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# SELF-ESTEEM

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# COURSE DESCRIPTION

**Research has show that self-confidence is linked to almost everything we want in life – secure relationships, success at work, a positive sense of self and happiness. But what it really is? Is it self-esteem or self-confidence we desire?**

**We often believe we have to wait until we feel confident before we can act confidently. Is this really true?**

**What is the role of thoughts, cognitive errors and our inner critic when it comes to self-esteem?**

**This module will give you answers to all these questions and will provide basic tools for a higher self-esteem.**

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Self-esteem is often defined as „how we value and perceive ourselves“. In 2003 a team of four psychologists went through decades of published research about self-esteem. The results of their analysis were very surprising. They found that high self esteem correlates with egoism, narcissism, arrogance, self deception and defensiveness when face with honest feedback.



Of course, there exists different definition of what self-esteem might encompass. However, from this point of view, it may be more usefull to use the term self-confidence.

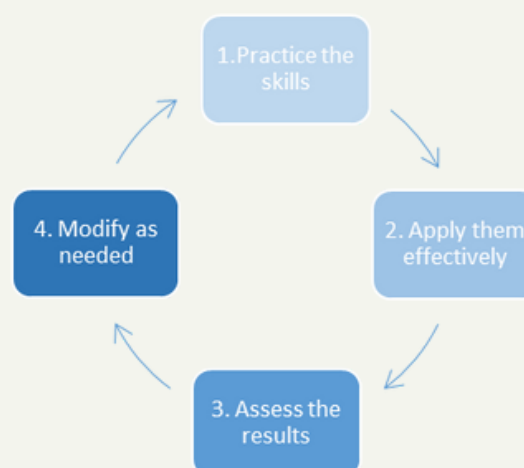


Self-confidence may be defined as the willingness to take steps toward valued goals, even if you are anxious and the outcome is unknown. True self-confidence is part courage, part competence, with a healthy dose of self-compassion mixed in.

If we wait for the feelings of confidence to show up before we start doing the things that are truly important for us, we may end up waiting forever. We don't wait for confidence to magically appear. Instead, we build it, step by step, by action. The actions of confidence come first, the feelings of confidence come later.

If we want to do anything with confidence - speak, paint, play a sport or socialize, then we have to do the work. We simply must practice the necessary skills over and over, until they come naturally.

Each time, we practice those skills, it is an action of confidence: an act of relying on ourselves. And once we have taken action, over and over, so that we have the skills to get the results we want, then we shall start to notice the feelings of confidence. It is called the confidence cycle:





Our beliefs about ourselves are often shaped by those around us, including family, friends and media messages. However, your level of confidence is not out of your control. In the contrary, confidence comes from being grounded in your sense of self: remembering who you are, what you value and the hard work you have put in.



Confidence is not something you have to possess every moment of everyday. Instead, confidence is a choice to take steps to act in line with your values.



Not all self-doubt is a bad thing! Sometimes fear is a signal that we have not prepared enough for a big presentation or the interview. The voice of self-doubt may also be saying we need to get more information, move in a different direction, or take a break.

# What is not self-confidence?

Some people may fear confidence because they do not want to „be a jerk“ or take up too much space. However, confidence is not the same as narcissism or arrogance



In fact, when we become self-confident, we often become much less self-absorbed. When we stop worrying so much about how we're coming across, we can pay more attention to those around us.

Confidence is not about being the loudest or the person who dominates every moment. It is also not about wealth and symbols of status.

It's about being rooted in who you really are, freeing up your mind from obsessive worry and self-doubt.

# Reasons for lower self-confidence



- Genes and temperament
  - Life experiences
  - Trauma
  - Parenting style
  - Bullying, harassment and humiliation
- 2. • Gender, race and sexual orientation
  - Excessive expectations
  - Harsh self-judgement
  - Preoccupation with fear
  - Lack of experience
  - Lack of skills
- 3. • The world around us

## LEXERCISE

Take a few minutes to identify the main causes of your lower self-confidence.



