

MINDFULNESS

FOR EVERYDAY PEOPLE



*How to be your best self
and live your best life*

ANNA FOX

Mindfulness for everyday people

By
Anna Fox

PART 1

HOW TO BE YOUR BEST SELF AND LIVE YOUR BEST LIFE

***Simple life-changing steps for everyday
mindfulness***

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INTRODUCTION

If you want to live a mindful life and have a positive change in your life then you have to take some action towards that change.

The purpose of this book is to motivate and inspire you, to help you on your path to a mindful life, to help you make a positive change by providing simple steps, a new perspective, and help for the development of new positive beliefs and actions. Its purpose is to help you find your authenticity and your best self.

I believe that we all need to be the change that we want to see in the world. It all starts with you and me, with individuals, with everyday people who are trying to live their authentic, mindful, and best lives. I believe that every person who lives authentically is changing their own little part of the world.

~

This book offers simple proven steps and strategies for people who are looking for something deeper and more meaningful in their lives, and people who want to live a more mindful life. This book is for people on the path of self-development and change - not change into something new or something they are not, but into something that is already there inside of them.

This book is for people who are not satisfied with average and do not want to accept the minimum of life anymore. These are the people who want more, who want to be their best self and live their best life and are asking questions and seeking answers for how to accomplish that and also how to live the best life possible and live up to their potentials.

This book is for people who are living everyday lives, not isolated from the world looking for answers; but being part of the world and

finding answers in everyday life and everyday experiences. They are seeking their own truth and ways to live mindfully and authentically.

This book is for everyday seekers.

“I am one of the searchers. There are, I believe, millions of us. We are not unhappy, but neither are we really content. We continue to explore life, hoping to uncover its ultimate secret. We continue to explore ourselves, hoping to understand.

We like to walk along the beach, we are drawn to the ocean, taken by its power, its unceasing motion, its mystery and unspeakable beauty. We like forests and mountains, deserts and hidden rivers, and the lonely cities as well...

We, searchers, are ambitious only for life itself, for everything beautiful it can provide...

For wanderers, dreamers, and lovers, for lonely men and women who dare to ask of life everything good and beautiful. It is for those who are too gentle to live among wolves.”

~ James Kavanaugh

Chapter 1:

MY STORY

I am not some special person with any secret knowledge. I am just a regular everyday person and I have spent a lot of years of my life seeking the answers on how to be my best self and live my best life – a mindful life.

I am trying to improve, grow and learn. That is something that never ends. I am trying to live authentically every day and I am striving to be the best version of myself and live up to my potentials.

I have read many books and taken many courses, programs and workshops to find those answers, but most importantly, I have lived through a lot of experiences that made me who I am today and helped me grow and become my best self.

I overcame a lot of pain, struggles, obstacles, and setbacks and I can tell you from experience that it can be done. You can come to the other side stronger, wiser, better, and more complete as a person. You can find yourself and your truth through life's hard situations and moments. You can have mindfulness in everyday life.

30+ years

During my 30+ years in this world, I have lost people close to me. My father died when I was 12. Two years later, I lost my grandmother very suddenly, and she was the person closest to me at the time as we shared a special bond. A few years ago, my other grandmother died as well, and although we were not so close, her final years were very hard. I know pain, grief, and sorrow, but I also know that it does not have to define you.

My childhood was not so ordinary. I lived with a father who abused drugs almost his whole life and a mother who did everything she could to help him and focused all of her time and energy on him. After his death, she, as a single mother, focused all of her time on work. We never developed a mother-daughter connection. Therefore, I could say that I had absent parents my whole childhood.

It took me 8 years after my father's death to forgive him for everything and move on with my life. During that time, I struggled with depression, an eating disorder and different health issues that came as a result of that kind of eating. With all of that, ironically, I was raised in a very religious family that put up a lot of restrictions.

My seeking started when I was 18. When I was 20, my depression took the best of me and I was in a really dark place. I spent a lot of time on the bathroom floor crying my eyes out. I felt as though my life had no meaning or purpose and I did not see the point in living with that kind of existence. All I felt was a deep pain, sorrow and a huge hole that nothing could close. At one point, I really considered ending my life. That was my rock bottom. I felt like I was drowning; like I was at the bottom of the ocean with nothing but darkness around me.

