yourself back to alertness in the 'here and now'.

Please note - Not all people can visualise things in their mind, so do not worry if you have tried this visualisation a number of times and can not visualise anything in your mind or find it very difficult to. That is perfectly ok, it may be just how it is for you. Just try the other activities.

20 minute sitting meditation ^{2, 24}

Try this meditation, once you can easily meditate for 10 to 15 minutes, especially useful to calm yourself before bedtime

1. Find a time and a place where you'll not be disturbed, a space just for yourself where you can come to stillness and replenish your resources.
2. Take your seat on a chair or cushion, and make sure your back is as straight as it can be, your feet are grounded on the floor, and your shoulders are open and relaxed.
3. Keep your head upright and tilt your chin slightly downwards, as if the crown of your head was being drawn gently upwards, sitting with the solidity and presence of a mountain, grounded on the Earth, then reaching upwards towards the sky.
4. Take your seat in a posture that embodies dignity, and the intention to be fully present in each moment whatever arises, not attempting to reach any special state, not wanting things to be different than how they are, but cultivating attention to each moment as it passes, and to each breath.
5. So, take your time to find a posture that is comfortable for you and slowly drop into stillness, and turn your attention to sounds. Not hunting for sounds but opening your ears to receive them. Whatever they are, wherever they come from. This might be sounds from inside your body, sounds from the room, sounds from outside. Notice how quickly you might rush to label and to judge the sounds, and as best you can, return to the raw sensations of sound: the loudness, the direction it comes from, the rhythm, how it stops and starts.
6. And at a certain moment, allow sounds to fade and bring your attention to the flow of your breath. Set aside any expectations or ideas you may have of how things should be and simply follow each breath, from its beginning through to its end. Feeling the breath at the nostrils. Maybe cool as it enters the body, warmer as it leaves. The air passing through the throat and into the chest. The lungs expanding and contracting. The ribs rising and falling, and on down to the breath in the belly. The sensations of breathing in the belly, around and below the navel. And now choosing the point in the sequence where you feel the breath most clearly, most vividly and focus your attention on that point.

20 minute sitting meditation ^{2,24}

7. Noticing the subtle differences between one breath and another. Each one unique. Sometimes close to undetectable. Aware of the fine texture of each breath as it flows into the body and out again. As best you can follow each breath for its full duration, fully absorbed in the flow of the air, in the sensations as you breathe. Each breath unique. Not trying to change or control the breath but allowing it to breathe itself and following it attentively.
8. And if you notice your mind wandering, becoming irritated or critical because this is what minds do, just notice the wandering, acknowledging where the mind has been and gently bring your attention back to your breath. Notice too emotions that may arise as the mind wanders. Not trying to suppress them or push them away but accepting them as they are. Notice, and acknowledge their presence, gently returning to the breath. And as many times as your mind wanders, always respond with the same interest, the same patience and gentleness towards yourself, over and over again.
9. It's not unusual when sitting for this length of time, to experience discomfort, even pain. So, notice the tendency if that happens to tense up, to brace yourself against the sensations, pull away from them, and instead turn towards them, and explore what you find there. What exactly are these sensations? What is this? Notice the urge to change or get rid of them and instead look deeply into them, soften and allow them, whatever they are. Slowly and gently change your posture or position to be kinder to yourself and reduce any pain or discomfort you may feel, making this part of the meditation practise as you do.
10. Bring your attention to your body as a whole, sitting, breathing. Turn your attention to the sensations of your breath throughout the body, so it may even feel as if your whole body is breathing in and breathing out.

20 minute sitting mediation ^{2,24}

11. Notice perhaps the points at which your body touches another surface. Perhaps your feet on the floor, your upper thighs on the chair or cushion. Your hands on your knees or in your lap. Notice and accept whatever sensations you find in your body, and notice the space that your body occupies, its contact with the air which surrounds it. And when you're ready, allow your body to fade into the background and turn your attention to thinking itself.
12. Notice your thoughts, images, memories, imaginings. How they rise in the mind, linger for a while, and then dissolve, like clouds passing across the vastness of the sky.
13. Hold your thoughts in spacious awareness from the moment of their arising to the moment of their passing away. And as best you can, notice them without adding to them, or rejecting them, or engaging with them in any way. Whatever they are – worries, thoughts about the past, concerns about the future, habits of self-judgement and self-criticism – try and let them be. Not interfering with them but allowing them to come and go in their own time. Thoughts: simply passing events in the mind.
14. And if emotions come, then let them arise and pass too, like waves on the surface of the ocean. Always moving on.
15. And for the last few minutes of the sitting, returning to focus your attention on your breath. Grounding yourself in the breath. Resting in the present moment. Knowing the breath is a haven you can always return to in turbulence. The quiet eye of the storm. A focal point for mindful awareness. Stillness in the midst of life. A space where you can find a sense of yourself as whole, complete. A space where you can find a sense of peace.

When overwhelmed with emotions & thoughts use these grounding mindfulness strategies to bring your attention back to the present moment

Practise these regularly when you are calmer, so when you next get overwhelmed with powerful emotions and thoughts your brain will have been well trained and will more easily be brought back into the here and now.

Mindfulness

Can be used when you feel anxious, angry, uneasy, sad, content, happy, joyful, grateful...

Anytime! You think of look for.....

