

Mindfulness in changing times

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Mind Full, or Mindful?

Mindfulness

- Introduction
- What is mindfulness & why does it matter?
- The science behind it. How does it work?
- Different ways to practise mindfulness
- Short meditation exercise
- How can mindfulness help in changing times?

What is mindfulness?

- Mindfulness is **deliberately paying attention** to things we would not normally even notice, and becoming aware of our present moment experience in a way that is **non-judgemental and kind**.
- It is a mental discipline that involves **training attention**.

It teaches us to use the mind in a different way and **to focus on the things that are most useful and helpful in our lives** thus helping us to live more consciously and fully.



Why does it matter? The problem with 'unmindfulness'

- Automatic Pilot, not really engaged, not really present
 - Not absorbing information properly
 - Bad communication
 - Making mistakes
 - When focused on one thing; we are less stressed & more productive



Practice of mindfulness is:

Intentionally engage with whatever we are doing in the present moment.



Notice when the mind, invariably, wanders off...



Bring it back to the present moment

More we practise this, the better we get at recognising & bringing the mind back.

We start to **rewire** the brain, training acceptance, letting go and focusing on the present.

The science behind it. How does it work?

- The scientific power of meditation
- Neuroplasticity



Different ways to practise mindfulness

- **Informal every day mindfulness**

You go about your daily activities in a more focused state of mind.

- **Formal mindfulness**

Work-out at the 'mental gym' where you 'train your mind to become more aware' by doing regular meditation exercises.

Don't try to get rid of thoughts but learn to focus your thoughts.

How do you practise formal mindfulness?

- Meditation 101

You don't have to sit in a funny position

Don't worry if your mind goes "nuts"

Exercise is about bringing the mind back

Failure is success!

5-10 minutes a day



"Can I call you back, Ed? I'm in the moment here."

Let's try it!

8 minute meditation

Or

3 Minute breathing space

5 ways to be mindful at work

Meditation and its benefits



How does mindfulness help with stress in changing times?

- Back to the now
- Acceptance / letting go
- Take a break
- Perception / Ability to adapt to change positively
- [Summary of Mindfulness](#)

- If you want to know more:

Book: *Mindfulness, Finding peace in a frantic world*
Prof Mark Williams and Danny Penman

Free online 6-week MOOC from Monash University
Mindfulness for Wellbeing and Peak Performance
www.futurelearn.com

If you would like more information, we are putting together some links to mindfulness resources.

Please email E.vanhout@kent.ac.uk or N.J.Urquhart@kent.ac.uk if you would like to be kept informed.

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Suggestions for practising informal mindfulness

- Take a different route to work or walk more consciously how does it feel in your body to walk, how does the body bounce or do your feet feel.
- Become aware of the sensation of the shower for the first 10-15 seconds every day and how it feels on your skin.
- Try and taste the first bite of every meal mindfully.
- When your computer is booting up, take a few mindful breaths. Or do this when the phone rings.
- Whenever you feel stressed or upset try to catch yourself and take a breath, feel your feet on the floor, settle your mind.