## The benefits of improved self-confidence

- Less fear and anxiety
- Greater motivation
- More resilience
- Improved relationships
- Stronger sense of authentic self
- Greater overall well-being

### ACTIVITY:

Now that you have a better understanding of what self-confidence is and what it is not and why it matters, we invite you to determine your own starting point, by filling up a short Self confidence scale.

(provided in the attachment)



# LIFE CHANGE LIST

CONSIDER WHAT YOU WOULD DO IF YOU HAD MORE  
CONFIDENCE AND WRITE A „LIFE CHANGE LIST“.

As I develop genuine confidence.....

- Here are some ways I will act differently:
- Here are some ways I will treat other differently:
- Here are some ways I will treat myself differently:
- Here are some personal qualities and character strengths I will develop and demonstrate to others:
- Here are some ways I will behave differently in relationships involving work, education, sport or leisure:
  - Here are some important things I will stand for:
  - Here are some activities I will start or do more of:
    - Here are some goals I will work towards:
- Here are some actions I will take to improve my life:

## Action Items:

Here are some specific actions you can take to implement the lessons and ideas you have learned so far:

1. Write down a favourite confidence quote and put it somewhere you'll see it often.
2. Watch a YouTube video of someone you admire who exudes confidence.
3. Try taking a break from social media for a day or even a week. See whether the urge to compare yourself with others starts to subside a little.



WOBIS

# LET'S TALK ABOUT ACTIONS AND VALUES (AND SUCCESS)

Confidence is all about action. If taking action in the face of fear, doubt, or lack of motivation were easy, our real lives might look more like our wildest dreams.

By now, you may have realized that you are feeling confident in some areas of your life but not so confident in others. Whatever the case, you need goals, or your efforts will lack focus and direction.



At the same time, if we want the best chance of achieving our goals, we should clarify our values first. Why? Here are the three reasons:



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Values give us the inspiration and motivation to persist, to do what needs to be done, even when the going gets rough.

02

Values give us guidance. They are like a compass: they guide our journeys, give us direction and keep us on track. If we pursue goals that are not aligned with our core values, it almost always leads to disappointment and dissatisfaction.

03

Values provide us with fulfilment as we move towards our goals.

Values are the principles that give our lives meaning and allow us to persevere through adversity. But often, our lives do not perfectly align with our values, particularly when a lack of self-confidence stands in the way.

Sometimes it takes reflection to know which values you really hold closest to your heart. Here are some activities that will help you get started

#### EXERCISE 1

Select top 6 values from the List of values provided in the attachment

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Select top 6 values from the List of values provided in the attachment

Our society generally defines success in terms of achieving goals: fame, wealth, status and respect. This view of success inevitably pulls us into the 'goal-focused life', where we are always striving to achieve the next goal.

It is this popular notion of success that creates the commonplace problem of 'fragile self-esteem' which is very common in high-performing professionals. These high achievers often develop a strong positive self-image based on their performance: as long as they perform well, they have high self-esteem. But as soon as their performance drops, their self-esteem comes tumbling down - from „winner“ to „loser“.

If we live our lives ruled by this definition of success, we are doomed to stress and misery. So we invite you to consider a different definition of success: True success is living by your values.

It does not mean giving up on your goals. It simply means shifting the emphasis. Instead of obsessing about the outcome, we get passionate about the process, about getting the most out of it, and doing it to the best of our ability.

This concept is especially useful if our goals are a long way off. We don't have to wait until we have achieved them, we can be successful right now by living by our values.

# THOUGHTS, NEGATIVE THINKING PATTERNS, COGNITIVE DISTORTIONS

Now, that you have set some value-driven goals, let's talk about the tools you will need to get there.

Low self-confidence is often based upon unhelpful or untrue interpretations of a situation. These interpretations are our thoughts – words or images that go through our mind.

Many of us battle negative thinking constantly. Our preoccupation with the worst-case scenario becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy, lowering our self-confidence and keeping us from doing our best. Our thoughts, emotions, bodily sensations and behaviours are all linked together. A thought we are having, while giving a presentation in front of an audience, is going to directly influence the quality of our performance. Here is how:



# COGNITIVE DISTORTIONS



A distorted thought or cognitive distortion – and there are many – is an exaggerated pattern of thought that's not based on facts. It consequently leads you to view things more negatively than they really are.

