

Mindfulness: What It Is. How We Cultivate It.

Mindfulness means paying attention in a particular way.

On purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally.

It's about living your life as if it really matters, moment by moment by moment.

Jon Kabat-Zinn, Founder Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Program, University of Massachusetts Medical Center.

Mindfulness is the gentle effort to be continuously present with our experience in the moment.

We do this by connecting with the natural rhythm of our breath, noticing sensation in the body, maintaining moment-by-moment awareness of our thoughts, feelings and surrounding environment.

Mindfulness involves acceptance, meaning that we pay attention to our thoughts and feelings – without judging them without believing, for instance, that there's a right or wrong way to think or feel in a given moment.

How Do We Cultivate Mindfulness

- Pay close attention to your breathing, especially when you're feeling intense emotions.
- Tune into your body's physical sensations, from the water hitting your skin in the shower to the way your body rests in your office chair.
- Notice – really notice – what you're sensing in a given moment, the sights, sounds, and smells that ordinarily slip by without reaching your conscious awareness.
- Recognize that your thoughts and emotions are fleeting and do not define you, an insight that can free you from negative thought patterns.

You only need to walk in mindfulness, making peaceful, happy steps on our planet. Breathe deeply and enjoy your breathing. Be aware that the sky is blue and the birds' songs are beautiful. Enjoy being alive and you will help the living Christ and the living Buddha continue for a long time.- Thich Nhat Hanh