

What is mindfulness?

Mindfulness is paying attention, on purpose, to the present moment, with openness, curiosity, and willingness to be with what is. Most of the time, people think about what happened in the past, like what you said or thought.

Or they think about the future, the worst possible scenario, worrying and exaggerating.

Being mindful means your mind is on what you are doing. It's the opposite of rushing or doing too many things at once. To be mindful, you can slow down and take your time. Do one thing at a time. Focus on what you're doing in a calm way. Pay attention with purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally. It may be what you're feeling, hearing, or anything else you notice.

Mindfulness is an invitation back into the present moment. A place of ease and well-being. In mindfulness practice, you bring your awareness to the present moment's body sensations, thoughts, or feelings without clinging to them, resisting them, or trying to change them.

Mindfulness involves holding the focus of your attention lightly, with gentle acceptance, like a butterfly resting in the palm of your hand, until it moves away on its own. You attend to the ongoing flow of experience, gently observing as it rises and falls.

Do you have to relax? There is no need to "relax" and no need to achieve anything. Just learn to pay attention to what is happening in the here and now. There's no special place of calm you have to reach and it's not about clearing your mind, it's just an honest and kind way to look at what you're experiencing at this moment.

There's growing research showing that when you train your brain to be mindful, you're actually remodeling the physical parts of your brain.

Mindfulness helps you stress less, concentrate better, understand yourself more, sleep better, get along with others, and make good choices.

Mindful activities

By trying mindfulness activities—like deep breathing, meditating, listening mindfully to others, being creative, or spending time outdoors—you can train your brain to pay attention to what's happening right now and feel better. Adding music appreciation and connecting with nature to your mindfulness practices can enhance this experience. Actively listening to music and spending time in nature can deepen your awareness and enrich your overall sense of well-being.