

Mindfulness



- **It can be easy to rush through life without stopping to notice much.**
- Paying more attention to the present moment – to your own thoughts and feelings, and to the world around you – can improve your mental wellbeing.
- Some people call this awareness "mindfulness". Mindfulness can help us enjoy life more and understand ourselves better. You can take steps to develop it in your own life.
- When we become more aware of the present moment, we begin to experience afresh things that we have been taking for granted.
- Mindfulness can be developed through practice - and the benefits affect all areas of our lives; our sense of well being and happiness, our relationships, our ability to cope with stress and adapt to change.

Mindfulness

- Practising mindfulness will not conflict with any religious beliefs you may hold nor require you to engage in religious practices if you have none.
- Mindfulness is often cultivated through the formal practice of meditation.
- Meditation is not about emptying your mind or relaxation. It is about paying attention. It is an active process that takes time and effort. In one common form of meditation an individual will focus on a single object, often the breath, coming back to it each time the attention wanders.
- The work of meditation, then, is becoming aware that your mind has wandered and bringing it back to the object of focus - of letting go.
- Like any other lifestyle change activity, such as dieting or exercise, it is the regular, sustained practice that is important. Just reading about it and thinking about it is not enough.
- Mindfulness is not confined to formal practice but is a way of being that you cultivate in your everyday life - intentionally noticing what you are doing and observing it in a non-judgemental way. Thinking, walking, meeting with friends or colleagues and eating can all be performed in a mindful way and used as practice.

Benefits

So what's the pay-off? Why would you want to spend some of your time every day quietly observing yourself and your place in the world at this moment? Well, these are some of the changes you may begin to notice:

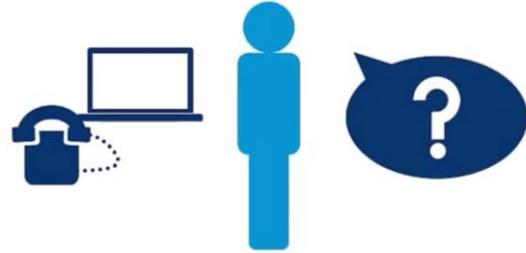
- › Greater self-acceptance
- › Improved self-esteem
- › Increased self-awareness
- › Greater sense of emotional wellbeing
- › Can manage anxiety, stress and depression more effectively
- › Better management of chronic pain
- › Improved physical wellbeing
 - Reduced blood pressure
 - Higher immune function
- › Experience more emotional balance - less ups and downs
- › Identify limiting, habitual patterns of thought and behaviour
- › Being more compassionate to yourself and others



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