



HOW PRESENT ARE YOU TO YOUR LIFE?

Please tick those that are true for you.

- 1) I break or spill things because I am not paying attention.
- 2) I walk quickly to get from place to place, unaware of the journey.
- 3) I sometimes feel like I am getting through the day on 'auto-pilot'.
- 4) I often daydream or plan while doing simple daily tasks.
- 5) I often take the wrong turning or go to the wrong place because I am driving on automatic pilot.
- 6) I forget someone's name almost immediately upon initial introduction.
- 7) I often listen to someone 'with one ear', lost in other thoughts?
- 8) I often eat in front of a T.V, computer or book without being aware of my food or intake.
- 9) I become so focused on a goal that I lose touch with the here and now.
- 10) I find it difficult to stay focused on the present and am often lost in thoughts of the past or the future?
- 11) I could be experiencing some emotion and not be conscious of it until some time later.
- 12) I tend not to notice feelings of physical tension or discomfort until they really grab my attention.
- 13) I like doing most things fast.
- 14) Time goes very quickly for me.
- 15) I rushed through this quiz.

YOUR SCORE

How many yes's did you get?

The more yes's you got the more you would benefit from learning how to be mindful. Your happiness score increases the more present you are in your life. Being present (mindfulness) is an important part of being happier, because it allows you to be right where you are, the only place you can ever find true happiness.

The good news is that it is never too late to be present and to really show up in your life. Being mindful is something you can do throughout the day, all the time, if you remember.

TIPS TO CULTIVATING MINDFULNESS IN EVERYDAY LIFE.

- In the morning allow yourself some slow mindful breaths before getting out of bed. Feel each in breath calm your body and each out breath release any tension or thoughts you are holding.
- Try eating breakfast without distractions (reading, listening to the news or talking). If possible eat silently for all or part of your meal. Before you eat, allow yourself to breathe in and out three times and bring your awareness and gratitude to the food.
- Take a few minutes, to notice something enjoyable about the morning. E.g. the sun or rain, the face of a child, a flower, or sounds of the birds or wind.
- While driving be aware of any body tension. Try and dissolve the tension and notice what it feels like to relax and drive. Try driving without the radio or music on.
- As you drive see if you can break the pressure of pushing to get where you are going and just enjoy the process of getting there. Allow red lights to be an opportunity to come back to your breath, relax your face and notice something beautiful. When someone cuts you off, try using awareness of your breath to calm your anger.
- Before you turn on the computer, talk to colleagues, or enter a shop, practice taking three mindful breaths. Allow your body to relax and see if a smile is possible.

- Decide to “stop” for a few minutes every hour to become aware of your breathing and body sensations. Use it as a time to release any tension, regroup and recoup.
- Use everyday cues in your environment as reminders to centre yourself. E.g. the phone ringing, down time at your computer, waiting for someone else, or flushing the toilet. Instead of relaxing by spacing out, relax by tuning in.
- When you walk notice whether you are peaceful or rushed. Can you allow yourself to slow down and make a trip to the bathroom or meeting an occasion for walking meditation?
- Use a computer screen saver that encourages mindfulness, a beautiful nature photo, or suggestive words like breath or mindful moment. Find a program that sounds a bell on your computer hourly <http://www.mindfulnessdc.org/index.html> - clock
- Choose to eat a couple of lunches a week in silence mindfully, away from work. On other occasions keep any conversations light and supportive, avoiding arguments or heated discussions.
- At the end of your working day, acknowledge yourself for work you have accomplished. Make a list for the next day and leave it at work. Also review what you did mindfully that day and how it affected you. Consider how you can build on that the next day.
- Make your trip home a transition time. Notice if you are rushing. Can you slow down a little bit and own those moments between work and home as much as any other moments of life?
- When watching T.V try turning down the sound during the breaks, and close your eyes and take some mindful breathes.
- As you prepare for sleep, take some mindful breaths, become aware of the bed supporting you. Feel the muscles of your body relaxing as you sink into your bed. Try letting go of the past days activities or anticipation of tomorrow.

[Get in touch](#) if you would like some training and support in bringing the beneficial habit of mindfulness into your everyday life.