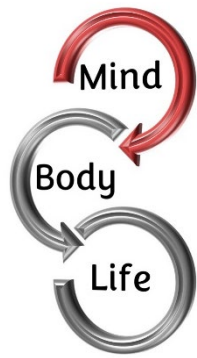


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“Mindfulness is the conscious act of allowing yourself time to focus. Letting the intensity of life settle. Creating genuine clarity of the mind, even for a moment.”

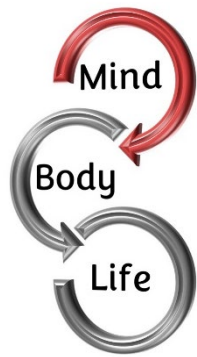
- Craig Stephenson (The Total Coach)





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- 1. What is mindfulness?***
- 2. Why should we practise mindfulness?***
- 3. How do we “do” mindfulness?***
- 4. An example – The mindful walk***
- 5. Record your experiences with the ‘TMT’ - Total Mindfulness Tracker***



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1. *What is mindfulness?*

Mindfulness is the conscious act of taking time and being absolutely present in the moment.

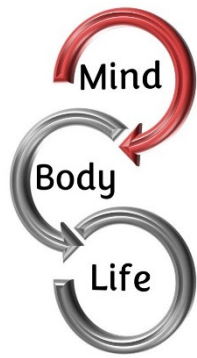
Sounds simple...

In reality, however, this can be a significant challenge. Due to the distractions of everyday life and the challenges of major events we can become overwhelmed. This can cause us to focus on the past or the future causing us to neglect and forget about the present.

Our minds tend to constantly move on to the next ‘event’ not focussing on the what we are doing right now. What we are feeling, seeing and experiencing at that very moment. Often missing so much.



“Mindfulness allows us to reign in a wandering, busy mind and bring us into the NOW.”



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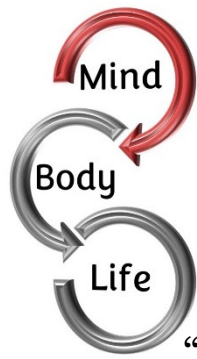
1. *What is mindfulness? – True or False*

FALSE

- **Mindfulness is weird and pointless.** With an open mind mindfulness can be a powerful tool to maintain and improve mental health and wellbeing.
- **Mindfulness will change you.** Mindfulness only recognises and cultivates the best of who we are and brings it to the surface.

TRUE

- **Mindfulness is for everyone.** We already have the capacity to be present. We need to recognize this and consciously bring this to the forefront of our lives.
- **It's evidence-based.** Science and experience has recorded its positive benefits for our health, happiness, work, and relationships.
- **It can drive creativity and innovation.** The clarity it creates can lead us to effective, inspirational, innovative, creative and passionate ideas.



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2. Why should we practise mindfulness?

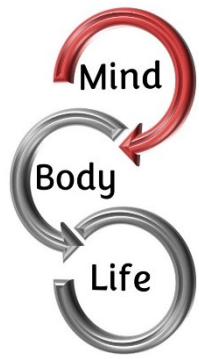
“Mindfulness allows us to reign in a wandering, busy mind and bring us into the NOW.”

‘Practising’ allows us to perform mindfulness as a natural reflex.

Initially when we start to practise mindfulness, we tend to fixate on the outcome rather than the process. This fixation can distract and detract from the act itself. Fortunately, through practise this can be eliminated, and the effectiveness of the mindful exercise can be really enhanced and appreciated.

When we are intentionally mindful, we can reduce our stress, enhance performance and gain clarity of thought. It raises awareness of our own mind, feelings and surroundings. It can also improve our empathy and connections with others.

Mindfulness exercises enable us to settle a busy mind, become clearer with our thoughts, our senses and our feelings. This will boost our wellbeing, our perception of self and that of others.



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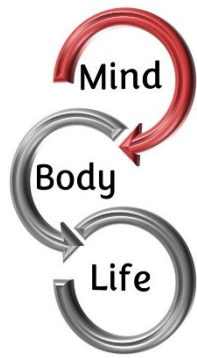
3. How do we do mindfulness?

Whatever exercise you're doing, try and really focus on the key elements;

- **What you see.**
- **What you smell.**
- **What you feel.**
- **What you hear.**



And then ...

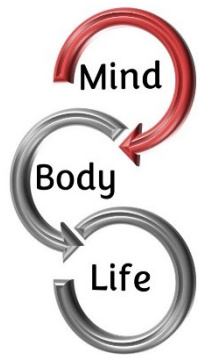


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3. How do we do mindfulness?

... take note of:

- **What did you see?**
 - What is around you? Look for the little details.
- **What did you smell?**
 - Inhale deeply. Bring your attention to all the different smells. Can you identify the different smells?
- **What did you feel?**
 - How is your breathing?
 - How fast is heart beating?
 - Do you feel relaxed?
 - Are you hot or cold?
- **What did you hear?**
 - Listen intently.
 - Can you distinguish noises?
 - Is it loud? Is it quiet?



