

From the point we wake up to the minute we get to our house from work, our day-day activities can be like a whirlwind of stress and challenging demands. In an attempt to survive a stressful day, we run on autopilot, reacting instead of responding to anything life throws at us. A lot of us want to get our lives back, but how can we do that?

The first thing to do is to get back your peace of mind. This book chapters will tell you how to do that. Using effective relaxation approaches rooted in both olden wisdom and contemporary psychology, they show how mindfulness can transform your mindset and assist you appreciate the joy of daily life.

Also, you will learn how specific vital practices can change all aspects of your day, such as your morning routine, your professional relationships, and your leisure time. Making use of simple however strong practices, you'll be able to gradually transform your viewpoint in order for you to progress with more awareness, more compassion, and more appreciation for the here and now.

## Chapter 1 - Practicing mindfulness assists you to stop thinking about the past, or mentally running ahead to the future.

All of us are aware that physical exercise is good for health; however, as a matter of fact, our minds can gain from exercise, as well. This is the point where mindfulness comes in. However, before we proceed to the mind gym and begin practicing, let's explain what the meaning of mindfulness.

Mindfulness is the awareness we acquire when we concentrate our attention on our inner sensations and feelings, or toward our immediate surrounding. However, more than this, mindfulness is essentially about changing our outlook. As we redirect our attention inward, we begin to notice negative habits, such as making fast decisions, criticizing ourselves, or trying to control everything. By giving us the gift of awareness, mindfulness assists us transform these habits, and helps us to be more open-minded, more accepting, and also more receptive to change.

Essentially, mindfulness is a strong tool that can assist you to appreciate the present moment. As a matter of fact, we need it. Think about a Harvard University study that discovered that the human mind concentrates on the present moment just 53% of the time. This signifies that you're using nearly half your mental life being busy with abstract thoughts – frequently analyzing what's has occurred already, or anticipating what might occur in the future.

The cause for this is rooted in our biology. Just like the remaining part of your body, your mind is essentially made for survival. Evolution has fortified you with a mental alarm system that's usually at alert for dangers, regularly anticipating the worst-case scenario. For our olden forefathers, it was safer to concentrate on the critical inner voice than anticipating for the best in a likely dangerous condition.

In the contemporary world, which is volatile, uncertain, and extremely complicated, our evolution works against us. Our mental alarm systems are regularly overwhelmed with info, distractions, as well as danger. This doesn't just make mindfulness a challenge – it makes it vital for our well-being as well.

In the following chapter, you'll learn about how you can begin to reclaim your peace of mind by learning about simple mindfulness practices.

## Chapter 2 - Learning only a few basic practices is all you need to begin being mindful.

The first thing to do on your mindfulness path is to learn some vital practices. Altogether, these practices make a basis for a calmer, more compassionate mindset. Also, they will assist you to make better choices.

This is the first one: mindful breathing. This can be done at any time, anywhere. It has to be your go-to exercise when you feel as though your mind is wandering, or when day-day life throws a curveball at you and you have to calm down, fast. Just stop anything you're doing and redirect your concentrate to your breath: concentrate on the sensation in your nose as you breathe in the air, to the feeling in your chest as it increases with your breath, and then reduces again.

As soon as you've followed your breath for a moment, you can proceed to a different vital practice, the body scan.

In order to do this exercise, turn your attention toward the feelings in your body. Begin by concentrating on your feet, and gradually change your attention up to your body, ending with the crown of your head. Is any part of your body aching, or tingling, feeling hot or cold? By observing these physical feelings, you'll as well become conscious of any emotions you're feeling.

For instance, if your stomach is clenched, it probably signifies that you are feeling fear or worry. As you learn to precisely know your emotions, you can make use of them as a source of relevant information. How? Well, when you have an understanding of your emotions, you can make use of this greater awareness to make more important decisions—decisions that take you closer to the life you really want to live, and the kind of person you want to be.

Loving-kindness meditation is our following practice. To do this exercise, concentrate on a person you know and hold them in your mind. Visualize this individual wishing you well. After, visualize yourself giving back their warm, loving wishes. Silently wish them peace, love, and joy. End the exercise by wishing these good things for yourself as well. Research has revealed that loving-kindness meditation increases our compassion for both other people and ourselves.

Our last practice is known as STOP, and it's particularly beneficial in stressful circumstances. As you might have thought, this is an acronym. The S represents Stop since the first step in any challenging circumstance should be to just pause, and know that your emotions require some space. The T stands for Take a breath, as this will assist you to calm down and take your attention back to the present moment. The O represents Observe your immediate experience.

Take a few instants to study how you're feeling, by observing your bodily sensations, your feelings, as well as your thoughts. The last one which is P represents Proceed with kindness. Amidst this difficult moment, reflect on how you can develop yourself. This could be as basic as reaching out to a friend or just taking a work

In the need chapters, you'll learn about how to incorporate these vital practices into your day-day routine.

## Chapter 3 - By practicing gratitude and meditation, you can get a mindful morning.

Morning can be a whirlwind of stress. Even before you've woken up, you're stressing about your to-do list or that forthcoming presentation at work. By the time you get up from bed, you've already got your game face on, mentally planning for success. If this seems conversant, there's a better approach.

