

Daily Mindfulness

1. Do one thing a day with complete focus.

While eliminating multi-tasking completely is nearly impossible in the modern world, it is fairly easy to make a habit out of focusing fully on at least one single task a day. This practice can be applied to simple activities or more complex tasks. Examples include: brushing your teeth, doing the dishes, reading to a child, listening to a colleague or patient, driving to work, answering an email, or eating lunch.

2. Practice silence.

Choose moments during each day to spend time in complete silence. This can be as simple as turning off the television or radio when alone. To increase the amount of focus required for this task, practice avoiding small talk when running into people, or listening more than speaking during conversations with colleagues or patients.

3. Focus on breathing.

The breath is a powerful tool for staying in the present moment, and also a strong indicator of current emotional activation and states of health. Take time each day to specifically focus on your breath, even for just a few inhalations and exhalations. To increase the challenge of this mindfulness activity, practice becoming increasingly aware of your breath throughout the entire day, as often as possible bringing your attention away from your thinking mind and simply watching and feeling yourself breathe, in and out through your nose.

4. Mindful minute exercises.

Set a timer for one minute and spend that minute engaged fully in a single activity, whether it be deep breathing, focused awareness, sitting up straight, or relaxing completely. Use this practice whenever you begin to feel anxious or unfocused, simply allow yourself a minute long break away from external effort and towards internal awareness.

5. Move slowly.

Take time each day to slow down. When walking somewhere, driving, or even when engaged in conversation, attempt to notice the pace at which you are behaving and then consciously make an effort towards slowing down as much as possible. This can mean talking slowly, taking the long route while driving, or walking with full attention as slowly as possible.