



eBook

The Power of Living in the Now



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“Stop acting as if life is a rehearsal. Live this day as if it were your last. The past is over and gone. The future is not guaranteed.” - Wayne Dyer

This quote reflects the power of living in the now. Right now, this very moment, is the one we are given. The past is over. The future isn't guaranteed. Today, this very moment is. Learning to live in the present moment gives you the power to live your best life, to the fullest, every moment of the day.

What does “living in the moment” mean?

To live in the moment or live in the now, means you are being conscious. Aware of your presence and each one of your senses. It means you aren't living in the past nor are you worrying about what the future will be. You are focused on what is happening to you and around you in the moment you are experiencing.

When you concentrate on being present, you focus your attention on the task at hand. You give it your full attention and let go of the outcome. Seizing the moment allows you to make each moment more meaningful and valuable, savoring every minute for quality over quantity of time.

It is still important to plan, set goals, and prepare for the future, however you can do all these things and still enjoy living in the moment. For instance, you may set a goal to exercise every day. Each day, when you go on your walk or go to the gym or Yoga class, focus your attention on your exercise and how your body feels — your breath, your muscles, clear mind — rather than your to-do list at work.

We tend to put enormous expectations on ourselves. Always rushing to do this or that or hurrying to focus on something else. Many times we are rushing around and don't even know why. It's rare that we slow down and enjoy the process, or at least give it our full attention.

By giving each moment and the people we are engaging with our full attention, we learn to appreciate each moment and receive the lessons offered. We are living consciously, purposefully, and responsibly.

Living in the now also means releasing attachment to the past and trusting in the future you are creating in each moment. Being positive and optimistic in the present moment allows you to see the possibility of a promising future. Living in the now, means we are meeting the moment.

In this guide you will discover there are a multitude of benefits that come from practicing the mindfulness of living in the now, and learn how to put it into practice. It's not as easy as just saying you're going to live in the moment from now on. Yet it's also not as difficult as you may think either.

Benefits of Mindful Living

Living in the moment is beneficial in many ways. From physical health to mental health, personally and professionally, being mindful enhances your life. Here are several ways living in the moment benefits you:

Better health: By reducing stress and anxiety you are able to avoid the health consequences associated with them. This includes high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes, and obesity.

Self-awareness & psychological health: Being mindful improves your psychological well-being because you are more in tune with what is happening around and within you.

Improved relationships: Most of us have had the experience of being with someone who is physically present but is mentally/emotionally a million miles away. This makes the relationship extremely difficult and disappointing. When you are with someone who is fully present, time with them is enjoyable and creates a deeper connection. Living in the now fosters deep connections which makes personal and professional relationships easier and more satisfying. Which relationships would you like to foster a deeper connection with?

Better self-control: When your attention is focused on the present moment, you can be more in control of your mind, your body and your emotions. Those racing thoughts slow down and you can navigate emotions more effectively.

Better focus: Living a mindful life encourages you to give your full focus to what's happening now rather than giving some attention to what is happening now and some to situations of the past and then a little more to what might happen in the future; which as you can imagine, is a recipe for stress and overwhelm.

Healthier choices: Being mindful helps you prevent unhealthy and binge eating. Staying present allows you to make healthier food choices because you are paying attention to what you choose to eat and how much. Another benefit? Food tastes better because you're paying attention to all the sensations of each bite.

Better decisions: Living in the now helps you make better decisions. Staying present allows you to be more aware of your circumstances and opportunities.

Reduced overwhelm: Living in the now helps you see what needs to be done now instead of being overwhelmed by the scope of a large project.

You're more relaxed: You are more in tune with the world around you instead of being lost in your own thoughts. You are able to identify what bothers you and why and choose what concerns need to be released and which you need to take action on.

Foods Linked to Better Brain Power

Research shows that the best brain foods are the same ones that protect your heart and blood vessels, including the following:

1. Green, leafy vegetables
2. Fatty fish
3. Berries
4. Tea and coffee
5. Walnuts

<https://www.health.harvard.edu/mind-and-mood/foods-linked-to-better-brainpower>



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Why Living in the Moment is Difficult

Even though there are many benefits of living in the moment, it can be difficult to accomplish. All our lives we've been encouraged to think about the future and remember the past. Advertising, notifications, messages, reminders, alerts are all geared to what's coming up or what happened previously. We tend to get caught up in what's going on around us that we don't pay attention to what's happening in the moment. Planning for the future serves a purpose and so does meeting the moment.

