



How to
Become

More Mindful in Your Everyday Life

—Elizabeth Scott, MS

**The practice
of [mindfulness](#)—
directing all of
your attention
and awareness
to the present—
can bring many
benefits to your
emotional and
physical health,
as well as to the
[relationships in
your life](#).**

Among its [many benefits](#), practicing
everyday mindfulness can:

Pull you out of the negative downward spiral
that can be caused by too much daily stress, too
many bad moods, or the [habit of rumination](#).

Help you make fewer errors when
processing your experiences.

Help you put stressful events into
perspective and build resilience so you're
less overwhelmed by them in the future.

And while there are many mindfulness
exercises you can practice on a regular
basis, learning how to be **present in
the moment** is also a way of life.

With practice, you can learn to live a more
mindful life that allows you to become
more conscious of everything you are doing.

It can be tough in today's fast-paced world to pause
and be present, however. After all, there are many
things competing for your attention and there's
a lot of pressure to multi-task.

But, if you're intentional about being more
mindful during your everyday life, you
can live with greater purpose and
more happiness.



Practice Mindful Eating

Whether you eat while you scroll through your phone or you reach for food for emotional comfort, mindless eating is common. And it can contribute to a host of problems, like overeating and consuming too much sugar.

Practice becoming more mindful about how you fuel your body. Resist the urge to multi-task while you eat. When you eat, be present with your food.

Pay attention to each bite that you're taking. Chew your food slowly and savor the taste.

Notice your body's signals about when you're getting full and pay more attention to what's on your plate. When you become more intentional about what you're eating, you'll be better equipped to focus on fueling your body with the nutrition it needs.



Be Mindful in Your Interactions

Whether you're interacting with your partner, your children, or a colleague, mindful interactions are important.

Mindfulness in a relationship is about observing what the other person is doing in a non-judgmental way. It's also about staying present in the moment during your conversations.

So rather than scroll through your phone while you're with someone, give them your undivided attention. And instead of crafting your rebuttal while they're sharing their opinion, seek to really hear their message.

You can become more mindful by paying attention to the way you're feeling, listening carefully, and learning to respond to others in a more mindful manner (rather than reacting out of anger).

Engage in Activities Mindfully

Do you ever have trouble recalling whether you washed your hair already when you're in the shower? Or do you sometimes forget why you walked into a certain room? Those are signs that you have a lot of things going on in your mind and you aren't being mindful.

Fortunately, you can improve at this and there are many opportunities to practice throughout the day.

[Walking](#), gardening, [eating chocolate](#), and many other activities can be opportunities to practice mindfulness. You just have to perform them with a heightened sense of awareness.

This means focusing on the present moment, tuning into physical sensations, being fully aware of everything you do, and letting go of thoughts of the future or anxiety over the past.

Take cleaning the house, for example. Start by viewing your work as a positive event—an exercise in self-understanding and stress relief, rather than simply as a chore. Then, as you clean, focus on what you are doing as you are doing it—and nothing else.

Feel the warm, soapy water on your hands as you wash dishes; experience the vibrations of the vacuum cleaner as you push it over the floor; enjoy the warmth of fresh-from-the-dryer laundry as you fold it; feel the freedom of letting go of unneeded objects as you put them in a box for donation.

Another opportunity to practice mindfulness in your everyday life is when you're listening to music. Really focus on the sound and vibration of each note, the feelings that the music stirs up within you, and other in-the-moment sensations.

Throughout your day, look for opportunities to be more mindful. Whether you're riding in the subway or you're taking a hot shower, try to be fully aware of what you're doing and what's happening around you.

When your mind wanders, congratulate yourself for noticing and gently bring your attention back to the current moment.



Pause Throughout the Day

As you move from one activity to the next throughout the day, it can be tough to stay mindful. You can get back on track by pausing throughout the day to practice a few basic mindfulness exercises.

You might make it a habit to spend a few minutes being mindful at certain times of the day, like during meals or when you're getting the car. Or, you might schedule a time to [practice meditation](#) or yoga.

You can also make it a habit to practice focusing on your breathing when you're upset or anxious. [Breathing techniques](#) can have a calming effect and help you stay grounded in the present moment.

[Progressive muscle relaxation](#) is another exercise you might practice throughout the day. Simply, work on tensing and relaxing your muscles, one muscle group at a time. With practice, you'll learn to recognize when you're tensing up certain parts of your body.

Mindfulness takes practice and effort. No one is good at it when they first start. Your mind is likely to wander repeatedly.

But, with practice and patience, you'll get better. And eventually, you'll recognize that you're living a more mindful life and you'll be free to enjoy benefits, like decreased stress, better mental health, better relationships, and greater overall happiness.

