

Common Questions about Mindfulness Practices



When practising mindfulness, do you easily get distracted or sleepy? Or do you feel tense, bored, or experience physical discomfort such as numbness or soreness? Perhaps you find it difficult to make time for practice? In fact, these are all common questions related to mindfulness practices. Below are some suggestions and coping strategies that may be helpful to you.

If you have questions about the experiences of your practice, please refer to **Part One**.

If you wish to learn how to integrate mindfulness into daily life, please refer to **Part Two**.

Part One: About Practice Experiences

1 What should I do if I cannot stay focused during practice?

It is normal for the mind to wander and it is not a fault. Noticing that your mind has wandered is already an experience of the present moment. When you notice your mind has wandered, just gently bring your attention back to the anchor, such as the body, breath, or sound (refer to  **Mindful Sitting**) or back to the loving-kindness phrases (refer to  **Loving-kindness**).



2 I fall asleep during practice. Am I doing it wrong?

No, falling asleep during practice is quite common. If practising with your eyes closed or in a lying down position may make you feel drowsy, you can try practising with your eyes open or in a sitting position next time. Alternatively, choose a time when you feel more awake, such as after washing up in the morning. Nonetheless, falling asleep during practice may indicate that your body truly needs a rest. In this case, be kind and allow yourself time to rest before practicing.



3

What should I do if I have pain or other discomfort in the body during the practice?



When experiencing pain or other discomfort, you may choose to gently bring your attention to that area and observe any changes in the sensations. You may slowly adjust your posture mindfully. See if this can relieve the pain or discomfort. If you find it difficult to focus on these sensations, you could bring your attention back to your chosen anchor, such as the body, breath, or sound (refer to  **Mindful Sitting**).

You may also place your hand on your chest or the body part where you experience pain or discomfort as in  **Loving-kindness** or  **Soothing Touch** , and continue the practice. However, if the pain or discomfort is too intense, you are advised to stop the practice and consult a healthcare professional to see if it is appropriate to continue.



4

I don't feel anything during practice. Is that normal?

The focus of the practice is to be aware of any experience in the here and now. Noticing "no feeling" is itself an experience of the present moment and thus it is completely normal. Simply continue practising with an open and curious mind.



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I feel very relaxed during practice. Does this mean I'm doing it right?

You may feel calm or relaxed during practice, but relaxation is not the purpose of the practice. The focus of the practice is to bring awareness to the experience of the present moment. Whether you feel relaxed or not, simply observe your body sensations as they are.



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On the contrary, I feel more nervous during practice. Am I doing something wrong?

During mindfulness practice, you are generally more aware of your emotional state in the present moment. Therefore, you may notice a sense of nervousness more intensely. You can bring your attention back to your chosen anchor, such as the body, breath, or sound (refer to  **Mindful Sitting**). You may also give yourself a soothing touch to support yourself, such as placing your hand on your chest (refer to  **Loving-kindness** or  **Soothing Touch**) and then continue the practice.



7 What should I do if I feel bored and agitated during practice?

If you experience emotions such as boredom, agitation, restlessness, discouragement etc. during practice, allow those emotions to be there. Try to explore the physical sensations these emotions bring with curiosity. You could also bring your attention back to your chosen anchor, such as the body, breath, or sound (refer to  **Mindful Sitting**) or to the sensations when your feet make contact with the floor as in  **Mindful Walking** . You may also place your hand on your chest to give yourself a soothing touch as in  **Loving-kindness** or  **Soothing Touch** .



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What should I do if I feel sad and upset during practice?



When treating themselves with loving-kindness and care, some people may recall memories of being unkind to themselves, and these memories may make them sad. In this case, observe the body sensations these emotions bring with a caring and accepting attitude. You could give yourself a  **Soothing Touch**, such as placing your hand on your chest, or focusing your attention on your breath or body sensations. However, if these feelings of sadness are too intense for you to focus on your body sensations in the present moment, you are advised to stop the practice and consult a healthcare professional to see if it is appropriate to continue.

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I have been practising mindfulness for some time but haven't noticed any effects. Is this normal?



Mindfulness practice requires perseverance and patience. Accept that things unfold at their own pace and let go of striving for any results. It's fine simply be aware of any experiences in the present moment with an open and caring attitude.

Part Two: About Mindfulness Practices in Daily Life

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How can I integrate mindfulness practice into daily life?

Integrating mindfulness into daily life is simple and does not require much planning or time. The key is to approach daily tasks with a mindful attitude by using your five senses to curiously and attentively experience each moment. For example, take a few moments to feel your breath when you wake up in the morning, savour the colours, aromas, and flavours of your food while eating, or notice the sensations of your breath or body while queueing up.



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How can I cultivate the habit of mindfulness practice?



It is recommended to practise at the same time and place every day to help establish a habit. You can choose a time and location with minimal distractions and inform those around you beforehand to reduce interruptions. You can also choose shorter mindfulness practices, such as  **Three-step Breathing Space** or  **Soothing Touch**, so as to maintain the practice principle of "better short than broken".



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I tend to walk very fast. Should I walk very slowly when practising Mindful Walking?



If you are a beginner to Mindful Walking, walking pace should indeed be slightly slower than usual, as this makes it easier to notice the sensations in each step. But the most important thing is to walk at a pace that allows you to maintain your balance. After becoming familiar with it, you can walk at your normal pace. Whether you go shopping, taking public transport, or go for a stroll in the future, you can always bring awareness to each step.



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I find some movements of Mindful Stretching difficult. Do I have to do all the movements every time?



Remember to always practise with the intention to care for yourself. If you find the movement too difficult for you, do not over-stretch yourself. You may skip it and resume the practice only when the next movement is suitable for you. You can determine how far you would like to go in the practice. If you want to be aware of your overall physical state and needs, you may do the entire set of stretches. If you notice that a certain part of your body is tight, you can choose to focus only on, or do more of, the stretches targeting that part.

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I also do stretching exercises routinely. What is the difference between these exercises and Mindful Stretching?

Both Mindful Stretching and stretching exercises involve stretching the body, but they have different goals. Stretching exercises typically require adopting specific postures to enhance physical fitness. The purpose of Mindful Stretching, on the other hand, is to cultivate body awareness through directing attention to the physical sensations in each movement, while accepting the body's present condition and limitations. Therefore, you do not have to force yourself to achieve specific postures or effects.



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With so many different mindfulness practices available, how can I choose the one that suits me best?



You can first pay attention to your physical and mental needs in the present moment, and then decide on the practice that suits you best. For example, if you experience tension

in your body, practising  **Mindful Stretching** may help you better attune to your bodily state and needs. If you feel agitated and want to calm down, you can choose  **Three-step Breathing Space** or  **Mindful Sitting** to ease off emotional distress. If you feel down due to setbacks, practising  **Loving-kindness** could offer compassion and care.

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I use my mobile phone frequently. How can I make use of it to practise mindfulness?

Your mobile phone or other electronic devices can be used as a tool to remind yourself to return to the present moment. For example, when you receive a call or message, you can first bring your attention back to your chosen anchor, such as the body, breath, or sound as in  **Mindful Sitting**, to calm your mind before answering the call or responding to the message. Alternatively, you can also set your phone to chime periodically to remind yourself to focus on the breath in the present moment, or practise the



Three-step Breathing Space

before continuing your work.