In other words, cognitive distortions are your mind convincing you to believe negative things about yourself and your world that are not necessarily true.

They play a role in maintaining lower self-confidence. As we have seen, our thoughts have a great impact on how we feel and how we behave.

When you treat these negative thoughts as facts, you may see yourself and act in a way based on faulty assumptions.

We all do them and it is very useful to start noticing them. Once noticed, we can stop doing them. You can learn to identify cognitive distortions so that you'll know when your mind is playing tricks on you. Then you can reframe and redirect your thoughts so that they have less of a negative impact on your mood and behaviour – and in a longer run – on your confidence.



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# THE MOST COMMON COGNITIVE DISTORTIONS ARE

- Black & white thinking (all or nothing)
- Overgeneralization
- Catastrophizing
- Discounting the positive
- Jumping to conclusions
- „Should“ statements
- Emotional reasoning
- Blaming



## EXERCISE

Now that you know the key types of cognitive distortions, see if you can recognize them in your own thinking.

1. Pick one of your goals.
2. Think about the process of chasing that goal, and list any negative thoughts and predictions that come to mind.
3. Examine each thought and see if it fits into one or more of cognitive distortion categories.

## ALTERNATIVE EXERCISE

Think of a recent event that put a dent in your confidence, and write down what thoughts you had while interpreting that event. Do you notice any cognitive distortions? How did those thoughts influence your emotions, your bodily sensations and your behaviour?



# Negative thinking patterns

Reframe negative self-talk: sometimes, asking whether a negative thought is realistic is enough to dismantle it. That approach works particularly well with thoughts about outcomes. If you're expecting failure, you can usually push yourself to see that success is possible, too.

You want to ask yourself: „Is this thought helpful?“ Is it helping you move toward your goals, or is it holding you back? If it is not helpful, try to reframe the thought in a positive way. More specifically, when having a negative thought, imagine what a friend or a wise mentor would say to that.

These techniques can help you defuse from a negative thought:

1. Label your thoughts. Instead of saying „I am a loser.“, say, „I am having the thought that I am a loser.“, or „My mind is having the thought that...“
2. Let the thoughts float away. You visualize each negative thought as a balloon and imagine it floating up, up, and away.
3. Thank your mind. Do not fight the thought, simply notice it and think to yourself: „thank you, mind. Thank you for trying to keep me safe.“
4. Sing your thoughts: Try singing your negative thoughts, try adding funny voices and see what happens with the charge of the thought.
5. Calm your inner critic: Give your inner critic a name, remember that your critic has good intentions (trying to protect you), remind your inner critic that plenty of times things turn out just fine.



### Action Items:

- Tell someone close to you that you are trying to reframe your negative thoughts. Ask them to gently let you know when they catch you voicing a self-defeating viewpoint.
- Reflect on a time when you had a lot of negative predictions about how something would go, and then it wound up going just fine. Hold on to that story the next time your mind is flooding with worries about a future event.
  - Some people find it helpful to physically dispose of negative thoughts. Write down a negative thought on a piece of paper, then cut it up and throw it in the trash or carefully burn it.

# MINDFULNESS



**Let's move onto the next tool, bringing you closer to self-confidence.**

**If you want to do anything well, then you have to be psychologically present. You need to be engaged in what is happening.**

**Only when we do something well are we likely to feel confident. But it is almost impossible to do something well if we are not engaged in what we are doing.**

**If we want to get the most of our life, we need to be fully present: aware, attentive and engaged in what is happening.**

**This involves a mindfulness skill: connecting with the world through noticing what we can see, hear, touch taste and smell.**

**The practice of mindful breathing is thousands of years old. It is a very basic, yet powerful mindfulness meditation practice. It is simple but effective way to develop engagement skills, and you can do it for as long as you like, from thirty seconds to thirty minutes.**



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## ACTIVITY

Mindful breathing and One-minute mindfulness activities provided in the attachment

# ACCEPTANCE

At first, acceptance may be a difficult concept to grasp. But once you will understand what acceptance really means, it will make a huge difference in how you proceed – not only in your quest for more confidence, but for your life in general.

