

More on Mindfulness

A little bit more on those mindfulness activities and further reading



Activities

Pay full attention to one routine activity you do every day

Choose one of those simple everyday things you do without really thinking too much about it. Here are some that I've tried and tested:

Showering – pay attention to everything about your shower rather than letting your mind wander off to plans for the day or distractions about how late you're running. What's the temperature of the water like? How does it feel? Can you wash your hair and body slowly and pay attention to sensations you feel. Feel the water over your face, under your feet. What can you hear? What about those smells from your body wash and shampoo? This is the simplest one for me as I LOVE a shower and remember times when my water has played up and I've had to endure a cold shower in a proper strop so I feel fully grateful for a hot and powerful shower. More on gratitude to come!



(EXTRA TIP – treat yourself to smells that really lift you up, that you love. Stop by lush or your local Reuse shop for plastic free, plant based ranges!)

Making tea – or your favourite drink. Rather than sticking the kettle on and rushing to do 4 other things while it boils, do each part of the process slowly and with intention. Waiting for the kettle to boil as you prepare your mug (a mug you love). Listen to the sounds as you pour the water in and notice what's happening in your mouth as you wait for it to be ready.

(EXTRA TIP – Then sit and enjoy it taking in all sensations you can feel as you do so)





Brushing your teeth – Yep, what a boring thing to focus on but I do it every time now. I look at my teeth while I'm brushing, noticing the taste of toothpaste, spending time on each tooth like they're fascinating (a side note here: we can easily stop appreciating our teeth, how much we need them and how they make us feel – take care of them!)

Mindful eating (no, it doesn't have to be a raisin!). Choose something you like.

- Look at it with all the interest you can muster. Hold it up to gaze from different angles, notice the colours
- Feel it in your hand or notice the textures
- If it's practical to do so (imagine a raisin), hold it up to your ear to hear any sounds made if you roll it between your fingers
- Place it under your nose take a deep inhale, smelling it
- Before you take a bite or your first taste, notice the reactions in your mouth
- Start to eat it (maybe close your eyes) and really notice the flavours, textures and how you feel. Ask yourself if you'd like another bite before taking one.
- Once it's gone, take a moment to notice how it was. I know, I know is there really a point? YES! We tend to eat mindlessly, not noticing when we feel full and losing enjoyment around eating and meal times. We can reset this.

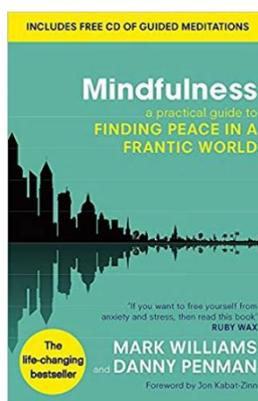
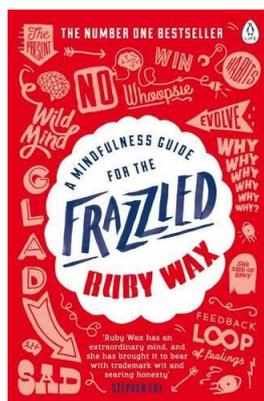
(EXTRA TIP – Remember this is an exercise not how you have to eat all food, always from now on!!)

3. Mix it up. Change where you sit (your chair in the staffroom), stand (in a yoga or exercise class) and/or drive (can you slightly alter your route to work/the gym/a friends house?).

How many times do you drive the exact same route to work? Sit in the same chair at lunchtime? Do you have a certain spot in whatever class you go to or at the dinner table or on the sofa (I know I did!). **Mix it up!** Wake up and out of auto-pilot to begin to retrain your brain.

Further reading

There is SO much out there when it comes to mindfulness. I've read a lot with often my mind being blown and then never actually got going. These are my favourite books that are practical and I use rather than buy, sit on a shelf and wait for that magic! They both include a course you can follow as well as a bucket full of information (lots of humour and honesty added by Ruby Wax).



HINT - Audios of most of the meditations from, "Finding peace in a frantic world," are also [available here](#) for FREE (in case you no longer have a CD player!!).