

MINDFULNESS IN DAILY LIFE

Choose a mindfulness activity to practice for the week and remember to practice awareness of your body sensations, thoughts and feelings while performing the activity. You may select from the list below or choose an activity of your own.

- 1) Washing hands. Consider where the water comes from, and how valuable it is in our arid environment. Be aware of the posture of your body, feeling of the water, the soap, the movement of your hands. Breathe!
- 2) Stopping at red light. Allow this to be a moment to pause, breathe, look at the sky, people. Become aware of the posture of sitting, notice the sense of your hands on the wheel. How tightly are you holding the wheel? Be aware of your shoulders, back. Notice the pressure of your buttocks on the seat, your thighs. The contact your feet make with the floor, the brake. What sort of thoughts and feelings arise? What is your mood?
- 3) Looking at a clock or your watch, remember to pause and breathe. Try putting your watch on the other arm as another way to pause. Notice how it feels when things are slightly different.
- 4) When the telephone rings, instead of rushing to answer it, allow yourself to pause with the first three rings, relax your face with a half-smile and breathe. Feel your arm reaching for the phone, the contact your hand makes with the plastic, how the receiver feels against the ear.
- 5) Washing dishes. Notice your posture, how your body moves, the look and feel of the dishes: the feel of the water, how it looks and sounds. Are you doing them slowly or rushing to get them done. Be aware of your mood. Breathe.
- 6) Brushing your teeth. How your hands hold the toothbrush, the movement of your arm, the sound of the brush on your teeth. Taste of toothbrush.
- 7) Taking a shower. Awareness of water. Its temperature, where it hits your body. Posture. Movements. Mood.

- 8) Eating one meal a day, breakfast or lunch. Notice how you are sitting (or standing?). See the food, the shapes and colors. Smell it. Pause to consider from where it came and how it ultimately reached your table. Notice any feelings of anticipation. Be aware of reaching for the food, bringing it to your mouth. Be with the taste and texture of the food as your chew. How do you swallow? Notice any impulse to rush through this bite in order to go on with the next. Thoughts and feelings that arise. What is your mood? How is your breathing?
- 9) Reaching, touching, turning a doorknob, opening the door and passing through the doorway. Breathe. A transition.
- 10) Driving: Turn the radio off and be with driving. Awareness of your posture, the pressure of your hands on the steering wheel, your buttocks on the seat and your foot on the gas pedal/brake. Notice what parts of your body are tense or relaxed. What is your breathing like? Be with sights and sounds as they arise and pass away. Use beginner's mind to see your old route with fresh eyes. (Or you might try a new route.)
- 11) Drive slowly. Stay in the right lane and go 55 miles per hour. Breathe.
- 12) When you go to work, look into the eyes of a co-worker and say, "Good morning." Breathe.
- 13) When dressing and undressing, notice your posture and how you reach for the clothes. How they feel on your skin as you slip them on or off. Breathe.
- 14) Use those moments of walking (in the office, at home, to or from the car, shopping, etc. as a meditation. Be with your posture, the feel of your body moving, how your legs and arms move. The feel of your feet contacting the ground. Your breathing. Sights and sounds. Thoughts and moods.
- 15) Shopping meditation. Be aware of your intention, what you plan to buy. Notice how your attention is pulled by different objects, notice the desire to have or own something. See if you can pause and ask yourself if you need this or if it is enough to look at this beautiful object in the store. (Stores as art museums.) When food shopping be aware of what foods are calling you. Is it your body that is hungry for them, or your mind?