



Benefits of
Mindfulness

Mindfulness. Made. Easy.

Starter Guide





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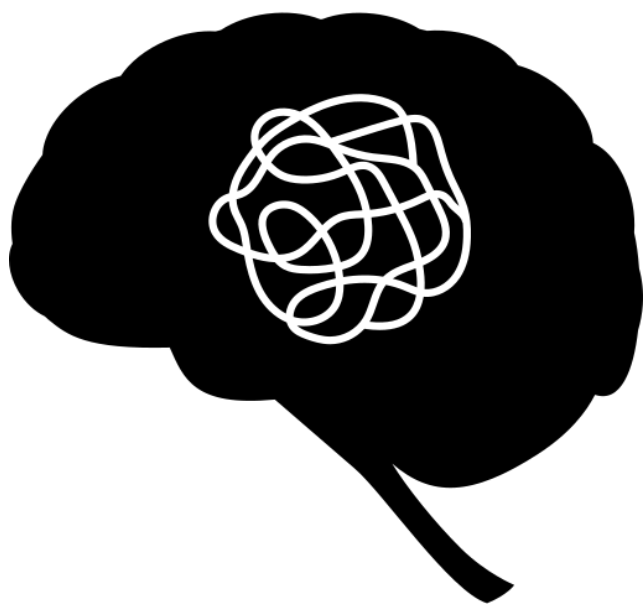
INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Benefits of Mindfulness – Mindfulness. Made. Easy. Starter Guide. The intention of this guide is to provide you with a no-frills, simple and straightforward introduction to basic mindfulness practices.

These have broken down into four core strands:

1. Mindful Reset
2. Deep Breathing
3. Sense Perception
4. Body Scan

“Every success begins with one conscious step towards your goal.”



Outcomes

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Humans have a tendency to want to achieve and be successful. Whilst there is nothing wrong with striving to be better, when this desire is left uncontrolled it can lead to bigger challenges than the challenge itself. As it has been said, we can be our own enemies of success.

Mindfulness practice then, must be predicated on the idea that

we are not **“trying to achieve”** some kind of state, or that we are **“aiming to be”** a certain way.

We, as best as possible, benefit most when we undertake mindfulness or conscious practice on the basis of **practising for practise's sake**. In other words moving away from the tendency to want to label what we are engaged in as something with an **input = output** idea attached to it.

So for the purposes of this Starter Guide, it would be advisable to enter this with a ‘beginner mindset’ regardless of your experience of mindfulness and embed a ‘no intention beyond the practice’ ideology.

Taking time to yourself and self care without pressure.

MINDFUL RESET

For our first practice we will utilise a really simple technique which is known as a grounding exercise. Most of us live our day-to-day life in ‘auto-pilot’, whereby our thoughts, feelings and even our movements often are predominantly left to their own devices.

“ You wake up, you go to the bathroom, you get out a toothbrush, you think about our first morning meeting where that report you were supposed to complete is due, you put the toothpaste on the brush, you get a pang of anxiety about the report which isn’t fully finished, you place the brush in our mouth, you start brushing, you start pacing the floor whilst brushing, you feel an itch and pause brushing to scratch it, you walk into the kitchen whilst brushing, you fill the kettle and switch it on... ” and on... and on...

The above scenario on a typical day may happen in less than 5 minutes and completely unconsciously – meaning – without us directing the thoughts, feelings, or movements with **intention**.

Did you know that on average we have around [70,000 thoughts a day!](#)

So we are not able to control our thoughts...



We can however control our *reaction* to the thoughts (our feelings about them) and we can control our movements. And there we find the crux of a grounding practice or MINDFUL RESET.

Start your Mindful Reset practice by **Planting Your Feet on the Ground**. This may sound odd at first, but you want to actually *feel* your feet on the ground – it is best to be in a seated position – and know you have *chosen* to focus your attention there.

Keep your attention with your feet.

Whilst there, follow these next steps (excuse the pun):

Step 1. Take 5 Deep Breaths

breathing in through the nose, and out from the mouth. As you breath in count to 8 – HOLD the breath for 4 seconds – and then breath out for 5 seconds.