The best way to understand acceptance is to think about this equation:

$$\text{SUFFERING} = \text{PAIN} \times \text{RESISTANCE}$$

Resisting is what makes us panicked, anxious, unfocused, and more likely to make mistakes during a presentation.

We often cannot control the pain part of the equation. Life happens. What we can usually control is our reaction to it. By not piling up on to the pain with resistance, we will have less suffering. The antidote to resistance is acceptance.

One of the steps toward developing lasting self-confidence is to practice acceptance – of our strengths, our weaknesses, and ourselves.

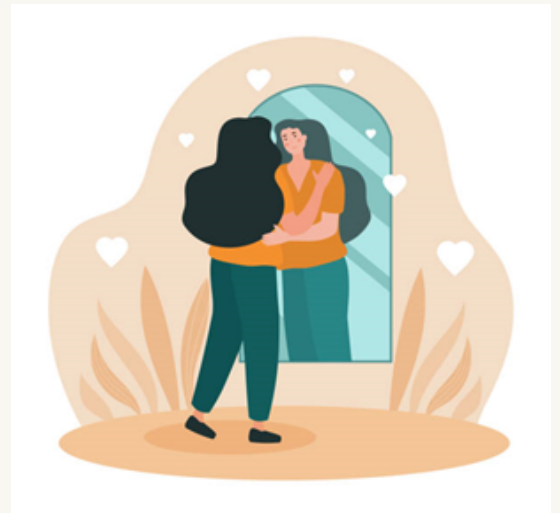
We will show you how.

## EXERCISE

Take a moment to reflect on how acceptance might help you pursue your goals from the „Life change list.“

Resistance does not come only when we face pain in life. Many of us resist compliments and good fortune, too, because we just don't think we deserve them.

Women in particular are often averse to acknowledging their strengths. Accepting your strengths isn't about building yourself up in comparison to others. You don't need to tell yourself you're the best entrepreneur, wife or mother. Instead, you are trying to reduce the suffering in your life by decreasing resistance.



## Therefore, we move onto recognizing YOUR STRENGTHS:

- Compliments I have received:
- Challenges I have overcome:
- An important role I have fulfilled:
- An important task I have tackled:
- Skills I enjoy using regardless of the task:
- A time I have helped someone else:

When you're done, read over what you've written and try to notice themes.

List three of your strengths:

### Accepting your strengths

Many people are brought up to believe that accepting our strengths means being prideful. Maybe you know there is something you're good at, but you truly don't think it's a big deal or that anyone could do that.

Confidence is not the same as arrogance. It's the knowledge that you can continue to act in line with your values, not matter what life throws at you.

It is okay to bask in your accomplishments, even if it's just for an instant. If you are someone who struggles to accept others' kind words, practice saying simple „thank you“ the next time someone pays you a compliment. Not only will you feel better, but you'll make others feel good, too, by not dismissing them when they make an effort to recognize your strengths.

# Acceptance: Weaknesses and Imperfections



Everyone has weaknesses. One of the hardest things about accepting them is being okay with the idea that other people might see them. Sometimes we live in fear that if other really saw us – our struggles, our mistakes, our failures – they would reject us.

Research shows the opposite is true. Vulnerability is how you connect to others. When people see you're worried, scared, messy, or flawed, they tend to feel great relief and let you know that they are, too.

Letting go of the shame and owning the fact that you are not perfect can be quite freeing.

If you perceive a flaw in yourself that causes you great shame, consider sharing it with someone you trust. You will likely find that the ability to live your life with authenticity takes a huge weight off your shoulders and brings you closer to those around you.

## Identifying YOUR CHALLENGES

- Weaknesses I'm aware of:
- What's most likely to make me give up?
- What trips me up time and time again?
- What keeps me from moving forward?
- Feedback I've received that may indicate a weakness:
- What roles do I avoid?

