

31 Day Mindfulness Challenge



A Month of Mindfulness

Below you will find 31 different mindful tasks which you can complete with all your family. These tasks only take a few minutes to be carried out and can be done on the busiest of days. Most of them can be done anytime, anywhere and if you wish, they can be done without anyone seeing but it's much better to get everyone to join in! Try to do them in order, don't pick and choose what you're going to do and before you read the day's task, make sure you take 3 deep breaths. Completing a full month should help develop a more mindful attitude towards life, reduce stress and anxiety and become a happier person, what are you waiting for?!

The challenge begins...

1. **The Posture Challenge** – During the day try and bring your attention to how you are



sitting, standing or lying at that moment. Notice where the body is supported by the chair, ground or bed. Simply scan through the body noticing any sensations that are present. Perhaps coolness or a pins and needles sensation, notice any areas in the body that feel tight or maybe a little achy. Don't change anything, just notice. Do this as often as you can throughout the day to begin to notice your posture and particular sensations that are present at that moment.

2. **Candle staring** – You'll need an adult for this one. Find a nice candle and light it in the darkest room. Try staring at it for as long as you can or up to 10 minutes. Notice everything about it, the colours, the smell and when your mind wanders bring it back to the flame.



3. **Back to nature** – Choose a natural object, it could be a flower, an insect, a tree or



even a cloud. Now look at your chosen object with a real sense of curiosity like you've never seen it before. Explore its colour, shape, texture. What role does it play? Continue for as long as your concentration allows and try it twice today.

4. **In the moment** – Choose a simple daily task, a good one at the moment would be washing your hands! Notice how the water flows when you turn on the tap, feel the temperature of the water, the texture and temperature of the soap. Watch as the bubbles appear on the hands as



you rub them together, how does this make you feel, what sensations are you feeling in that moment? Try to do every time you wash your hands.

5. **Mindful melting** – Find a quiet time to sit or lay down and relax. Imagine you're a



chocolate bar in the sun melting into the surface around you. On each out breath let go and feel your body melting away...Try this a few times as it's a tricky one to master.

6. **Mindful chore** – Pick a chore that you have to do daily perhaps making your bed, putting your clothes away or doing the washing up. Now try this chore as if it's a new and fun activity. Get creative and discover new experiences with a familiar task.



7. **Self-love** – Make a voice recording on your phone or borrow an adults or siblings phone. Say out-loud everything you love about yourself, your ambitions, your strengths, things you do for others, how you inspire others, etc. Then listen to it! Keep listening to it every day over the next week especially in moments when you're feeling a little down. Notice how it makes you feel...



8. **Ouch!** – Pinch your arm, how does it feel? Where do you feel it? What kind of pain is it, sharp, dull? Does the pain stay in your arm or flow through your body? How do your emotions react to the pain, does it make you angry, upset? This helps to tune in to how the body reacts to different emotions and where in the body you recognise these emotions. Try a few times to see how you manage and understand the pain.



9. **Fisty cuffs** – Clench your fists as tight as you can for 5-20 seconds. Release. Notice the sensations in your hands and arms for as long as you can. Practise a few time to see if you can increase your attention for longer each time.



10. **Mindful smells** – Choose a strong smell like the perfume or aftershave your adults wear or perhaps a cup of coffee. Breathe the smell in deeply. What happens to your body when you smell it, how does it make you feel? Safe, happy, awake, loved, excited? Try a couple of times with the same smell or a different one, concentrate on the emotions it makes you feel.



11. **Mindful tasting** – Choose a food with a strong taste like a mint or an orange, notice what happens in your mouth when you eat it and how it makes you feel. Really taste it like you've never tasted it before, notice the textures as you eat. You could even try with a mouthful of dinner and get your family to join in and see if they notice anything different to you.



12. **Mindful listening** – Chooses a song or piece of music you've never heard before, it could be a genre that you usually don't listen to like classical or folk, close your eyes and put your headphones on. Try not to pre judge the music, just listen, let go and see where it takes you...



13. **STOP** – Right now, stop. Look around and see what's going on. Check in with your senses. How are you feeling? Happy, anxious, excited, over-stimulated? Take this moment to feel your emotions and see what's happening around you.



14. **Walking with awareness** – Allocate 10 minutes to walk silently (tricky I know but try your hardest!), this could be indoors or out on your daily exercise. Focus on sounds or objects around you, thoughts, sensations and feelings in your body. When you sense or see something say it out-loud three times. For example, if you see a dog say "dog, dog, dog." If you feel hot say "hot" three times. Continue to label everything you notice.



15. **"I"** – For the whole day keep count of how many times in a sentence you use the word "I". You'll be surprised how often you talk about yourself!!