Step 2. Normalise Your Breathing and Begin to Count

from one to ten, one as you breathe in, two as you breathe out, three as you breathe in, and so on, until you reach 10, and then start at 1 again.

Step 3. Note Thoughts or Feelings That Arise

any thought or feeling that comes to your attention, and thus takes away from you feeling your feet on the ground, and counting, simple note (acknowledge it – but do not get tied up in it) and allow it to pass, like a cloud in the sky might. This should be gentle and non-judgemental, and then just as gently, bring your attention back to the feet on the ground and breath counting.

Step 4. Keep Repeating the Above Steps

for as long as you feel comfortable – at first, you may feel like this might be only able to continue for 5 or 10 minutes. That is perfectly fine, and over time you will be able to build this up. When you feel like you're losing your focus, you can just start over again from Step 1. The deep breaths and counting can help to ground you again.

DEEP BREATHING

Our second practice is an extension of the first part of the first practice – but we will use a different pattern of breathing, inspired by Eastern Traditions, but more recently popularised by the likes of Wim Hof and used in athletic settings to improve V02-Max amongst other [benefits](#).

This exercise is best done using a timer – or alternatively there are many videos on YouTube that will guide you through actively (check out the Benefits of Mindfulness [Courses](#) page).

BASIC STEPS:

1. Lying down, take in a **BIG STRONG DEEP** inhalation (mouth/nose whichever is comfortable for you)
2. **Let Go** of the breath, in a relaxed way out of the mouth
3. REPEAT – **30 BREATH**
4. On BREATH 30, do a **FINAL HEAVY EXHALE** all the way out
5. **HOLD.** For as long as you can tolerate. Be present with your body, embrace the calm. Feel your body's needs and once you decide to, take a deep breath in, and hold it for 10-15 seconds.



SENSE PERCEPTION

During our daily lives, we make decisions on an almost constant basis. A lot of these are subconscious, or made without us ‘directing the show’ so to speak. The same way that a pianist may rattle off a tune on a keyboard, and the fingers operate on muscle memory, so do our day-to-day tasks, like brushing our teeth, or filling the kettle. When we allow ourselves to operate like this for long periods of time without taking some time to observe our patterns and truly experience the motions involved, it can lead to our environment dictating our sense of being and calm.

So, one very helpful practice to break this spell, is SENSE PERCEPTION – fully **Seeing, Smelling, Touching, Tasting and Hearing** the activity or motion we are involved in, as applicable.

You can make this easy by using the table on the next page to record your experience.

Focus your attention to detail that you would otherwise have overlooked. Truly be present in the moment with the activity and you can use the noting technique (from MINDFUL RESET) to gently bring the mind back when it wanders astray.



Daily Activity Sense Perception Log

ACTIVITY	SEE	SMELL	TOUCH	TASTE	SOUND	ADDITIONAL COMMENTS / THOUGHTS
<i>Example: Brushing Teeth</i>	<i>The colour of the toothpaste, the texture</i>	<i>Minty, sweet smelling with a tingly afterburn</i>	<i>Feeling the foam on the tongue, the sensation of the brush on the tooth</i>	<i>Sharpness, a spiciness from the strong mint</i>	<i>The rhythmic sound of the bristles, as they brush over the teeth</i>	<i>The duration felt longer and I had a sense of being refreshed</i>

BODY SCAN



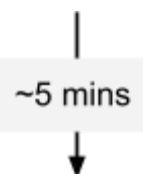
The Body Scan is a very simple and effective mindfulness practice to reconnect the body and the mind. As per the Sense Perception section previously, the Body Scan is a way of working to exercise our focus and awareness so as to be more present, when we otherwise may find ourselves disengaged mentally.

We will be ‘scanning’ our bodies, meaning, placing our focus and awareness on one body part at a time. When you do, the rest of your body will fade in your mind’s eye. What we are doing here is training our attention – and you will likely find that with regular practice, your efficiency in daily life progresses massively.

