

Mindful Walking and Journaling

Workbook



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Group Welcome

- Come with an open mind and an open heart
- Be who you want to be
- We can agree to disagree
- Keep a learning focus
- Share to help others learning
- Be mindful of other students and their experiences
- Be present
- Chat
- Recovery Education - a supportive group



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Hello from your trainers!

Hi, my name's Alison and I am your lived experience trainer. I started journaling as a teenager and it's been something I dipped in and out of over the years. Over the last few years, I have used it more to help with my wellbeing and understanding what's going on for me in my life.



Journaling can be very personal and adapted to your own style.

I am a qualified mindfulness teacher with a passion of being more present in the here and now. I am looking forward to showing you how the two may be combined as we go through our mindful walk followed by some reflective journaling.



Hi, I'm Claire and I'm your professional trainer. I've journaled for over 30 years, since I started senior school, and it's helped me through the ups and downs of my life, being a safe space for me to release my thoughts, frustrations, upsets and relive happy times.

Through all this, it's helped me to really understand who I am, what I want and helped me to focus to be the person I want to be and live the life I want to live.

I am a qualified and accredited life and business coach, as well as a qualified journal therapist and mentor. I am fortunate to be able to share my love for journaling on a daily basis, helping people to discover there is no right or wrong way to journal - only yours!



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What is mindful walking?

Just as mindfulness is the practice of bringing your attention to the present moment, mindful walking is the practice of becoming aware of your surroundings and how your body and mind feel while moving.

Meditation isn't necessarily about being still. For some people, movement is helpful for becoming more aware of their bodies and minds, as well as the present moment.

Choose a route, preferably outdoors, where you can walk uninterrupted for at least 10 minutes. Dedicate the time simply to walking — mindful walking isn't about getting to a destination or running an errand!

What are the benefits of mindful walking?

Mindful walking blends two important de-stressing methods: movement (preferably outdoors!) and mindfulness. Physical activity, even if it's walking, is shown to steady your heart rate, lower blood pressure, and reduces stress-inducing hormones like cortisol and adrenaline.

On top of the benefits of walking itself, mindfulness also has benefits that can improve your body and mind.

Mindfulness is being in the moment to appreciate the smaller things we may sometimes miss.



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What is journaling?

Very simply, journaling is writing about your thoughts, emotions and feelings. It's slightly different to keeping a diary, as a diary is a more factual record of daily events. A journal explores your thoughts, feelings, emotion and beliefs surrounding the events, situations and experiences in your life.

It a private place for you to freely express yourself honestly, without judgement, fear or bias.

When you reflect on your writing, you can learn so much about yourself and create a deeper level of understanding about who you are.

What are the benefits of journaling?

Studies have shown many, many benefits to journaling! Here are just a few :-

- Reduces Stress
- Regulates Emotions
- Improves your overall wellbeing - mind, body and soul
- Boosts your working memory
- Develops emotional intelligence
- Helps you achieve goals and dreams
- Boosts your immune system
- Enhances personal empowerment
- Improves productivity
- Improves communication



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Mindful Walking and Journaling

Mindfulness describes a practice of focused attention and awareness.

Kabat-Zinn (2003, p. 145) defines mindfulness as:

"The awareness that emerges through paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally to the unfolding of experience moment by moment"

There are many ways that we can practice mindfulness: meditation, mindful eating mindful walking, breathing exercises, and body scans. Another method is through journaling.

By combining mindfulness and journaling, you are creating an opportunity to really deepen your personal connection to yourself.

Being present in your surroundings and with your mind and body, then writing about anything you noticed eg what you saw, any thoughts that came up and how you felt, can really help you gain an insight into the moment and how it affected you.

Allow yourself time to relax and enjoy the walk, look around you and take in the sights and sounds. Notice how your body moves and feels.

Don't worry about having to remember everything, we will guide you through the journaling and the right things you need to write about for you will come through.

Today we will show you how to raise your awareness through mindfulness and how to capture that awareness through journaling.



