

# Mindful awareness

## Learn how to STOP and connect with yourself

We live in a 24/7 world of instant messaging and social networking. It feels like we always need to be multi-tasking and connected to a constant flow of information. The many demands for our time and attention raise our stress levels and can negatively affect our physical, mental and emotional health.

Mindfulness can help you quiet the noise around you so you can check in with yourself from time to time. You can train yourself to avoid dwelling on the past or the future – the source of most of our stress – and quit running on “auto-pilot,” so you can be more alive, more connected and more your true self.

Mindful awareness means “paying attention to present moment experiences with openness, curiosity and a willingness to be with what is.” Research shows this can:

- Improve your ability to focus and make decisions
- Lower your blood pressure and strengthen your immune system
- Help with anxiety and depression

You can practice mindfulness through meditation or simply taking time out to open your mind and body to the experience of the moment.

**S**

### STOP

Find a place where you will not be disturbed.

**T**

### TAKE A BREATH

Pay attention to your breathing. Breathe in. Breathe out.

**O**

### OBSERVE

Notice your body in the present. Notice the sounds and smells around you. What is your mood? What thoughts come to mind?

**P**

### PROCEED

After observing yourself in the moment, you will be better able to move on to what's next.



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