The first thing to do in order to have a better morning is to be kinder to yourself. When you wake up from sleep, it's tempting to think about every slight thing you didn't get around to the day before. The author used to stress about, if she didn't instantly remind herself of her entire unresolved tasks, she wouldn't get the motivation to do those tasks that day either.

However, beginning your day by concentrating on your failures is neither healthy nor beneficial. As a matter of fact, if you truly want to enhance your productivity in the day, attempt concentrating your first thoughts in the morning on gratitude. Use a few minutes, as you're still lying in bed, and think about the whole thing you're grateful for. This could be anything like your friends and family, your work projects, to the basic reality that you're living to witness another day.

It was discovered by researchers at Harvard Business School that practicing gratitude has an important positive effect on your physical and mental health. Also, feeling grateful can assist you to be more productive since gratitude puts you in a more conscious and energetic mood.

Should in case you're thinking about how you're going to fit in this whole gratitude into your life, you can be sure that a little goes really a long way. A study that was conducted by the University of California discovered that practicing gratitude every week is more effective than doing it daily; therefore, in order to benefit from this powerful practice, you just have to do it one time a week.

For the remaining six days, you can provide your morning routine an improvement by starting a short meditation session. Also, research has revealed that meditation decreases anxiety and

assists us to regulate our feelings. Only ten minutes per day of meditation can be the only thing you need for you to reap these benefits.

Even though it might look daunting, meditation doesn't need to be challenging. It can be as basic as sitting down in a quiet place and practicing mindful breathing for just ten minutes. Don't bother if you notice your mind regularly wandering as you meditate. As a matter of fact, each time you sense that you're distracted and have to refocus, you are in fact boosting your self-awareness.

## Chapter 4 - Mindfulness assists one to become a better communicator.

How often have you listened to one of your colleagues; however, discovered that your attention had wandered to another place? You might be saying, "Hmm, right, I hear you," however, 50% of you are already pondering on your following meeting. Noticing that you're not really interested, your colleague speaks faster, and it gets more and more difficult to follow what she's talking about.

When you listen mindfully, you concentrate your entire attention on what is being said to you. If you discover that your attention is wandering, simply pull it back to the speaker. Even though it's tempting to come in with your own view as the other individual is talking, attempt to prevent yourself from doing this.

Similarly, when we're speaking to others, it can be easy to hear just what we anticipate to hear, not what is really being said. Mindful listening entails being open and receptive rather than depending on your own expectations. In order to know that you've really understood the other person's message, shortly summarize what you believe they're attempting to say to you, and ask them if you've got it correctly. Attempt it— you might be surprised by how regularly you've misunderstood what a person said.

Email is another vital part of professional communication. Whether you believe it or not, there is something known as mindful emailing.

Think about the last time you got a displeasing email from a colleague. Maybe you considered it unfair, or critical of your work. When this occurs, it can be tempting to instantly fire off a defensive or aggressive response.

However, there's a better, more mindful approach of addressing circumstances such as this.

First and foremost, you have to take a pause before reacting, and make use of this time to foster a sense of compassion for the person that sent the email. Bring to mind the person that sent the message, and bear in mind that, just like you, they as well have needs, concerns, and hopes for the future. Attempt to put yourself in their situation and question yourself what they might want from you at the moment? As soon as you're in a kinder mindset, respond to their email in a spirit of openness as well as collaboration.

Writing emails that are kinder might not look like much; however, it can have a huge effect on your workplace. As a matter of fact, research conducted by the University of Michigan has discovered that greater compassion at work brings about reduced staff turnover, more collaboration, and more dedication to the organization. Therefore, before you press "send," take a minute to think about everything you have to gain, only by being nice.

## Chapter 5 - Your spare time is a valuable resource, and you shouldn't waste that time.

Do you get the best out of your weekends? As a young kid, you most likely had no issues making the most out of your spare time; however, as an adult, it can be a bit more difficult. Rather than spending that time with our friends or intentionally having fun, we usually waste our time off, sitting on the sofa and going through the internet from our phones. Instead of seizing the day, we're allowing it to slip away.

But the good news is that making the most out of your leisure time doesn't need to be difficult or costly. As a matter of fact, it can be as basic as turning off the TV and taking a mindful walk.

This practice entails concentrating your attention on the basic act of walking. Each time you take a step, notice the stability of the ground as your feet touch the ground. Take in your

surroundings, as well; however, don't allow your thoughts to wander a lot. For example, if you sight an apple tree, notice it, and appreciate it; however, attempt not to ponder on how much you'd wish to bake an apple pie when you get back to your house!

It is even good for your health as well as your brain if you can take your mindful walk in nature. Similar to every other part of your body, your brain needs to work hard daily, and at times it requires rest. Various studies have shown that, when you go for a walk in nature, a part of your brain known as the prefrontal cortex, which is in charge of planning and decision-making, is less active. Also, researchers from the Japanese have also discovered that, compared to walking in an urban surrounding, walking through woodland reduces your blood pressure and lowers your cortisol level, the alleged "stress hormone."

