

The Power of Being Present

We all have busy days and busy brains. Often, we move through time on autopilot, checking off to-dos and putting out fires one after the other with only the end goal of getting done or getting home in mind. As a result, yesterday becomes a blur and tomorrow turns into tonight's anxiety. Operating on this endless loop of do, done, repeat, means we're ignoring the here and now and are unable to appreciate the present. Mindfulness helps you become more aware of your surroundings and experiences, thus enabling you to connect with – and find more joy in – each moment.

What it means to be mindful

Contrary to what it may seem, mindfulness doesn't have to be related to a spiritual journey. It's simply a state of active attention or the ability to be fully present and aware of your thoughts, physical sensations, and emotions, and the ability to take in what's going on around you and return to the present moment without judgment.

The benefits of being in the moment

Being even a little more present in your daily life can have positive effects on your health, happiness, relationships, and overall well-being. Here's a shortlist of the many advantages that may come from being in the moment:

Health and well-being

- Improved physical and mental health
- Better quality sleep
- Reduced stress and anxiety
- Increased resilience
- Better moderation of self and emotions

At work

- Increased job satisfaction
- Reduced conflict between coworkers
- Enhanced management of and adaptability to demands
- Greater attention span and cognitive function
- Elevated creativity levels

Are you minding the moment?

You may need to practice being more present if some of the following sounds familiar:

- Forgetting what was said during recent conversations
- Not being able to recall today's commute
- Rushing through lunch, or not actually noticing how the food tastes
- Giving more attention to your phone or computer than to others in your personal life

Personal life

- More complete sense of self
- Greater sense of satisfaction/fulfillment
- Stronger, more enriched relationships
- Increased enjoyment of others
- Improved attitude and optimism

Practice makes present

Fortunately, anyone can become more present. Mindfulness becomes more and more accessible with daily practice. There are many ways to practice being present, so make a point to find the techniques that work best for you. Start by sitting or standing right where you are, then take a few deep breaths and observe your environment. Take notice of what you smell, see, and how you feel in this exact moment. Doing this may not seem like much, but since we rarely stop to truly absorb and appreciate our surroundings, we can miss the small events that can ground us. You may be surprised at how calming it can be.

To find out more on how you can harness the power of being present, or to get tips on mindfulness practice, call the **Employee Assistance Program (EAP)** today to receive additional information and helpful resources.

The EAP is a voluntary and confidential employee benefit available to federal employees and their family members at no cost.

24 HOURS A DAY

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