



Applying Mindfulness in Our Daily Lives Through Writing

Here are some tips and strategies to practice mindfulness through writing.

Breathing naturally calms our body. Allow time during your day to focus on breathing:

- Relax, breathe deeply, as you breathe count to five. If at any time your mind wanders, stop counting and go back to zero. It does not matter how many times you stop.
- Notice and reflect on where your mind goes. **Write it down.**

Writing is powerful because it:

- is personal
- allows for introspection and reflection
- can help to identify issues or analyze responses
- can help to explore resolutions and resources

Intentional Writing: Recognizing Stress Patterns

- Given a specific stressor/challenge:
 - If you notice X, what do you do?
 - If you notice X, what could you do?
 - If you notice X, what should you do?
 - What is something that you can change, and what is outside of your control?
 - If you cannot avoid the situation, what can you do to make it better?

Observation and Writing Activity: Notice and Feel External Conditions

1. Close your eyes. Notice what you hear, smell, and/or sense without using your sight right now in this room. Try to notice three things.
2. Open your eyes and notice what you observe. Use any of your senses including sight.
3. Without worrying about spelling, grammar, complete sentences, etc., write a list of at least three things you heard, smelled, sensed, or observed. You can also make drawings or use colors.





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Observation and Writing Activity: Notice and Feel Internal Conditions

1. Close your eyes.
2. Notice how you are feeling physically. Where, if anywhere, are you holding tension in your body? Does anything hurt? Does anywhere feel relaxed?
3. Notice anything that is causing stress or anxiety. What, if anything, is cycling through your mind?
4. Recognize and accept how your body/mind is feeling.
5. Without worrying about spelling, grammar, complete sentences, etc., write down what you notice. You can start with: *"Today, I feel..."*

Journaling: reflect, notice patterns, and calm the mind

Taking even five minutes a day to write about our feelings can help us be mindful of stressors and how we react to them.

Sample prompts:

- What do I notice (external and internal)?
- What are my struggles, thanks, and changes?
- What allows me to keep moving forward?
- What stops me from moving forward?
- What internal changes can/would/should I make to improve my situation?
- What external changes can/would/should I make to improve my situation?

Presentation sources and resources:

[UC Berkeley's Greater Good: What is Mindfulness?](#)

[Mindful.org: What is Mindfulness?](#)

[Mindfulness Exercises and Activities](#)

[How to Practice Progressive Muscle Relaxation](#)

[Why You Should Keep a Stress Relief Journal](#)

[Four Ways to Calm Your Mind in Stressful Times](#)

[Life, Works, Connections \(HiP App/Program\)](#)

[Kam's article, "Distinct electrophysiological signatures of task-unrelated and dynamic thoughts"](#)

[Does Mind-Wandering Make You Unhappy?](#)

[Wandering mind not a happy mind](#)

[New Science: Why Our Brains Spend 50% Of The Time Mind-Wandering](#)

[Dr. Ellen Langer Podcast](#)

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