There is one beautiful thing about hitting rock bottom – there is no way but up after that. In one moment, I decided that this was not how my story was going to end.

Little by little, step by step, I started to change my life and let go of my past. I started swimming towards the surface and, at some point, I could see the light coming through the water. After a while, I reached the surface and took my first breath again. I saw a hand reaching to me and pulling me out of the water and then I realized it was me. I was the one that pulled me out. It was me all along. I had that strength in me even in my darkest times, I was just not aware of it.

I have not only survived my darkest times, but I came out stronger because of it. I always say that my life started when I was 22. That was the time when I felt like I was starting to breathe again. I did not become a new person then, I became myself and found myself. That was the year when I started to be my best self and live mindfully and

authentically. I started filling that huge hole with self-love, compassion, and kindness. From that moment on, my life was getting better and better.

This was a process, of course, filled with a lot of little steps, a process that I am still going through, a process that will never end. It is the process of growth, development, and learning.

So far...

I overcame my depression.

I overcame my eating disorder.

I developed more of a conscious and healthier relationship with food.

I accepted and started to love myself and my body.

I changed my job and my career path altogether.

I healed all of my childhood wounds and forgave my parents for their mistakes.

I let go of my religious upbringing and found beliefs authentic to myself.

I learned to prioritize my life and put important things first.

I improved my health and resolved my medical problems in a natural and holistic way.

I cleared and changed a lot of beliefs that held me back.

I found my life's purpose and meaning.

I live a mindful, joyful and meaningful life. I live a life more connected to myself and others. I live an authentic life.

Except when I am not.

Because I still have bad days, as any human does, and I am not happy 24/7. I am still looking for answers and I am still growing and

improving myself every day and I will continue to do so for the rest of my life.

However, now, I look at those days from a different perspective and from a place of love, kindness, and acceptance.

Chapter 2:

THE NO.1 STEP NECESSARY FOR CHANGE

The only person responsible for your life is you

The most important thing that you need to realize in order to change anything in your life is that the only person responsible for your life is you. You have to take the responsibility for yourself and your actions. Without that first step, anything else is impossible. If you are not a young child, then you are responsible for yourself and you are the only one to blame if your life does not look the way you want it to look.

That is an amazing thing! If you are the one responsible, that also means that you are the one that has all the power to change whatever you like.

Of course, there are always things that you do not have that influence on as some situations are beyond your power. However, even then, you have the power and ability to choose how you perceive those situations. Are you feeling hopeless or hopeful? Are you looking at things with desperation or confidence? That is your choice, you can choose your perspective. You have the power over your mind, and that is your strength. Because you are not your mind and you are not your thoughts. You are the one observing them, you are the one behind them. When you start to live mindfully and you start to observe your thoughts consciously, you have the ability to detach from them or change them and that will lead to the outside changes. Everything starts from within.

You are more than able to change parts of your life that you are not satisfied with.

Take back your power

First thing towards the change is to stop blaming someone else for your situation. If you are blaming someone else then you are shifting responsibility for your life on that person or people, and you are giving them all of your power. Take back your power and the energy that you are giving others and use it to improve your life.

It is easy to blame others. Maybe you are having a bad day at work. It is very easy to blame it on your boss or your coworkers but that will not change anything. That will not change your day and make it better. You will only repeat that same situation over and over in your head and make it last all day. Why not try a different approach? Why not try to take responsibility for yourself and your mood and see how you can make your day good and positive? Try being in the now. The situation that caused your day to be bad is in the past, it is over, it is already behind you.

Or maybe it is something that is repeating and maybe your boss really isn't such a kind person. Still, the same thing applies. Whining about it over and over again and blaming your boss or other people will not change anything.

Take a little time and ask yourself, what can you do to make things better? What can you do to change that situation?

A change of perspective is everything. Maybe you just need to accept that your boss is a person with some issues or problems and try to put yourself in his or her shoes. Maybe this job is making you miserable and you need to find a way to start doing something that would make you happy and fulfilled and you need to make a plan for that to happen. Maybe it is something else.

