

MINDFULNESS

By Isabella Luu

What is it?

When you think of mindfulness, what is the first thing that comes to mind? A calm beach, waves that hit the sand, and the warm sun against your skin? Maybe a monk in the mountaintops, muttering a mantra as the wind passes through the trees.



So what is mindfulness? According to Oxford Languages, the official definition is, “the quality or state of being conscious or aware of something.” It is a branch of meditation that allows you to be aware and keep the mind active.

How do you do it?

There is no right way to mindfulness, but a simple way to get started is to sit down in a quiet, comfortable place. Close your eyes and take a slow, deep breath. Repeat twice to calm the mind and body, now take notice of yourself. Release tension from the head down, from the crease in your brows to your neck, fingers, and so on. Make sure to keep your breaths steady and to sit up straight.

How does that make you feel? If there are worries on your mind, let them go with your breath. Allow yourself to have gratitude for both what you have done and accomplished. If you are still working towards a goal, then what is it? Imagine yourself once you've achieved it, how does that make you feel?

When you are ready, you can open your eyes.



Why is it important?

Unlike other forms of meditation, mindfulness can be practised anywhere anytime. It's an informal way to take a deep breath and drink in your surroundings as well as gauge how you feel or want to feel in the present moment.

Some things to think about are awareness of the breath, movement, concentration, and tension. Ensure you are relaxed, and note that mindfulness doesn't have to pertain to sitting down. You can also perform this while walking (or doing anything else, such as drawing and dishes!) because it allows you to slow down and be in the present moment.

If you experience anxiety, nerves, and overthinking, mindfulness is a great way to calm the mind and body without having to formally meditate. Regardless, it is a versatile way to relax and take a moment to slow down in a world that is constantly changing. By doing so, you will find yourself much calmer and at peace.