

## Practical Guidelines & Tips for Practicing Mindfulness in Everyday Life

David R. Moore, Ph.D.

- Body Scan

- Although you can do an extensive body scan meditation for a full formal meditation session (either sitting, lying down, or sitting), you can also do a quick body scan to help you get “out of your head” and re-center in the present moment by grounding yourself in your body.
- Simply bring your attention to bodily sensations, allowing your breath to remain in your peripheral awareness. Start at one end of your body (either toes or head) and gradually move your attention to the other end of the body, focusing on any and all sensations in each body part and region (temperature, pressure, feeling of air on your skin, etc.). Then, bring your awareness to the body as a whole.

- Mindful Check-ins

- Brief mindful check-ins involve periodically “tuning in” during the day.
- Gently bring your attention to your breath, and take a few mindful breaths. Then bring your attention to your body, releasing any tension that you might be carrying in your body or in your mind.
- This practice can be helpful in training the mind to be mindful during your everyday life, and to automatically recognize and let go of tension that tends to build up (often without our conscious awareness).

- Returning to your Senses

- Much of mindfulness in everyday life involves re-connecting with direct experience (as opposed to being stuck in our heads, with all of our over-thinking, analyzing, commentary, and judgments).
- The goal with this practice is choose a few everyday activities or experiences and engage in these activities mindfully, with a focus on particularly awakening to the *direct sensory experiences* of these activities. It helps to choose a handful of activities that you do frequently, that involve a fair amount of sensory input. It can also help to choose at least one activity that you currently engage in quite mindlessly.

*Some examples:* walking, showering, washing your hands, eating, exercising, making the bed, folding clothes, driving

- Go at a pace where you are not rushing and where you are able to really engage with your moment-by-moment experience, but you don’t have to go at a snail’s pace. A normal pace is fine (unless your “normal” pace entails mindlessly rushing).
- Start with a few activities, and then begin to expand this practice to more and more to other everyday activities.