This is just an example. Whatever you are dealing with in your life, ask yourself the same questions. The important thing is that you know what is best for yourself and you have the right answer for you. Be honest with yourself and listen to your inner voice. What is that

first positive step you can do towards the change? How can you improve your life?

Start your change from the inside

The second thing is to start your change from the inside. When you change the way you think, you will change your beliefs and that will change your actions.

Everything on the outside reflects what is inside. So, if you want to change your life, start by changing yourself and your inner world and the rest will follow. Your outer world will reflect those changes too.

Thoughts = Beliefs = Actions

You can start with changing your thoughts. Your thoughts also reflect on your emotions and how you feel. Everything is connected. But to be able to do that, you need to be conscious of your thoughts and observe them. You need to be present in your life. You need to be mindful and aware of how you react to certain situations.

One simple example is when you are stuck in traffic. Do you curse at everyone around you? Or maybe get angry because you have to wait? You maybe start by thinking about how the world is unfair and how you always get stuck in traffic, then some driver cuts you off and you start to get angry. Then you drive nervously, come home and start a fight with your family. It all started with some random thought.

If you are trying to be mindful and aware of your thoughts and detach from them or replace the ones that do not serve you, then you could have this version of events: You are stuck in traffic and start to think about how the world is unfair and how you always get stuck in traffic. Then you start to observe these thoughts and realize that you do not want to think that way and that these thoughts are not even true.

Then you decide to detach and let them go. You decide to play your favorite album and sing along to your favorite song. Before you know it, you are having fun, you are in the good mood, you are letting go of all the stress from work and you come home and kiss your family members. Big difference, right?

Again, this is just one simple example. The point of the story is that your thoughts create your reality and your life. The way you think can make your day the best day ever or the worst day ever. It is up to you.

~

So, again, ask yourself which of your actions you would like to change. Then go deeper and observe your thoughts around those actions. Ask yourself, can you think differently about it? Is there any other point of view that you can take which will serve you better and improve your life?

Have you found your answer? Good. Now do it! Change something. Step by step.

“No one is in control of your happiness but you; therefore, you have the power to change anything about yourself or your life that you want to change.”

~ Barbara de Angelis

Chapter 3:

HOW TO MAKE A PERMANENT CHANGE ONE STEP AT A TIME

Lots of people are unhappy with their lives and many of them have that drive inside of them to do something different, to change something. Maybe they read a book like this one and get all worked up and ready for a change and then they stand in front of the problem and all of that energy and inspiration just disappears. They lose that drive, see that the challenge is too big to be solved in one step, and then they just give up. I was, and still sometimes am one of those people, but I found some helpful tricks to help me with that.

The problem is that we get scared by the size of the challenge. It gets overwhelming. We cannot make it go away in one bite so we never even start to chew on it.

Do it step by step

The solution is to take steps, or bites if you like. Do it little by little. You cannot eat that whole cake in one bite either but that does not keep you from eating it bite by bite.

So, let's say you want to eat healthily and be healthier. You get all worked up about it and go to the health food store only to get overwhelmed by all of the choices and different foods that you've never even heard of. Then you just give up, walk out of the store and return home to your chips.

Maybe, just maybe, there is a better solution.

Start with one thing, one step, one bite

Let's say that you decided to eat healthily. OK. Now the trick is to pick one thing that you want to change in your diet, or even better, one thing that you want to add to your diet. Do not ever deprive yourself of something. That just creates a resistance against the whole thing. An easier and more positive approach is to add something new to your diet, or any other area of your life.

Start with one thing, one step, one bite. If you do not know anything about healthy food, then do some reading and researching. You have a whole lot of books or websites on that topic. Do some reading, get familiar with the thing you want to change and then pick one thing.

Let's say you were reading about the powerful amazing effects of green smoothies and you think that they could be just the thing for you. Great! Add them to your diet. Let the green smoothie be the first thing you start your day with (they are best to drink on an empty stomach and give them about 45-60 mins to fully digest for the best possible result on your health and body). Let's make this even easier. Do not start with a hardcore kale smoothie. Start with the smallest step ever and try some spinach with a banana and maybe add some dates for extra sweetness and flavor. This is super tasty and you do not even taste the greens, just fruits.

