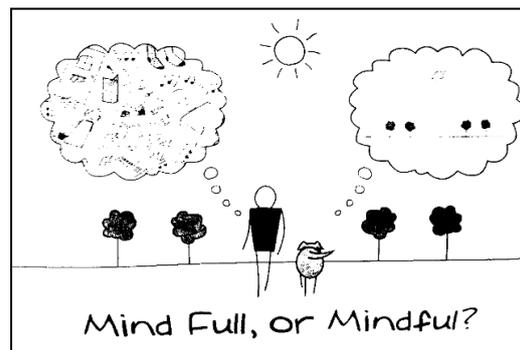


## How can I be mindful in my everyday life?

You can be mindful during any activity! The key is to experience the present moment by observing details. Use your 5 senses to help you do this. Here are 3 examples of everyday mindfulness:

### Walking:

- No matter why or where you are walking, be mindful. While walking, our minds often wander. Bring your focus back to the present moment.
- Pay attention to each step. Notice your breathing - is it deep or shallow? How does your body feel? Are there any places of tightness or pain? Which muscles feel loose? The purpose isn't to make judgments or changes in your movements, but to just notice.
- Take in the sights, smells, and sounds around you. Observe the feelings you're having as a result of this mindfulness.



### Eating:

- Avoid multitasking while you eat. Consider how often you snack on your favorite foods, and before you know it, your snack has disappeared! Did you even enjoy your experience?
- Instead, try to slow down, pause, and pay attention to the food you are eating. Maybe your meal includes an apple. Notice the different shades of reds and greens on its skin. How does it smell? Is the skin smooth? Are there any bruises? Observe the crisp crunch when you bite into the apple, and then be present with the various flavors and textures on your

tongue, whether tart, sweet, crisp, gritty, or somewhere in-between.

- Try this with any food item! Is your post-meal satisfaction different at all?

### **Showering:**

- Notice the feel of the water as it runs down your skin. Is it warm? Is it enjoyable? Observe the scents of soap and shampoo, and the feel of your hands on your head and skin. How does the water feel on your feet? Can you taste anything? Notice the sound of the water. Is it different if your eyes are open or closed? Watch the droplets run down your arm.

**Helpful hint:** It is normal for our minds to wander. If this happens, do not judge or feel frustrated. Gently bring your awareness back.

### **How can mindfulness improve my mental health?**

Practicing mindfulness can help you train yourself to focus on the present, rather than worry about the future or regret the past. It is completely normal to notice thoughts coming to your mind. Over time, you can learn to refocus your attention. The next time you're feeling sad, worried, or angry, try being mindful of that moment. Use your senses to observe the here-and-now. Simply observing your thoughts and feelings can help you feel less overwhelmed during tough situations. Practicing mindfulness can improve your coping skills over time.

**For more information:**

- University of Michigan Depression Center
- 1-800-475-MICH or 734-936-4400
- <http://www.depressioncenter.org/toolkit>

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