16. **What happens?** – Try to find yourself half an hour or an hour for this task or whatever you can manage. For every action you do in this time you are going to think 'what happens?' For example, if you pick up a pen to write the ink must flow down to write on the paper, to open the door you must turn the handle which in turn pulls the latch. See how many actions you can notice in your allocated time.



17. **Mindful movie** – Watch a movie you've not seen before and give it your full awareness. Notice how your posture changes, your emotions and your facial expressions too. What happens to you at the exciting parts or the sad parts?



18. **1-minute breath** – This can be done anytime and anywhere. To start, take a long slow breath in through the nose and out through the mouth to help settle you. Now take notice of your breath, let go of any thoughts, follow the breath the whole way in and the whole way out. Do this for one minute, counting each breath. It doesn't matter about how many breaths just count them to help you focus, try this about 5 times throughout the day.



19. **Appreciation exercise** – Choose 5 things from your daily life which you usually take no notice of and write them down. It could be the toothbrush that keeps your teeth clean, the gas or electric that heats the water for your shower or even the wheat to make the bread for your sandwich! Think about how these things work, how they play a part in your life. Do they benefit you in any



way? Look at the finer details of these items and their role on the Earth. Make sure you tick off the list as you go.

20. **Do's and do not's** – Think about the kind of language you use today and try to swap any negatives for positives. Instead of “Don’t be late” you could try “Let’s try to be early.” See how much nicer and friendlier it sounds. Take the negative words like ‘can’t, won’t shouldn’t etc.’ and think of more positive examples. Notice how it makes you feel and changes the atmosphere around you.



21. **Happy waiting** – Any time today when you are waiting for something be it the computer to load, waiting for somebody or even waiting for the bathroom, take that moment to practice mindfulness. Take some breaths, appreciate the moment and feel gratitude. It makes waiting a lot more bearable!



22. **Gratitude exercise** – Today get in touch with someone who has made a difference to your life in a positive way and thank them. Tell them what you’ve learnt from them and how they’ve helped you. You could call, email, text write a card or even a letter. You’d be surprised how much this will mean to the person and notice how it makes you feel when saying or writing it too.



23. **“Shhhhh”** – Do a good deed for someone else today but make sure you keep it a secret. You could leave your siblings some of your sweets, do the washing up or order a gift for a family member or friend and watch them open it not knowing who it’s from. Notice how this makes you feel and the urge you have to tell them it was you. This is completely natural but try to let it go and hold onto your secret.



24. **Colourful thoughts** – An excuse to buy a packet of M&M’s or skittles which ever you prefer and this evening sit with your family and answer these questions together about your day:



For every **red** take it in turns to say something that made you happy

For every **blue** say something that has made you sad

For every **green** say something that had made you excited

For every **yellow** say something that has made you angry

For every **brown** say something you wish you could have done differently that day

For every **orange** say a good choice that you have made today

25. **Auto-pilot** – That everyday task of brushing your teeth, by the time you've finished



you don't even remember doing it! Today try and brush mindfully, slow down and engage in the taste, smell and texture of the toothpaste and brush, if the mind wanders-which it most definitely will-bring it back to the task at hand. See if this changes the boring task that you have to do every day.

26. **Shadowboxing** – Allow 10 minutes in your day to fight your shadow. Focus on your breath and keeping it steady, don't do crazy fighting, pretend you're a 'Kung Fu' expert and makes those kicks and punches precise. Feel the movement in your body, feel the power. This makes a great mindful exercise.



27. **Breathe** – Take a moment to focus on just one breath, follow the whole of the breath in and the whole of the out. Notice the pause in between the out breath and the in breath. Notice when the out breath turns into the in breath and the in breath turns into the out breath. Try it now. Give your mind a break, do any many time as you wish during the day.



28. **In the moment** – On your daily exercise, in the house or in the garden take some time to become aware of the nature around you at that moment. Take in the sounds, smells and sights. Feel the breeze on your skin, the heat of the sun or the rain on your face, listen to the birds chirping or dogs barking. When the mind wanders from the present moment notice where it went and gently bring it back to the surroundings, keep your focus on the present moment.



29. **Pause button** – Think of something you touch often during the day, it could be your glasses, a phone or a watch and make this your pause button. Every time you touch the item pause for a moment and notice your surroundings even if it's only for a few seconds at a time.



30. **Sunrise or sunset** – Take the opportunity today or tomorrow to watch a sunset or sunrise. Enjoy the colours and peacefully embrace the feeling of a new day, a new beginning, forget about your worries or things to do. Be there in the moment, right here, right now...



Live in the moment,

Look out for each other,