Now you can be proud of yourself because you made that first step. It was super easy because you did not have to give anything up, you just added something healthy and good to your life. Then, the funny thing happens. You drink your smoothie for a few days now and you realize that you do not need coffee anymore, so you stop drinking it. Then you fall in love with the smoothies and you want to try all the other green vegetables and other fruits. Shortly, you start to think that this was not so bad and not so hard, so you do some more reading and pick another healthy thing to add to your diet. After a while, you do it again, and again, and before you know it, you are eating healthily and going to that health food store like a pro.

Make a positive habit

You can use this principle on any challenge that you have in your life. Do not focus your attention on changing the whole thing. Sure, keep in mind the end result that you want to achieve but do it step by step. Take the smallest steps ever but just walk.

Focus on adding one positive and new thing to your life and, with every new step you take, pat yourself on the back and be proud of yourself. Celebrate small things and small accomplishments because they are a foundation for big changes. Then give yourself a little time and determination to make that one thing a permanent part of your life; a habit if you like. Our whole life is made of habits. So, create one that actually does some good. Create one new positive habit in your life, then add the second, and the third. Before you know it, you will solve your problem and overcome your challenge.

~

Think about it. What is that thing you were wanting to change for some time now? What is the first small step you can make towards that change? Got it? Great! Now do it!

“There is no one giant step that does it. It's a lot of little steps.”

~ Peter A. Cohen

Chapter 4:

3 STEPS THAT COULD ACTUALLY CHANGE YOUR LIFE

Change is not always easy. It does not happen by itself and it takes some effort and work. You need to get your hands dirty in order to change anything.

The fact is that you cannot become the person you want to be by staying how you are. In order for you to grow and develop as a person, you need to change things that are holding you back.

However, at the same time, in order for you to change anything, you have to start by accepting who and where you are right now. By accepting yourself the way you are right now is the only way to get where you want to be.

Here are the top 3 steps that changed my life and my perspective on life:

Take responsibility for your life

Like I already said, this is the No.1 step to take. Without this one, nothing can change.

You have to accept that you are the only one responsible for your life and you are the only one that can change it. Other people play a huge role in your life and they can have an influence on it, but they are not responsible for it or for your decisions. You and you alone are responsible. You make decisions and act on them.

That is a beautiful thing. If you are the one that is responsible, it also means that you are the one with all the power to change whatever you like or do not like, want or do not want in your life. Take back your personal power.

It is so liberating to know that you do not depend on others for your personal growth and change. It is your life and you are living it, so, other people and their opinions, in the end, do not have a say in it. Sure, advice from others or their example is an amazing way to learn and improve yourself, but in the end, if you choose to implement any of it in your own life, you are the only one responsible for the outcome.

Let go of the belief "I am not good enough"

It is very interesting how the mind works and how 95% of the mind operates from the unconscious level, only 5% is the conscious mind. That means that most of your actions are unconscious and you need to be aware of it and use it for your benefit. Your unconscious mind is a million times stronger and more powerful than your conscious mind. That is the place where all of the beliefs that are holding you back are stored.

You may be telling yourself that you should get that promotion because you work hard, but maybe subconsciously you believe that you are not good enough and that is why you will sabotage yourself and not even realize it. Your beliefs are that powerful and they affect your actions. If you do not know what kind of limiting beliefs you have and if you do not become aware of them and change them, you cannot have the best possible life.

One way to do that is by observing your thoughts, by becoming aware of the conversations that you have with yourself and the comments you give yourself every day. Examine your thought patterns and your emotions connected with them.

You create your reality and your life. Sometimes this is hard to believe because, who would want to create problems or suffering? But like I said, your outer world reflects your inner world and it all starts with your thoughts and beliefs. Most of them you are unaware of as they are playing on an unconscious level. Become aware of

them, become conscious of them. When you live mindfully, they do not have the power over you, you can choose to let them go, change them, and you can choose to act in spite of them.

Through life, you have created and developed many beliefs and they are affecting your decisions and actions in life. Your beliefs are just thoughts that you repeat to yourself so many times that you believe them and now act from them.

