

Are you a mindful worker?

Try this little experiment below. You can establish how mindfully you live your life, and experience what it's like to be mindful as you go through your day. Adopt an open mind, be curious, enjoy it! This is not a test, it's an exploration and will help you raise self-awareness and understand more about mindfulness.

STEP ONE - Whether it was today, yesterday or last week, cast your mind back to your last full day at work (or full attendance if you're part-time/work shifts). Read through **A day in the life of a Mindful Worker**, and decide for each activity whether you did this mindfully.

You might use a scale like this one: **Not at all mindful / A bit mindful / Very mindful**

STEP TWO - Then print off **A day in the life of a Mindful Worker**, or store a copy on your phone. Follow the guidance for each activity. For two of the activities there are full instructions, and you can also use the link to listen to a guided practice.

<https://work-psychology-hub.teachable.com/p/mindfulness-based-living-course13>

STEP THREE - A few days later, repeat step one for a day when you were not following the instructions.

Mindful Activity	Last full day at work	Day chosen to be mindful	Another full day at work
Waking Up!			
Brushing Teeth			
Walking to Work			
Starting Work			
Eating Lunch			
Meeting			
Arriving Home			
Getting Ready for Bed			

Need help on this? Please do get in touch

A day in the life of a Mindful Worker

Wake Up!

If your alarm is going off, turn it off. Before you do anything else (don't check your phone, don't start planning your day, ignore the animals asking for food), do a bodyscan. This practice allows you time to check in with how the body and mind are feeling at the start of the day. *You can follow the guidance given further on, or follow this link for a FREE ten minute guided practice.

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Brush Your Teeth

Be present for brushing your teeth. Notice how the texture of your toothbrush, the taste of your toothpaste, the edges of your teeth.

Mindfully Walk to Work

Whether your walk to work is from the front door to the car, the bus stop or all the way to the office, take the opportunity to walk mindfully. Pay attention to putting one foot in front of the other. Notice how the body feels when it is walking. Notice other things such as how the weather makes you feel, and whether how you walk depends on the weather.

Start as You Mean to Go On

Set an intention at the start of your work day. How would you like to approach the day ahead? Maybe you would like to listen fully whenever you have a meeting? Maybe you would like to be focused today? Maybe you would like to be kind to yourself during your busy day? Say a short statement in your head or out-loud to affirm your day's intention.

Mindful Sandwich

If you have a habit of desk-dining, then today find somewhere away from your desk to eat your lunch. Be present for what you are eating. Really taste the sandwich, experience the textures and chew every bite. Stop to experience how it feels in your mind and emotions as well as physically eating. You will notice that by eating this way, there is no room for checking your mobile or reading!

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*This can be any item of food!

Mindful Meeting

Whether you are meeting via email, teleconference or in person, and whether your meeting is a formal one or informal, be mindful during each meeting today. Commit to listen fully with your mind and body.

Arriving Home

Try to do something different when you get home to what you normally do. If you normally switch the TV on, then try having a conversation with someone you live with. If you normally go straight to the kitchen and eat something, then try taking the dog for a walk or strolling around your garden.

Getting Ready for Bed

Before you go to bed, take a moment to be grateful for three things from today. This might be catching up with a colleague you haven't seen for a while, or receiving some praise from your boss. Either write these down, or simply reflect upon them and how they made you feel.

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Bodyscan guidance

You can do this practice in your bed, or on a yoga mat on the floor with a blanket. You might want to set an alarm for ten minutes time in case you fall asleep!

Your eyes can be open or closed. Become aware of your whole body from head to toe, left to right, front round to back. Observe the points at which the body connects with the floor or bed beneath it. Notice the breath as it comes into the body and leaves the body. You may notice the rise and fall in your body as each breath comes and goes. On each breath, allow the body to let go and feel the support of the floor or bed beneath you.

Take your awareness all the way down the body to the big toes and become present for what sensations are there. You may feel temperature, the weight of the blanket. You may feel something completely different, or you may feel nothing. Whatever your experience, it is OK. There are no expectations of what should happen. You do not need to force anything to happen.

Gently broaden your awareness to include the rest of your feet - the toes, the soles of your feet, the heels and the tops of your feet.

Move your awareness up to your ankles, then your calves, moving on up into your knees and then your thighs. Then hold both legs in your awareness. Remember that you are experiencing each part of the body with your awareness rather than thinking about each part. When your mind wanders off to thinking, notice this and gently bring it back to the bodily experience.

Move away from the legs, and your experience can shift up through the pelvic area, and on into the lower and upper back, shoulders, round to the abdomen, rib-cage and chest. Observe the breath breathing in this area. Notice if you are holding emotions anywhere as you travel round your torso. Observe any tensions that may be held in your back, shoulders or elsewhere.

Bring your awareness into your arms and into your hands, fingers, finger-tips. Notice the warmth and energy that is stored in the palms of your hands. Notice what the hands feel like at rest and the contact they are making.

Start to move awareness to your head, neck, throat and face, noting any tension held in the muscles around the forehead, around the eyes, the jaw and the mouth. Notice any facial expression. Allow your face to soften with your awareness.

Let go of any focus on a particular body part, and broaden your awareness back to your breathing. Pay attention to the breath as it is felt in the body and try to maintain this awareness with an overall sense of your body – as if your whole body is breathing and held in awareness. Be aware of the quality of your experience and note any emotional tones present without judging them. When you are ending your practice, start by slowly moving the body, perhaps wiggling your toes, making sure not to come out of the practice too quickly.

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Mindful Eating

You may wish to find a quiet corner of the canteen, or maybe the park. Alternatively try this with a colleague in silence together (although this exercise can sometimes evoke laughter, if so, experience the emotion fully!)

Take your sandwich (or other lunch item such as a crisp or carrot stick) by holding it in your hand. Investigate the sandwich by **looking** at it from every angle. Turn it around and upside down and look at the different colours, the different patterns, the angles.

Hold the sandwich lightly in your hand, **feel** the weight of it, stroke the texture of it. Lightly squeeze the sandwich. **Listen** to the sandwich. What do you notice when you hold the sandwich up to your ear?

Bite off a small mouthful of sandwich. Hold it in your mouth without doing anything and observe how it **tastes** and feels. Try sucking the sandwich. Then chew it. Swallow it. Taste the aftertaste.

Eat the rest of the sandwich in more of a 'regular' fashion, but do so mindfully, taking mindful bites, tasting and chewing each bite. Take a moment after finishing to observe how you feel physically, mentally and emotionally.