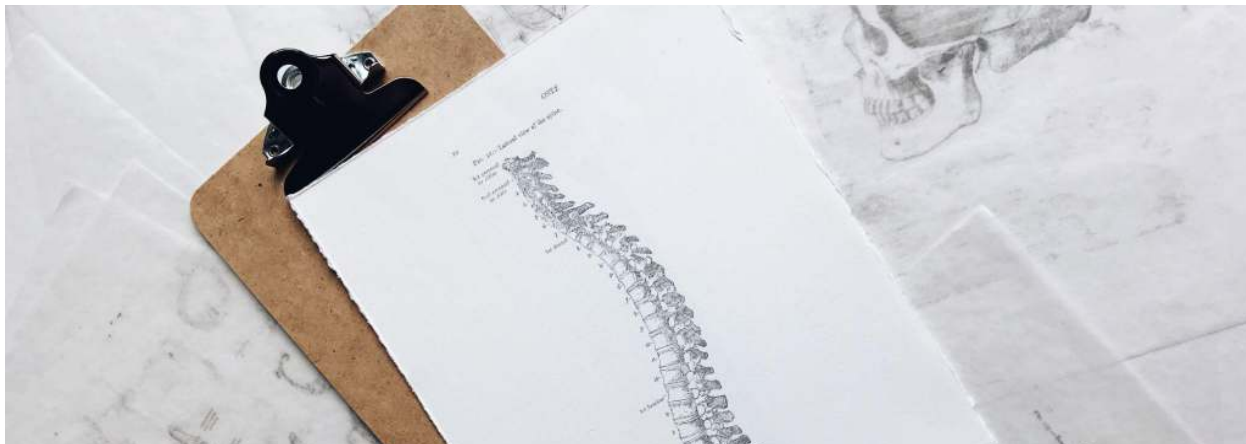
As per the Breath section previously, there are many videos on YouTube that will guide you through the Body Scan so make sure to check out the Benefits of Mindfulness [Courses](#) page).

BASIC STEPS (time ~15–20 minutes):

1. Lie Down (covered with a blanket for warmth if you need) and begin to **note the sensations in your body** – especially the points of contact with the floor/mat.
2. Begin to count your breaths from 1 to 10, inhale 1, exhale 2, inhale 3, exhale 4 and so on. When you reach 10, start at 1 again. **Imagine yourself sinking** a little deeper into the floor/mat every time you exhale.
3. Once you feel inclined, **focus your attention on your feet**. Think of your attention like a spotlight 💡, shining on them and highlighting the details – the toes, the soles, the arch, the sides.



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4. Now, whilst maintaining focus, try to visualise that as you breathe **IN**, the breath could travel into your lungs, down through your legs and **into your feet**. As you breathe **OUT**, imagine that the reverse is true and the breath travels back up the body and out again.
5. When it feels suitable, on an **OUT** breath, move the spotlight to another part of your body and repeat Step 3 and Step 4. Focus on:
- a. Legs (Lower/Upper); Knees
 - b. Pelvic Area
 - c. Abdomen/Torso
 - d. Back (Lower/Upper)
 - e. Arms (Upper/Lower)
 - f. Hands
 - g. Neck
 - h. Head
- ↓
~10-15 mins
↓
6. Once you have scanned the whole body, or feel like moving out of the meditation, take some time to come back to the body as a whole. Feel the sensations in the body again. *N.B you may find that keeping your eyes open intermittently will help support you from drifting off into sleep.*



PRACTICE SCHEDULE

Now that you have tried each of the above exercises you will have a better understanding of the ways that mindfulness can integrate in your life. You may have reflected on the way your day is set out, and times in your schedule when it would be more conducive to say a Body Scan, as opposed to other times where you may wish to practise the Sense Perception.

However you decide to incorporate mindfulness into your daily life is of course a personal choice, and so there really is no use to anyone dictating to you when the best time is. One recommendation however would be to incorporate it somehow, in a meaningful and consistent way. The length of time or commitment is really [arbitrary](#).

Noting after exercises can be a helpful way to build a habit. This does not have to be a special book, although it can be, but simply popping it on your phone's "Notes" app or keeping a record in your calendar can be enough to serve as a milestone that will motivate you.

If you would like to explore more, go check out the [Benefits of Mindfulness](#) website, where you will find lots of great resources, including blogs, tutorials and links to relevant content and likeminded organisations.

THANK YOU

Wishing you all the best on your journey to a calmer, more peaceful and present way of living.



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