In order to grow and develop, you have to let go of the limiting beliefs that are holding you back.

The No. 1 belief that is holding you back and preventing you from living the authentic and best life possible is "I am not good enough". It is the core belief behind most of the fears and inaction. You know those "I will do it when..." lines you are telling yourself? "I will do it when I get a raise", "I will do it when I lose the weight", "I will do it when I have more time", "I will do it when xyz". They all have the "I am not good enough" belief behind them. "I am not good enough the way I am now, I need to change xyz before I do something I want to do because then I will deserve it".

That is just not true. You are always good enough and deserving. Just by being here on this planet you are deserving. It is your birthright. Behind all of your problems, pain, sadness, negativities, beliefs, and thoughts, you are perfect and whole. You are not your problems, pain, and sadness. You are not your negativities, beliefs, and thoughts. You are the one behind it all, the observer that is faultless, flawless, undamaged, and untouched by anything.

You were not born with those beliefs, but remark by remark, comment by comment, you have started to believe that you are not good enough. You have started to say it to yourself. That inner voice that plays like a tape in your head, over and over again, repeats this thought and belief every time you try to change something in your life. It tells you that you cannot do it, why anyone would listen to your ideas? Or any other lines that are on that tape.

Those remarks and comments about you that other people said before, they became your own mantra and were said from their own limited beliefs, fears, or emotions. They were not the ultimate truth and they were just someone's opinion that does not define you.

It is up to you to detect that belief and let it go because it is holding you back.

Be your own best friend

If you want to change anything in your life, you need some support and, most importantly, you need your own support. Be your own best friend. Treat yourself like you would treat your best friend.

Observe your thoughts, detect when they are not supportive and consciously change them. Do not let that inner critic discourage you. Question all of the content playing on that inner tape because that is not who you really are. Start recording some new tapes.

When you change the way you think, you will change your beliefs and that will change your actions. When you change the way you think about yourself and when you change the conversation you are having with yourself, then you will change how you treat yourself. You will start doing what is best for you and your life.

That does not mean that you will become selfish or self-absorbed. On the contrary, you will have more to offer to others in your life and you will be able to give them your best self.

One easy mindful step towards loving yourself and treating yourself as your best friend, that I could recommend, comes from Louise Hay. Stand in front of the mirror every morning for 30 days, take a moment to look yourself in the eyes and say: "I love you, I really love you".

At first, you may not truly believe it and your inner critic will have its remarks and nasty comments. You just need to ignore them and say the words regardless of them. After a week or two, something inside

you will shift, that inner critic will stop complaining, and you will actually start treating yourself with more love and kindness.

Also, when you look yourself in the eyes, and I mean really look, deep beyond the surface, and try to see that inner perfection, that part of you that is whole, untouched, and flawless, then your whole perception of yourself will change and you will never look at yourself the same.

~

In the end, it all comes to the point of view and your perspective. There are some things that you cannot influence and change, but you sure can change your perspective on them.

I will borrow one quote from Scott Dinsmore that sums it up: "Freedom in its purest form is the ability to choose the way we interpret what happens to us. We can either see life's occurrences, good or bad, as reasons to pursue what matters, or we can see them as excuses to sit on our ass. The choice is yours."

"Incredible change happens in your life when you decide to take control of what you do have power over instead of craving control over what you don't."

~ Steve Maraboli

Chapter 5:

BE YOUR BEST SELF. LIVE YOUR BEST LIFE.

Be your best self

Sometimes it is not that easy to be the best you can be. I know from my own experience that life sometimes gets in the way of that. Everyday trouble, worries, work, and obligations can cause you to be your lesser self because you put yourself in second, third, or even last place. Everything else and everyone else comes first.

That is when you lose yourself and you lose track of what is important for you.

Put yourself first

It is OK to put yourself first. This is not selfishness but a necessity. Of course, if you always and only put yourself first and do not care about other people's feelings and wants then that is selfishness, but that is not what I am talking about here.

You probably know the comparison with parents and planes.

Before the plane takes off, the stewardess always gives instructions that, in the case of an emergency, parents should put oxygen masks on themselves first and then put masks on their children. Logic is that you cannot help your children if something happens to you.