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Ice Breaker

Let's have a short "get to know each other" moment!

We'll pair you up and ask each other one of the below questions:

- What brings you here today?
- Tell me a random fact about yourself
- What is your favourite food?



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Journal Prompts

Today we are going to combine two journal techniques, prompts and sprint writing.

Journal prompts help to get your thoughts flowing freely, our brains can't resist answering a question!

Sprint writing is simply setting a time for you to answer each prompt. This helps to prevent overthinking and encourages writing from the heart and by instinct. This will provide the most honest and insightful answers.

- What did you notice about your surroundings during your walk?
- How did you feel physically when walking?
- How did you feel emotionally when walking?
- What did you enjoy most about the walk?

Reflection

Reflection on your writing will help provide more insights about yourself. It's where you will notice any recurring themes or patterns that you may otherwise miss. Reflection helps to create a deeper understanding of yourself.

- What do you notice most about your writing today?
- What have you learned about yourself today?
- What will you do with this learning?



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The Journal Therapy Acronym

The Journal Therapy Acronym was created by The Coach Federation and is a great way to keep you focused on what matters as you move through any process with journaling.

J – Judgement Free – Write whatever thoughts and feelings come up and when they come up. Don't judge the emotions you might feel and remember that your journal is your personal, private and safe zone.

O – Observation – Observe how you feel about situation and/or experiences as you write. Observe how you feel about situations and/or experiences as you read back what you've written. Become the observer of the experience/situation and look at how you are interpreting it.

U – Understanding – By observing your reactions to certain situations and experiences, you will start to recognise them and from there you can gain a better understanding of your own thoughts and behaviour patterns. You will start to understand and learn how you perceive certain situations. The more you start to learn and therefore understand about yourself, the more you'll grow as a person and work out what thoughts or behaviour patterns are negatively impacting you. From there you can work out how to manage them going forward.

R – Revelation – As you start learning more about yourself and gaining a better understanding, the more you will discover about your values, dreams and what you want.

N – Needs Assessment – Regular writing helps to notice any problems, any potential issues and then any potential solutions. By going through the process of writing down your thoughts and feelings, it can make it clearer and guide you to the next steps you need to take.

A – Awareness – Writing a journal can help you to gain perspective on situations, events, people, your life in general. It raises your awareness on how negative and positive events in your life have an effect on you. Once you are aware, you can learn how to deal with or accept things and move forward.

L – Life – Keeping a journal can show you that you have a wonderful life to live and enjoy every moment. By journaling for a few minutes a day, you can ease stress, release anxiety and give you a clarity of mind that's needed to develop positive steps towards recreating happiness in your life.



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Top Tips for Mindfulness

Here are a few top tips to help you develop your mindfulness practices:

- Practise mindfulness every day, even for just a few minutes
- Keep it regular - you may find it helpful to pick a regular time each day, maybe each lunchtime or in the morning before you start your day
- Try different ways to be mindful to help you notice your world in new ways
- Notice the everyday - all those little things as you go about your day
- Watch your thoughts - you don't have to push them away, acknowledge them and let them move on

Top Tips for Journaling

Here are a few top tips to help you develop your journaling practice:

- Make sure you are in a comfortable environment where you won't be distracted, you don't know where your train of thought will lead.
- Add the date, time and location on each entry. This will help you spot any recurring themes, patterns or behaviours
- Reflect regularly and write down your feedback on what you notice
- Keep your journal private and be honest with your writing. If you know others will read it you are less likely to write as honestly
- Ditch perfection. This is not a work of art or prize winning novel. Do not worry about spelling, grammar or presentation. Write from the heart.
- Find what works for you – just have one journal for everything, use scraps of paper and destroy them or have a different journal for different things.
- Don't limit yourself to words. Get creative – doodles, stickers, cut out pictures and stick them in, draw, be creative
- Do it regularly. Don't just journal when you feel stuck, down, anxious or stressed. Journal regularly and make it a part of your routine, journal about the good stuff too!



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