

6 Mindfulness Exercises That Each Take Less Than 1 Minute

Mindfulness exercises for people who don't want to do formal meditation.

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Here are 6 short mindfulness exercises you can incorporate into your day if you're not keen on formal meditation.

1. Two mindful bites.

Instead of attempting to do mindful eating all the time, try mindful eating for the first two bites of any meal or snack.

For the first two bites of any meal or snack you eat, pay attention to the sensory experiences - the texture, taste, smell, and appearance of the food, and the sounds when you bite into your food. You don't need to savor *per se*, you're just paying attention to your sensory experience in an experiential rather than evaluative way.

2. What one breath feels like.

Instead of formal meditation, try paying attention to what one breath feels like.

Feel the sensations of one breath flowing into and out from your body. Notice the sensations in your nostrils, your shoulders, your rib cage, your belly etc.

3. Take a mindful moment to give your brain a break instead of checking your email.

Instead of checking my email in the 5 minutes between therapy clients, I spend a few seconds watching out my window. I usually watch the leaves fluttering on the big trees across the street. Use mindfulness to give your brain a break rather than filling up every tiny space in your day by automatically reaching to check your email.

4. Air on exposed skin.

Pay attention to the feeling of air on your skin for 10-60 seconds.

This is best done when wearing short sleeves or with some skin exposed.

Why: You're practicing being in experiential processing mode (as opposed to evaluative "judging" mode, which is our default).

5. Scan your body.

Scan your body from top to toe for any sensations of discomfort or tension. Attempt to soften to the sensations of discomfort. Next, scan your body for any sensations of comfort or ease.

6. Do one action mindfully.

Pick an action you do at the same time everyday and plan to do that action mindfully. For example, the moment you flick out your rolled up newspaper.

Your Own Twist.

Please feel empowered to put your own twist on these ideas. The reality is that most people aren't willing to do formal meditation exercises on a consistent basis. These informal exercises are an alternative. You can also take any formal meditation you like and create a more everyday version of it. Think of it as remixing to suit yourself.