

Mindfulness exercises

How do you ensure that you really live life mindfully? We will take you through a number of exercises (three to be precise) for every moment of the day.

Whether you are sitting in the office, driving in the car, standing like a sardine on the tram or quietly at home... you can practice mindfulness anywhere.

Mindfulness exercise 1: the Body Scan

The body scan is a well-known **mindfulness exercise**, where you focus on feeling your own body. You let your attention flow through your entire body, to feel what you feel. This makes you aware of your body and what is going on. You try not to pass judgment on this. Let's try it:

- Lie on [your yoga mat](#) or on your rug in the living room
- The surface should not be too soft, but you should be able to feel your body well
- Close your eyes
- Now move your attention through your body for each body part. You can do this by mentally naming and seeing each body part, you can visualize a golden string through your body or you can just feel it. This is completely up to you.
- You start with your right foot, right leg, left foot, left leg, hips, abdomen, chest, neck, right shoulder, right arm, right hand and fingers and then the left side. Feel your tongue in your mouth (make sure it is loose in your mouth), your lips, nose, eyes, forehead, and the top and back of your head.

Sometimes you feel nothing at all during a body scan and sometimes you feel some or even all body parts tingling. There is no right or wrong, because it's about **your body and your focus**. When you feel tension in a part of your body, notice it. After the body scan you can pay extra attention to this tension by breathing into it and visualizing this part relaxing.

You do the body scan as a mindfulness exercise when you want to take time for yourself and have a quiet space to do this. Assume approximately 20 minutes.



Mindfulness exercise 2: Breathing in the office

We often forget to be mindful at work. Even if you are an experienced mindfulness practitioner, it is difficult to be one under pressure and stress. But do you realize the enormous benefits when you manage to be mindful at work (more concentration, less stress, more creative, better decisions, etc.). A good **mindfulness exercise for the office**:

- Set your alarm every two hours to remind you to breathe consciously
- Just stay at your desk or wherever you are
- Close your eyes and take ten deep breaths through your stomach and focus on your breathing



Mindfulness exercise 3: Focus on your environment

You are in the car, on the bike, on the subway or on the train. You don't really have the option to close your eyes and isolate yourself. Are you unable to do any exercises at all at that time? Exactly right then, because moments like this are all the more important to be in the now.

You do this by focusing on the sounds and movements around you. What do you hear, what do you see, what do you feel? Are you going to digress? Notice this and come back to the environment around you. This really ensures that you are in the here and now, so mindful.

