



UNCOMMON PPL

**MINDFULNESS**

DEFINITION OF MINDFULNESS ACCORDING TO THE OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE DICTIONARY

**Mindfulness is defined as the quality or state of being conscious or aware of something. It involves a heightened awareness of the present moment, encompassing our thoughts, feelings, and bodily sensations. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, mindfulness refers to “a mental state achieved by focusing one's awareness on the present moment, while calmly acknowledging and accepting one's feelings, thoughts, and bodily sensations,” often utilised as a therapeutic technique.**

**Similarly, the Cambridge Dictionary describes mindfulness as "the practice of being aware of your body, mind, and feelings in the present moment, thought to create a feeling of calm." This practice has been shown to help alleviate feelings of anxiety and depression, leading to an overall improvement in mental well-being.**

**Mindfulness is the intentional practice of focusing one's attention on the present moment while observing thoughts, emotions, and bodily sensations with openness and without judgment. It involves cultivating awareness of what is happening internally (in your mind and body) and externally (in your environment) to enhance clarity, emotional regulation, and overall well-being. By regularly practising mindfulness, individuals can develop a greater sense of presence and reduce stress, anxiety, and negative thought patterns.**

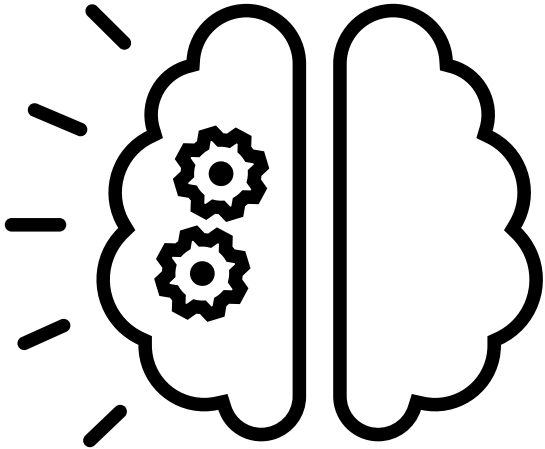
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**When it comes to defining mindfulness, no clear-cut definition applies to everyone. Some people might view it as being present and, In the moment, focusing on the here and now rather than dwelling on the past or worrying about the future. Others might define it as a way of being aware and accepting of our thoughts and feelings, recognising that emotional experiences are fleeting and pass through us like any other physical sensation. Mindfulness is about cultivating awareness and learning to connect more with ourselves and others. Whether you define it as presence, acceptance, or something else entirely, practising mindfulness can help us become more present in our everyday lives and ourselves.**

# THE HISTORY OF MINDFULNESS

- The Evolution of Mindfulness
- Mindfulness is a practice found in a range of religious and secular traditions, including Hinduism, Buddhism, and yoga, as well as more contemporary forms of non-religious meditation. Its practice has spanned thousands of years, existing independently or as a component of broader traditions.
- Typically, mindfulness gained prominence in the East through various religious and spiritual organisations, whereas in the West, its rise can be attributed to specific individuals and secular institutions. Nonetheless, the Western practice of mindfulness is ultimately rooted in Eastern religions and traditions.





It is important to include that some commentators argue that the history of mindfulness should not be reduced to Buddhism and Hinduism, as mindfulness also has roots in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam



(Trousselard et al., 2014).

# The Five Cs of Mindfulness



- 1. Curiosity: Approach each moment with an open mind. Be eager to explore your thoughts and feelings without judgment.
- 2. Compassion: Show kindness to yourself and others. Practice self-compassion, especially during tough times.
- 3. Courage: Be brave in facing your thoughts and emotions, even the uncomfortable ones. It's about being willing to experience life as it is.
- 4. Connection: Build a sense of connection to yourself and those around you. Mindfulness helps strengthen your relationships and awareness of the present.
- 5. Consistency: Practice mindfulness regularly. Making it a daily habit enhances its benefits and helps you stay present and resilient.

## How does mindfulness change the brain?



- A growing body of research shows that mindfulness can have far-reaching effects on the brain. Studies have found that practising mindfulness over time can alter the structure and function of specific brain regions, including areas related to attention, emotion regulation, self-awareness, and cognitive control. This may explain why many mindfulness people feel calmer, more focused, and more centred in their day-to-day lives. The neural changes associated with mindfulness appear to be long-lasting as well. Other studies have shown that individuals who regularly meditate or practice other mindful awareness appear to maintain these changes even when not actively meditating or practising mindful techniques. Overall, it seems clear that being mindful can change the brain in some truly remarkable ways, making it an essential tool for mental health and wellbeing.



## How do you practice mindfulness?

Practising mindfulness can be a great way to live in the present moment and connect with your innermost thoughts and feelings. However, for some people, mindfulness can be challenging to practice. If you're struggling to get started with mindfulness, here are a few tips to help you get started.

### #1. Make time for mindfulness

The first step to practising mindfulness is to make time for it in your day-to-day life. Whether you set aside 10 minutes for formal meditation practice or take a few moments throughout the day to be aware of your surroundings and your thoughts, it's essential to create space in your life for mindfulness.

### #2. Start with breath awareness

One of the simplest and most effective ways to practice mindfulness is to [focus on your breath](#). Sit or lie down in a comfortable position, close your eyes, and pay attention to your breath moving in and out of your body. If your mind wanders, notice the thoughts that arise and then return your focus to your breath.

### #3. Be accepting and non-judgmental

When practicing mindfulness, it's important to be accepting and non-judgmental of your thoughts and feelings. It would help if you neither tried to push away nor cling to any particular thought or emotion. Instead, observe your thoughts and feelings as they arise, without attaching judgments or labels to them.

### #4. Practice regularly

Mindfulness is a skill that takes time and practice to develop. But, like any skill, the more you practice mindfulness, the better you'll get at it. So, make sure to set aside some time each day to focus on your breath and be mindful of your thoughts and surroundings. With regular practice, you'll soon find that mindfulness becomes more accessible and natural for you.



- As with anything, the more you practice mindfulness, the better you'll get at it. Some easy ways to start practising mindfulness include incorporating regular meditation or breath awareness into your daily routine, accepting your thoughts and feelings without judgment, and tuning in to your surroundings throughout the day to help bring yourself back into the present moment. Whether you choose to practice formally or make time for mindful awareness in your day-to-day life, remember that this skill takes time and patience to develop – so be kind to yourself and keep practising!



# THANK YOU

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