When you're done, read over what you have written and try to notice themes. List three or more of your challenges or weaknesses:

# FORGIVE YOURSELF

Confidence requires action, and inevitably, some of your actions are going to flop. What you need then is forgive yourself.

Nothing about your appearance, your parenting, your career success, or anything else could make you unworthy of love.

Accepting the fact that you'll make mistakes doesn't mean you stop holding yourself accountable. Instead, it clears up your mind to take meaningful action. If you hurt someone with your mistake, that means apologizing and making amends.

When you are not spending days obsessing over what you did wrong, you're also more likely to find creative or innovative solutions to a problem. But more importantly, you'll feel more peace.

## Practice self-compassion



There are three important components of self-compassion:

- **Mindfulness:** simply being aware that you're hurting and in need of attention
- **Kindness:** providing yourself the same comfort and encouragement that you would a good friend or a small child
- **Realization that you are not alone:** many other people have had similar experiences. This isn't to minimize your personal situation but to let you know that hard times are part of the human condition



## Self-acceptance

To pursue our goals and live a confident life, we need self-love. Self-acceptance and self-love is a process and we need to start where we are. Not all of us are going to love ourselves right at the start, and that is OK.

Self-acceptance is one of the most rewarding principles you can adopt in your life, and it will serve as a foundation for the rest of the confidence skills.

### An important note at the end...

The topic of self-esteem, self-confidence and self-acceptance is a very personal one.

It is perfectly normal to feel a little uncomfortable while talking about it, thinking about it and performing the exercises of this module.

However, thinking and talking about our inner critic or other underlying causes of our lower self-esteem might be too hurtful for some people.

If this happens to you, please know that is also very normal and that it happens to many people. If this feeling and negative thoughts do not subside within a few days or weeks, you may consider contacting a licensed psychotherapist in your area that is qualified to help you find a way out of this state and help you move to a brighter stage of your life.

## **CONCLUSION - WHAT TO TAKE AWAY FROM THIS MODULE?**

1. True self-confidence is part courage, part competence, with a healthy dose of self-compassion mixed in.
2. The actions of confidence come first, the feelings of confidence come later.
3. Remember your values. True success is living by them.
4. Negative thoughts are normal. Don't fight them, defuse, redirect and reframe them.
5. Reframe your negative self-talk.
6. If you want to do anything well, we need to be mindful. Mindfulness is a skills that can easily be taught.
7. Know your strengths, know your weaknesses and learn to accept them.
8. Practice self-acceptance and self-compassion.



# SELF-CONFIDENCE SCALE

Let's determine your starting point. Read each statement on the following page and circle A if it is true for you most of the time, B if it is true for you some of the time, and C if it is not usually true.

- I have a realistic sense of my strengths and weaknesses. A B C
- I am willing to take risks for something I believe in. A B C
- I plan and prepare for new experiences. A B C
- I have ways to cope with fear and doubt. A B C
- I take time to remember my past successes. A B C
- I recognize failure as a part of life. A B C
- I can cope with unexpected changes. A B C
- I am comfortable asking for help and support. A B C
- I know what I value in life. A B C
- My actions generally line up with my values. A B C
- I don't give up easily. A B C
- I realize not everyone will like or approve of me. A B C
- I have a sense of my inherent worth. A B C
- I understand setbacks are normal and to be expected. A B C
- I don't beat up on myself when I'm going through a rough time. A B C
- My thoughts do not paralyze me when trying something new. A B C



## HERE IS HOW TO INTERPRET YOUR SCORE:

**Mostly As:** You are doing a great job not allowing obstacles to get in your way of meeting valued goals. This module might help you learn new skills to improve your confidence even more.

**Mostly Bs:** You are right in the middle, sometimes recognizing your accomplishments and other times focusing on where you are falling short. Your answers indicate you may fall prey to common pitfalls that undermine self-confidence. This module might help you to identify those areas so you can more consistently enjoy self-confidence.

**Mostly Cs:** Your self-confidence is a little shaky, but that is okay. Remember, there is no one with total self-confidence all of the time. The tools provided in this module may start your journey of easing up on yourself, noticing your accomplishments, and finding ways to handle setbacks.