If you've kids, it's even a good idea to bring them together with you on your mindful nature walk. Now, experts believe that the quality of the time you use with your children is very much significant than the quantity. When you walk mindfully with your kid, you're completely dedicating to being in the moment with them.

Also, to your kid, whenever they have your complete, undivided attention is possibly the highest quality time of all! Furthermore, kids love it when adults share in their sense of wonder and awe of the natural world. Therefore, if you've got a child present in your life, make a date to spend your following weekend together with the child, relishing the trees, the sky, as well as the sun on your face.

## Chapter 6 - Hugging meditation assists us to show the people we love that we care about them.

When the husband of the author gets home from his workplace, there's a family member he can usually depend on to give him a warm welcome – his golden retriever, Beau. Anytime he hears the door, Beau hurries over, barking his excitement and wagging his tail. Dogs such as Beau find it easy to show their love; however, human beings don't usually find it really easy.

As the story of this shaggy dog shows, the instant a person passes through your door is a great chance to communicate your affection for that person. If your family welcomes have turn into a slight lackluster of late, why don't you attempt the hugging meditation?

This practice begins with basically identifying that the other individual is now present. For instance, you could walk to the front door, meet their eyes, and say something like, "Welcome home." After, both of you should take a mindful breath, to completely put yourself in the moment.

Now you can hg one another, for a complete of three full breaths. Become aware of your presence and joy at this moment with your first breathe. So, with your second breath, increase your awareness of that other person and imagine their presence and joy as well. Then, with your last breath, allow a sense of joy and appreciation wash over you since you are together.

Aside from making the one you love to feel welcome, hugging has other advantages as well.

To begin with, hugging increases your connection with your partner, by boosting your levels of oxytocin, normally called the "love hormone." However, it has been proven to minimize the harmful effects of stress on your body as well. For instance, researchers at the University of North Carolina have found out that women who usually hug their partner have a lower blood pressure compared to women who don't.

However, what is the reason why are hugs really good for us? Well, according to neuroscientists, they believe it's due to the fact that the sensations of a warm hug stimulate a part of our brains known as the insula, which assists us to process our emotions. Due to that, we immediately feel less irritated. Therefore, if your partner looks tense or stressed after a long day, attempt holding them in a hug till their body calms down.

**Chapter 7 - Mindfulness allows you to feel as though you've actually come home.**



The majority of us anticipate the end of the working day when we can spend time with the people we love, or just enjoy a carefree evening. Therefore, it looks cruelly ironic that immediately we get to our house, usually, all we can think about is work!

If you find it difficult to remove your thoughts away from your work, then a mindful evening ritual can assist you to relax.

The first aspect of this ritual is to speak your intention. When you reach outside your front door, take a second to touch the doorknob and make this declaration loudly: "As I enter my house, I am present, calm, and at peace."

As soon as you've walked across your threshold, pause before moving any further. Make use of this pause to practice three mindful breaths. While doing that, ask yourself these three basic questions: "What are my thoughts presently? What sensations am I feeling," and "What feelings are present with me?"

If you've had a hectic day, you might become conscious of some painful feelings. Don't attempt to disregard these emotions; however, accept them, and concentrate your attention on the part of you that is going through pain. Lastly, send yourself kind and loving wishes. If you find it hard to think of what these might be, then visualize what you would tell a friend who was feeling unhappy after a terrible day, and mentally speak these words to yourself.

After you've finished this ritual, you can use the remaining of your evening concentrating on something that is positive, like cooking and enjoying a meal.

Taking about cooking, this is a thing you can do mindfully as well. Begin by giving the ingredients your undivided attention. This can be as basic as running some uncooked grains of rice through your hands before you put the rice in the pot, or observing the bright orange shade of melon as you slice it. If you feel as though your mind is wandering, you can make use of heat as an anchor for your attention. Maybe it's a boiling pot of water or the sizzle of garlic in a frying pan, focus on the warmth, sounds, and smells of the heat sources in your kitchen, and continue taking your attention back to them.

As you eat your evening food, feel thankful to the farmers and everybody that participate in making the food possible, and give thanks that life has offered you another chance to enjoy the present moment.

## The Mindful Day: Practical Ways to Find Focus, Calm, and Joy from Morning to Evening by Laurie J. Cameron Book Review

Your mind has grown to stress about the future and dwell on the past. However, you don't need to be a slave to your neurobiology. Basic mindful practices can assist you to concentrate on the present, and appreciate the brief instants of intimacy, joy, and calmness that only occur in the here-and-now.

Relish the moment, even when it's cold and dark.

Winter can be a hurdle, and a lot of us count down the days until spring comes. However, a more mindful technique is to accept this extreme season instead. Bear in mind that the most vital time is the present; therefore, instead of anticipating brighter days, look for means to make the winter more pleasant. Light candles in the evening to form a warm glow, put cozy blankets on the couch, and invite friends over to keep your company in the time of those long, dark nights. With some mindful attention to detail, winter can turn into a source of happiness and a chance for connection.

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