Here are a few reasons why:

- When you're in the flow, fully engrossed in what you're doing and end up getting pulled away from it by a notification or message on your phone. Each time you are pulled away or interrupted it takes about 20 minutes to refocus again. This pulls you away from the present and being aware. This is one reason living in the moment is difficult. It also makes you tired at the end of a multi-tasked day.
- The basic nature of our mind is to dwell on our past and worry about our future. We face a lot of uncertainty that causes anxiety when we live in the moment. When you are fully into the moment you aren't thinking about what will happen in the next, which can cause some stress about what is going to happen.
- We have a hard time keeping focused on the moment. Our minds naturally wander. We have an innate ability to always be thinking, wandering, asking, pondering, and just having random thoughts. Mind-wandering serves a purpose too. Give it some dedicated time.

- We don't worry about the present moment because it's already decided. That means our mind naturally goes to the past or to predicting the future. We use our past as the basis for what the future will be. This tendency can get out of control and we begin to see dangers that are not actually there.
- There is comfort in the possibility of what's to come, something that lies beyond today – hope. We have hope that tomorrow will be better than this moment, this now. So, we are constantly thinking of what is next.

These thoughts, assumptions and fears keep us from living in the present moment, and as you have most likely experienced it can be hard fighting them.

Yes, you can do it! You are in charge of your thoughts, your energy and your time. You have a choice.

Just like anything else, actually practicing mindfulness helps you get better at it.

How to Start Living in The Moment

We've talked about why living in the moment is beneficial and why it's difficult to do. Now, let's discuss how to actually put it in practice.

Here are 21 tips to put mindfulness into practice.

1. **Slow down.** Before beginning any activity, no matter what it is, take a deep breath and focus on the process.
2. Start making an effort to **focus on each moment**. Make the commitment to begin changing your habits of rushing, not paying attention, and functioning by going through the motions.
3. **Practice being mindful.** Practice by doing tasks you normally do impatiently or unconsciously mindfully instead.
4. **Notice** when you aren't in the present moment. When you are in a present moment that is stressful, notice how your thoughts and emotions are affecting your body. Turn those thoughts into more positive ones that keep you in the now.
5. **Engage** in what you are doing. Feel into it and enjoy the process.
6. **Learn relaxation** techniques to help you be calm. These include meditating, deep breathing, and visualization.
7. **Train your mind** to focus on the current activity.

8. **Listen attentively** to your conversations, music, and the silence around you.
9. **Take notice** of your surroundings. What do you see, hear, smell, and feel?
10. **Savor** your food and drink. Slowly chew, enjoy the taste, and set your utensil down between bites.
11. **Think** about the past, but only in small doses. Be sure to focus on the past for a specific reason such as to relive a happy experience, figure out where you went wrong or to identify a key to a past success.
12. As with the past, **think** about the future small amounts at a time. Focus on the future in a healthy way. Leave the worrying out of it. Just visit the future long enough to prepare for it then return to the moment.
13. **Get rid** of unneeded possessions. Minimalism helps you live in the present. You aren't living in the past from items associated with past memories allowing you to live in the moment.
14. **Start each day** with a smile. Each day is full of possibilities. You can control your attitude every morning. Keep it optimistic and intentional.
15. **Be fully appreciative** of the moments of today. Soak in everything about today- the sounds, sights, the smells, the emotions you feel, the wins and the sorrows. This is living but we often forget to take them in and appreciate them.
16. **Let go** of past hurts and resentments. Choose to forgive and move on. Don't let the harm impact your present mood.
17. **Love** what you do. If you just survive your work and are constantly waiting for the weekend to get here, you're wasting a good portion of your life. Either find a new job you enjoy or find things about your current career you can appreciate.
18. **Stop worrying** about tomorrow or what might happen. Realize that tomorrow will happen no matter what. Redirect your mental energy into enjoying this moment.
19. **Listen** to your body. Your body will tell you if you are stressing, worrying, or not taking care of it.
20. **Change your beliefs and thoughts.** Think positively and calmly.
21. **Let go of outcomes.** When you live in the moment you don't stress or worry over how something will turn out. Take action, focus on the task, and let the outcome happen.

Learning to live in the now is an essential part of living a happy life. Looking at this list, what is one practice you can implement to start on your path to presence?

Start with one practice and slowly work up to being present in every way.

Train Yourself to Be Mindful

Living in the now helps you be more appreciative of what you have. We are all familiar with gratitude and how it can shape our personal and professional lives in very positive ways.

You can actually train yourself to be more mindful no matter where you are or what you're doing. Start becoming more mindful today by implementing these 7 exercises:

1. **Create what you desire.** Being mindful starts with having a vision of what you want your life to be. What do you genuinely want to experience in life? What journey do you want to be following?

There are so many distractions in life that can easily take you off track of your dreams, goals, or ambitions. To accomplish what you want, stay focused during the good and the bad days. On the days you feel like giving up, be mindful of your desires and continue on.

2. **Be in alignment** with your beliefs and values. Knowing what matters most to you, your deepest beliefs and values keeps you on your path. Live every day in alignment with them. When you do this, you are making the decision mentally to be mindful in your life and consciously aware of your choices. This releases energy for you to go toward what you want.