## **SOURCES AND FURTHER READING**

**Self-Esteem: A Proven Program of Cognitive Techniques for Assessing, Improving, and Maintaining Your Self-Esteem by Matthew McKay, Ph.D. and Patrick Fanning**

**Self-Confidence Workbook: A Guide to Overcoming Self-Doubt and Improving Self-Esteem by Barbara Markway, PhD and Celia Ampel**

**The Confidence Gap: From Fear to Freedom by Russ Harris**

**Self-Love Workbook for Women: Release Self-Doubt, Build Self-Compassion, and Embrace Who You Are (Self-Help Workbooks for Women) by Mega Logan, MSW, LCSW**

## LIST of VALUES

**Select 6 values that resonate the most with you.**

|               |               |                  |
|---------------|---------------|------------------|
| Acceptance    | Faith         | Optimism         |
| Adventure     | Family        | Originality      |
| Altruism      | Freedom       | Patience         |
| Assertiveness | Friendship    | Peace            |
| Authenticity  | Generosity    | Persistence      |
| Beauty        | Gratitude     | Personal Growth  |
| Bravery       | Growth        | Play             |
| Caring        | Happiness     | Practicality     |
| Challenge     | Harmony       | Productivity     |
| Compassion    | Health        | Reason           |
| Contribution  | Honestly      | Reliability      |
| Conformity    | Humility      | Resourcefulness  |
| Confidence    | Humor         | Risk             |
| Cooperation   | Individuality | Security         |
| Connection    | Intuitiveness | Service          |
| Creativity    | Joy           | Silence          |
| Curiosity     | Justice       | Simplicity       |
| Dependability | Kindness      | Skillfulness     |
| Dignity       | Knowledge     | Spirituality     |
| Discipline    | Leadership    | Spontaneity      |
| Empathy       | Learning      | Stability        |
| Energy        | Love          | Strength         |
| Enthusiasm    | Loyalty       | Thoughtfulness   |
| Equality      | Mastery       | Understanding    |
| Ethicality    | Maturity      | Uniqueness       |
| Excellence    | Meaning       | Trustworthiness  |
| Excitement    | Mindfulness   | Truth            |
| Expressive    | Nature        | Welcoming Spirit |
| Fairness      | Openness      | Wisdom           |



# SELF-CONFIDENCE GOALS

**Below are some categories in which you might want to consider self-confidence goals. Take some time to think about them and make notes in the space provided.**

**You might have goals in each of the areas listed, or you might want to select just one area to work on for now. What you will likely find is that when you gain confidence in one area, it will spill over to the others.**

## WORK

If you had the confidence to fully live your values in your career, what kind of work would you be doing? What kinds of opportunities would you accept? What would your role be? How would you relate to your co-workers and business partners? Set some specific, realistic, and values-driven goals below.

## RELATIONSHIPS

If you had the confidence to fully live your values in your relationships with family and friends, what would you be doing? Would you approach conflicts differently? Would you set stronger boundaries? What about your love life – what would you do if you had unlimited confidence? Set some specific, realistic, and values-driven goals below.

## PARENTING

If you had the confidence to fully live your values as a parent, what would you be doing? Would you participate differently in your children's lives or model differently for them? Would you take a different approach to discipline? Set some specific, realistic, and values-driven goals below.





# SELF-CONFIDENCE GOALS

## FAMILY

If you had the confidence to fully live your values in your relationships with your parents, siblings, and other family members, what would you be doing? Set some specific, realistic, and values-driven goals below.

## COMMUNITY

If you had the confidence to fully live your values in your community, what would you be doing? What causes or organizations would you be involved in, and what would your role be? How would you connect with others and make a difference in the ways that are the most meaningful to you? Set some specific, realistic, and values-driven goals below.

## HEALTH

If you had the confidence to fully live your values when it comes to your physical and mental well-being, what would you be doing? Would you join a gym or exercise class, regardless of what people might think? Would you cook and eat different meals? Would you get back to an old hobby or activity that always helped you deal with stress, even if maybe you are not as „good“ at it anymore? Set some specific, realistic, and values-driven goals below.

