



Here are some ways you can immediately support yourself with Mindfulness during the current Covid-19 pandemic, and beyond:

Mindfulness is a practice i.e. putting in tiny skills and techniques, when practised consistently throughout your day, which have a cumulative effect over time. You will begin to feel more present, aware, calmer, more able to focus.

- **Thoughts are not facts** - whilst it is important to take current advice, choose to stay away from constant news and social media. Maybe just check the headlines on your phone once per day. When you have a fearful or negative thought about anything, STOP – ask yourself “is this a fact?” “what do I actually KNOW in this moment” Focus your thoughts on positivity.
- **Remember to breathe!** – Take 3 full breaths (down into the abdomen) at regular intervals during your day. Focus your mind on the tiny sensations as the breath flows into and then out of your body – then notice where is that point when the breath turns around at the end of the in-breath and becomes the out-breath? Imagine letting go of any stressors or negativity on each out-breath and imagine each in-breath flooding you with light, health and energy.
- **Let go** – choose to let go of not knowing exactly what the future will bring. You ‘holding on’ to any thoughts of being in control are not serving you right now. **Acceptance** is a more useful and realistic approach. Accepting that this situation ‘is what it is’, go with what you do know in this moment, and the next moment. **Trusting** that you will respond in the right way at the right time, as the situation unfolds. We only ever truly have THIS PRESENT MOMENT – so choose to stay present and aware (the quickest way to come back to each present moment is to move your focus to your breath, the breath is your anchor to the here and now).
- **Stay Present** – whenever you feel your mind racing with thoughts, find your breath and follow a couple of breaths in and out fully with your focus, then notice e.g. I am sitting in the chair, I feel my feet on the floor, I can sense my spine, neck and head, I notice sensations of air on my skin, I can feel warmth in the base of my feet yet coolness on my arms.... If in bed – I feel the comfort of my body being supported by this bed, I can feel the duvet on me, I am safe, warm, relaxed, my partner/children are safely in bed, all is OK. This is very calming and grounding.
- **Use any of the mindfulness APPS** (you can download on your mobile) e.g. Calm, Headspace, Insight Timer - as you wake up to start your day, during breaks in the daytime, before you go to sleep.
- **Gratitude** - Perhaps before you go to sleep, during the daytime, and/or first thing on waking - think of 3 things in your day that you are grateful for. Maybe you'll come up with 5! This is a great way to encourage happy vibes in the body and mind and feel good - improving wellbeing.
- **Get outside as much as you can** – notice the Springtime in the garden, sit outside with your coffee and breathe and take it all in. Enjoy mindful walking, notice 3 things you can hear, feel, see, smell, touch. Focus your attention in every step – feel the surface touching your foot, feel the weight transfer through your feet and legs as you move. Find your breath and follow 2 or 3 breaths in and out. Enjoy nature. Give yourself permission to just let go of your day, or any concerns.

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- **Exercise** – perhaps gardening, cycling, decorating, take part in a virtual exercise session on your laptop or tv - whatever works for you. Movement and exercise release stress, keeping you healthy in body and mind.
- **Stretch** - get on the floor and instinctively stretch your body - just let your body guide you. Then while you are down there you could listen to a Mindful Body Scan! Lovely
- **Wash your hands MINDFULLY** ;) slowly and regularly. Notice and enjoy the sensations.
- **Mindfulness Self Talk** - guide your thoughts to be self-supportive, self-kindness, reassuring. When we feel in a good space, it increases our ability to be kind and supportive to others.
- Use these skills above to **get out of your head and re-connect with your body**. This will encourage a feeling of stability, calmness, positivity, and wellness.

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