When you are mindful in life you are aware of why you do something. You know and understand the reasons why you get up in the morning and go work. You have a purpose for living.

3. **Disconnect from society and connect with yourself.** We live in a world that's constantly on. Facebook, the internet, messaging, Instagram, emails, television, fast food, billboards, and advertising. All these things are noise that is constantly inundating our minds and our lives.

Train yourself to be more mindful by disconnecting from society every once in a while. Instead connect with your own mind. Discover your emotions, thoughts, and feelings.

4. **What is your legacy?** What do you want to be remembered by? You can easily get stuck in routine and forget why you do what you do. Take the time to think about the

end and why you do the things you do. Doing so keeps you mindful of your goals and values.

5. **Have mindful actions.** Express yourself through your actions by becoming more aware of the moment. You can be more mindful in a negative way or a positive one. To be positive in your mindful actions, be in the moment, aware of your body, your actions, and your thoughts. Release any judgement.
6. **What inspires you?** What is your purpose in life? Do you have a reason that inspires you to get up and start your day in a positive way? Or are you living by routine? Routines are great but it's also good to shake things up a bit.

Get clear on your purpose in life so you can start living each day mindfully. You'll know that everything you do is connected to fulfilling your chosen purpose.

7. **Know who you really are inside.** Authenticity supports mindfulness.

Always remain true to who you are. Be authentic. Stay connected to who you are and what you want, rather than conform to society's expectations. When you do this living in the now becomes much easier.

Strengthen Your in the Moment Awareness

Besides training yourself to be more mindful there are other exercises you can do to boost your mindfulness and strengthen your "In the now" awareness. These exercises are good ones to try.

1. Do a **mindful body scan** where you get in touch with your body. This exercise helps put you in a mindful state and helps you notice when your body is feeling differently.
2. **Visualize your daily goals** and write in your journal. Each morning make an entry into your journal. Then before you start your day, visualize your goals. See yourself taking action on each day and completing your goals.
3. **Take a mindful walk in nature.** Be intentional with your awareness on your walk. Notice your surroundings, feel your feet hitting the ground with each step you take and listen to all the sounds around you. Feel your breath with each inhale and exhale.
4. **Do a mindful review of your day.** By the end of the day, you may be tired and even worn out. It can be easy to let things fall down. When this happens, try doing a review of your day before going to bed. Think back to the beginning of the day and remember how your mindfulness exercises started the day. How did that make you feel?

Then go through the rest of your day, making note of any particularly mindful or memorable events. What was your mood like throughout the day? Write these thoughts down in your journal or a diary.

Using these exercises on a daily basis helps you strengthen your awareness of being in the now. Use them together to get into a habit of being mindful throughout your day.

Simplify your Life

We live in a materialistic world. We are told that having more and achieving more is always positive. But did you know having all this stuff clutters your mind along with your space? It keeps you from enjoying what you have, wastes time and weighs on your mind the amounts of money you've spent on everything. Simplifying your life is the key to making mindfulness easier in your life.

Eliminating non essential possessions is one way to simplify your life, but here are a few other ways to do that by taking control of your finances, your time and your commitments.

- **Learn to say “no” more often.** Sometimes we want to accommodate others at the expense of ourselves. This doesn't actually help you or anyone else in the long term. It drains you, fills up your time and makes you less joyful. Be discriminate in your commitments. Prepare and practice ways to pause and say “no” in advance.
- **Clear the clutter.** You'll feel lighter when you get rid of things you don't need. Grab some boxes and go through your home, from bottom to top, closet to closet, drawer to drawer, garage and storage areas sorting out everything you have. Trash what's broken, useless, stained and donate what's still good. If you don't use something or look at it more than once or twice a year, it's probably time to give it to someone who will enjoy it.
- **Simplify what's left.** Now that you've done away with the unnecessary stuff, it's time to re-organize what's left into a workable system. Use closet and drawer organizers with labels. Color-code your clothing so it's easy to see what you have and grab what you want. File papers you have to keep and scan the rest into a software program on your computer.
- **Downsize.** Do you really need all the space you have? Is it just a trap causing you to fill it with useless things? Consider getting a smaller place. Downsizing saves you money, energy and resources and is often easier to maintain.
- **Stop multi-tasking.** This scatters your energy. You can't focus on what you're doing, and it takes longer to do three things at time. Divided attention keeps you from living in the now.

Bottom line

Living in the now means finding joy in everything, every day. Simplifying your life allows you to focus on the moment by decluttering what's taking up your time and focus.

What practices can you incorporate to begin living a more mindful life today?



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The secret of health for both mind and body is not to mourn for the past, worry about the future, or anticipate troubles, but to live in the present moment wisely and earnestly.

– Buddha

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In person or virtually, Barb is here to help you take your high-performing team to the next level.



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