MINDFULNESS



6 Simple Mindfulness Exercises

Mindful Breathing

Just be still and breathe! Breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth slowly. Focus only on your breath entering and exiting. One cycle should last about 6 seconds, and continue for one minute. Get lost in your breathing, blocking out your thoughts and worries.

Mindful Observation

Are you often so busy "doing" that you don't stop to "smell the roses". Chose an object near you in nature, a bird, a tree, clouds and just focus on watching the object. Look at it as if you have never seen it before. Relax and note every detail of that object and reconnect with nature.

Mindful Awareness

We often go through life on autopilot and don't take time to notice the small things. Choose something you do many times a day, such as opening a door, brushing your teeth or eating. Each time you perform the task, stop and be mindful. For example, smell and really taste the food you eat. Be appreciative for having food to eat and having your senses to enjoy the food. This exercise should raise your appreciation and awareness of the simple tasks and actions you are able to do without thinking twice.

Mindful Listening

This exercise helps to really listen without judgment and pre-conceived thoughts. We often listen with our past experiences and likes and our "dislikes" get in the way. Select a piece of music you haven't heard before and really listen to the notes and chords, exploring all aspects of it. Hear it through, even if it is not something you like at first and try to remain neutral.

Mindful Immersion

Instead of focusing on getting through one task to move on to something else, in this exercise you will try to be content in the moment. For example, while you are vacuuming the floor, pay close attention to every detail. How does the vacuum sound? What pattern does it make in the rug? Which muscles do you use when sweeping? The idea is to discover "new" experiences while performing a routine task and immersing yourself in the present moment.

Mindful Appreciation

Many things and people in our lives go unnoticed and may seem insignificant, yet they support our lives in so many ways. It is important to stop and appreciate, be thankful and acknowledge these things from time to time. Try to take note of 5 things that you otherwise wouldn't give attention to and jot them down. Examples might include your mail carrier, running water, the senses that allow you to taste, see, hear etc. When you look over the list you made, think about life without them? How do these things exist or work? Truly appreciate their purpose.

The purpose of these exercises is to help us live "in the moment". When we go through life on auto-pilot, we are being led by past experiences and emotions and we tend to fear and anticipate future experiences. This limits our ability to be present and face each moment with a clean slate. With that, may come greater compassion and free us from negative thinking.

*Source:www.pocketmindfulness.com