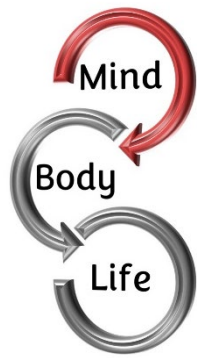
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3. How do we do mindfulness?

When you have done that once, take a deep slow breath and reflect. If you need to, or want to, repeat the process. Try and see if you notice anything different the second time.

If you felt distracted at any point, again, consider repeating the process until you feel absolutely and completely present and clear of mind.

Once we become proficient, these exercises can take anything from 20seconds to 20minutes. This can depend on the time available, the intensity, complexity or sensitivity of any given situation.



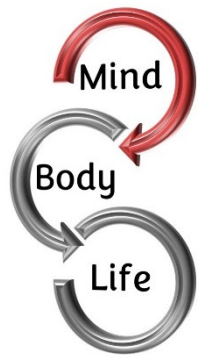
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4. *The Mindful Walk*

A good and easy exercise to facilitate is a ‘mindful walk’. All you need is a quiet space to walk. It could be outdoors, or in a hallway, or just walking back and forth.

As described earlier, as you walk focus on all your senses;

- **What do you see?** Look around, notice colors and objects and bring to your attention the smallest details of everything you see.
- **What do you smell?** Simply notice the smells around. Bring to your attention specific smells. If you are outdoors, can you smell grass? Animals? Cars? Flowers?
- **What do you feel?** As you walk, relax into a natural pace. Notice how you hold your hands and with each step, pay attention to the lifting and falling of your feet. Notice movement in your legs and the rest of your body. Is it warm? Is it cold? How does the wind or the sun feel on your skin? Is your heart rate steady? Are you controlling your breathing?

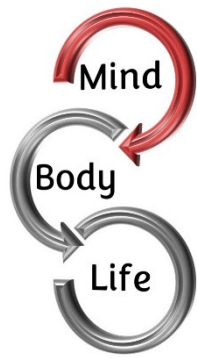


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4. *The Mindful Walk*

- **What do you hear?** Take a few minutes to bring your attention to sounds. Wherever you are walking, without getting caught up in whether you find them pleasant or unpleasant just notice sounds as nothing more or less than sound. Consider the volume and if it fluctuates try and breathe in line with fluctuations to build a connection with your surroundings.
- **Mindful conclusion.** When you feel you are finished, take the time to stand still for a moment again. Pausing, choose a moment to consciously ‘end’ the walk. Reflect on the experience and consider how you might bring the awareness and clarity created into the rest of your day.





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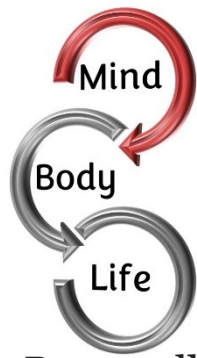
4. *The Mindful Walk*

➤ **Other points to consider.**

- ❖ Maintain awareness of everything around you, wherever you are. At that time there is nothing to do, nothing to fix, nothing to change. Be fully aware of just yourself.
- ❖ Whatever else captures your attention, always come back to the initial sensation of walking. Your mind may wander, so guide it back again as many times as you need.
- ❖ Particularly outdoors, consider the environment around you, staying safe and aware.

➤ **Other exercise examples.**

- ❖ Mindful Shower.
- ❖ Mindful Eating.
- ❖ Simply sitting in your favourite location (beach, mountains, woods etc).
- ❖ Meditation.
- ❖ Any other activity that allows you to slow down and safely take the time to focus.



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5. Record your experiences with mindfulness

Personally, I have a mindful shower at least twice per week, working through the same processes, bringing each of the senses to my attention and noticing the impact on my body and mind.

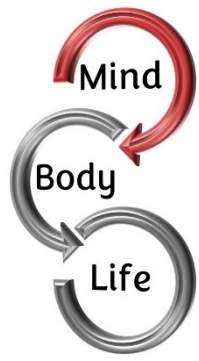
Whatever practise you choose always take the time to reflect and record the following;

- What worked well and what didn't?
- Were you easily distracted?
- What did you notice? (See, feel, hear, smell)
- What will you try differently next time?

Use the record sheet on the next page to record and learn.

REMEMBER – Mindfulness takes practice. The first few times might feel awkward or weird. However, trust me, if you go into this with an open mind you will see and feel the benefit!

Please get in touch & share your experiences. Email The Total Coach: info@thetotalcoach.co.uk



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5. Record your experiences

Date	Activity	How was your experience (How did I feel? What did I notice? What would I do differently?)