## LIFE ENJOYMENT

Are there any other ways in which you are holding yourself back from enjoying life because of a lack of self-confidence? If there are things you would genuinely like to do but have not found the confidence for, write them in the form of specific, realistic and values-driven goals below.



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# MINDFUL BREATHING

**Now please read the instructions twice, so you know what you are doing, and then give it a go.**

- Find a comfortable position (preferably seated upright, with your back straight, and your feet flat on the ground).
- Close your eyes or fix on a spot, whichever you prefer.
- Take some gentle, slow, deep breaths.
- Focus on emptying your lungs. Gently and calmly push out every last bit of air, until your lungs are completely empty, and then allow them to fill by themselves.
- There is no need to take a deep breath in. Once your lungs are empty, they will automatically refill. See if you can simply allow this to happen, rather than forcing it.
- Observe your breathing as if you are curious scientist who has never encountered anything like it before. Notice every little sensation: the air moving in and out of your nostrils, the rise and fall of your shoulders, the lifting and lowering of your ribcage, the rise and fall of your abdomen. Notice how all these elements interact effortlessly.
- After the first ten breaths, allow your breathing to find its own natural rhythm. There is no need to keep controlling it.
- Your challenge is to keep the spotlight on your breath, to observe it flowing in and out of your body. As you do this, let your thoughts float by like leaves on a stream.



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# MINDFUL BREATHING

- From time to time, your mind will hook you and pull you out of the exercise. You will get caught up in everything and anything, from ancient memories to daydreams to what you are having for dinner. This is natural and normal, and it will keep on happening. Each time you realize you have been hooked, gently acknowledge it and refocus on your breath. (And if your mind starts to beat you up for not doing it well enough, thank it for those thoughts and carry on with the exercise.)
- If uncomfortable feelings show up, such as frustration, boredom, impatience, anxiety or backache, silently acknowledge them. Say to yourself, 'Here's frustration.' or 'Here is boredom'. Then refocus on your breath.
- Periodically your mind is likely to grumble or protest. At first, these thoughts will hook you and pull you out of the exercise. But they are really not a problem. No matter how many hundreds or thousands of times your mind hooks you, as soon as you realize it, acknowledge it, unhook and refocus on the breath. Every time you do this, you are building a valuable skill: the ability to sustain focus.
- Once your time is up, expand your awareness to engage with the world around you. Keeping a spotlight on your breath, also bring up the lights on your body and your environment: push your feet into the floor, sit up straight, have a good stretch and notice what you can see, hear, touch, taste and smell.



# ONE-MINUTE MINDFULNESS

Here are a few mindfulness exercises you can try that will only take a moment.

1. Take a deep breath, imagining you are breathing in white light as you inhale and breathing out dark clouds as you exhale.
2. Pet your cat or dog and immerse yourself in the sensations of your hand touching its fur. Allow your pet's unconditional loving gaze to seep deep inside you.
3. Do this „5-4-3-2-1“ exercise that engages all your senses: Take a note of five things you can see, four things you can hear, three things you can touch, two things you can smell, and one thing you can taste.
4. Pretend you have to write a letter to a friend describing the present moment with as many evocative details as possible. What do you notice around you? How would you set the scene?
5. Focus for a moment on each part of your body from toes to head, thinking to yourself with each breath, „Let my feet be at ease.... Let my calves be at ease.... Let my knees be at ease“ and so forth.
6. Take a minute during a meal to set distractions aside and focus on the experience of eating. Taking slow bites, notice the flavour and texture of the food, its colours and aromas. Notice the gratitude you feel for the meal.



VIDIECKY PARLAMENT  
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# ONE-MINUTE MINDFULNESS

7. Visualize a stream flowing past you. Each time a thought pops into your head, imagine the thought as a leaf on the stream, slowly passing by and out of view.

8. Think about your hands. What have your hands done for you today? Notice any worries or judgments about each hand. What sensations do you feel in your hands right now? Let your thoughts come and go.

9. Pick an object in your surroundings and pretend you have never seen it before. With openness and curiosity, notice its color, texture, shape, and shadow.



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