- 5** Things you can see
- 4** Things you can hear
- 3** Things you can feel
- 2** Things you can smell
- 1** DEEP BREATH



- S - Stop**
- T - Take a moment**
- O - Observe**
- P - Pull Back - Put in Some Perspective**
- P - Practice What Works**
- Proceed**

Mindfulness I Spy

Something that is:

- | | |
|----------|--------------|
| 1. Heavy | 7. Light |
| 2. White | 8. Colourful |
| 3. Old | 9. New |
| 4. Noisy | 10. Quiet |
| 5. Cold | 11. Hot |
| 6. Big | 12. Tiny |

Mindfulness Treasure Hunt

Look for something that:

- ⇒ is useful or helpful
- ⇒ is special or pretty
- ⇒ makes someone smile
- ⇒ you are grateful for
- ⇒ You think is treasure

"Between stimulus and response there is a space. In that space lies our freedom to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom". Viktor Frankl.

Mindful Practise Record ²

Record on this form each time you try mindfulness. Also make a note of anything that comes up for you in the practise, so that you are able to talk about it with someone who can help if you would like to.

Please note: If any practise repeatedly makes you feel worse please stop, and speak to your mindfulness teacher or health professional or your care team.

Day/date	Practise (e.g. Yes/No ? What did you try)	Comments (e.g. what happened, what did you notice?)
Date: <i>Tues 9th Oct, 19</i>	<i>Teeth brushing & body scan</i>	<i>Teeth brushing good I enjoyed it , Felt I cleaned my teeth better! Body scan - Fell asleep, cold window open, difficulty staying awake, straight after eating tea! Perhaps do it before I eat and make sure I am warm?</i>
Date:		
Date:		
Date:		
Date:		
Date:		
Date:		

How best can I take care of myself ? ²

22. Be Mindful of how you spend your days - Activity and Mood Exercise

(What 'helps me' and what 'depletes me' every day?)

1. How do you spend most days ? What do you do ? Make a list of the individual activities or tasks that you do on most days below:

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

2. Now put a 'H' next to the items that are helpful to you, you enjoy or are useful to you, and put a 'D' next to ones that deplete you, that do not help your health and wellbeing, either physically, or mentally.

To better take care of yourself you need to spend more time in the day on 'H' helpful and useful activities and less on 'D' depleting activities.

5 tips to keep mindfulness going ²

1. Do some mindfulness practise regularly, no matter how brief, even if for only 10 seconds !
2. If possible try and do the practise at the same time in the same place each day
3. See the practise as a way to help yourself, rather than something on your 'to do' list.
4. Look at ways to practise with other people, or in new ways and places.
5. When possible in each day do just one thing at a time and pay full attention to it - when your mind wanders bring it back and repeat this step several billion times, noticing where your mind wandered to, and you will have learnt the skill of training your mind.

All you need to do is keep practising & you will see the benefits for yourself

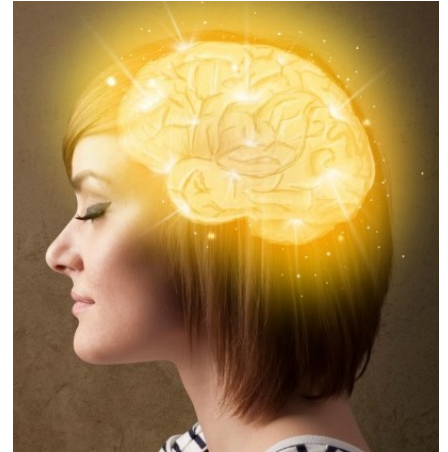
Regular mindfulness practise promise to myself

22. Mindful Action Planning²²

A little bit of Mindfulness practise each day builds a routine, which slowly becomes a habit and calms your mind but you have to do it !

So write a realistic Action Plan of how you are going to include a mindfulness practise in the weeks ahead

In the weeks ahead:



1. What are you going to do ? (e.g., try a new mindfulness practise out)

.....

2. How much are you going to do it? (e.g., for 10 minutes)

.....

3. When are you going to do it ? What time of day ? (e.g., before bedtime)

.....

4. How many days a week are you going to do it? (e.g., every evening)

.....

How certain am I that I will be able to achieve this action plan? (circle):

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

0 = not certain at all

10 = totally certain

If you choose 6 or below - are you not very confident about completing your action plan? if so either:

- Change you action plan (e.g., 3 to 4 evenings) so you are more likely to achieve it

Or

- Choose another action plan that is more realistic and achievable

Places where you can find more Mindfulness Resources

1. **FREE mindfulness meditation audio exercises** at:

The Oxford Mindfulness Centre (OMC) - at:

<https://oxfordmindfulness.org/for-you/resources/>

The 'Free Mindfulness Project' - at:

<http://www.freemindfulness.org/download>

2. **Free mindfulness meditation videos** at:

The Oxford Mindfulness Centre You Tube Channel at:

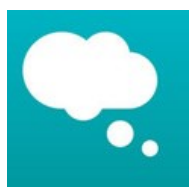
<https://www.youtube.com/user/OxfordMindfulness>

3. **Free mindfulness self-help and therapy resources**, including worksheets and audio and video at the Get Self Help website at:

<https://www.getselfhelp.co.uk/>

4. **Many books** are available, please see reference list for ideas.

5. **Mindfulness Apps** are available including, Headspace & Calm, where you may be charged to use them fully. At the time of writing



'Catch It' is a free app using cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT), which can be used mindfully to help you change the way you think and feel about things, available

at: <https://www.nhs.uk/apps-library/catch-it/>



Please note: The above suggested organisations are solely responsible for their own advertisements, products, service, compliance and fitness for purpose and the NHS is not liable for their use.