The same thing is applied in everyday life. You cannot give or help or be there for others if you do not put yourself first. If you do not put your oxygen mask on first, if you do not fill yourself with energy, and if you do not recharge yourself, there is nothing to give. You can only give as much as you have and if you spend it all and do not replace it

with the new then you will be left empty. Empty is not your best self, so recharge yourself and put yourself first in an unselfish way.

Be your best for that day

You can, in fact, always be your best self but the trick is to be the best self you can be at that moment. You are you and you do not need to compare yourself with others and you do not need to be someone else's best self. You just need to be yourself and give your best.

That best will not be the same every day. Sometimes your best for that day will be 60% of your best from two days ago and that is OK. You cannot be the same every day. Maybe you are facing problems that were not there two days ago and you can only give 60%, but if that 60% is actually today's 100%, then you are being your best self.

Just do your best on a moment to moment, day to day, basis. That is enough.

Are you being your best self today? Can you do and be more today? Or are you pushing yourself too much right now and you need to give yourself some space and permission to just relax?

Find your purpose

Being your best self includes going after your dreams, doing what you love, making your ideas come to life, expressing your talents, and fulfilling your soul's needs. You are your best self only when you do not suppress yourself. Express yourself and do what you love. Express your creativity, your hunger for answers, your need for connection.

If you have that burning passion for something, go and do it. If you have that urge to do something that you find meaningful, go after it.

If you still do not know what that urge or passion is, that is also OK. Go and look for answers, get to know yourself better and find your purpose.

Every person has that something inside of them that brings meaning and sense to their life. You just need to find what that something is for you. That something does not need to be a huge thing. Simple things can bring as much meaning as big and complicated things. Not every person has a purpose of changing the world on a big scale, but every person can change their little part of the world and make it better.

Maybe you find that your passion and purpose is in gardening and making your environment beautiful for you and others. Maybe your passion and purpose are playing an instrument and bringing music and joy to people's lives. Maybe your passion and purpose is cleaning and making the lives of others less cluttered and more cozy and organized.

Whatever your passions and purposes are, go and live it. Or dig deep and find answers if you are still not sure about it. One quote says, "Your purpose in life is to find your purpose and give your whole heart and soul to it".

My life got a whole lot better when I found my passion, or to be more precise, when I found a way to live and express my passion and purpose. It gave my life meaning and a new inspiration, motivation, direction, and focus. It gave me a reason to wake up every morning with a new sense of excitement and joy.

I spent 6 years consciously finding that answer - how to express and live my purpose. At times, it was frustrating and I was impatient to find the perfect answer. Sometimes it seemed to take forever, but most of the time I was, and still am, aware that the journey itself is an amazing experience that taught me so much about myself and life. Everything was a learning experience and, in that process, I gathered a lot of knowledge and skills that are very useful, even now. It is by far the best journey that I have ever taken.

I am still the same person as I was before. I am still sometimes complicated, anxious, impatient, stubborn, and a whole bunch of other things. Of course, I am also still kind, loving, open, positive, and a whole bunch of other things. The point is that finding my purpose did not change me in a way that things magically become... well, magical.

I actually believe that the world is a magical place but what I mean is that my problems and challenges did not disappear. Sure, the big ones that I mentioned were resolved in this process of finding my best self, but challenges are still part of my life and they always will be. Life will always bring something new for me to face. I still work on myself, on clearing my beliefs and changing my habits. I still have to choose every day that I want to be my best self and set my priorities in order. However, the difference is in my perspective, in my view on things, in choosing to see the challenges as opportunities, and choosing to be kind and loving to myself no matter what. The difference is in mindfulness.

Everything is a lot easier, it really is. Being in the now, in the present moment, is the place that I am most of the time and when I realize that I am not, it is so much easier to return. I am choosing to make my life better and better with each and every day. You can do the same.

Live your best life

Your best life is something that comes naturally with being your best self. You cannot have one without the other. If you are being your best self and giving your best you, will achieve your best life.

If you are not satisfied with your life right now, it means that you need to step up and change something. You need to let your best self out.

If you are not living the life you want, or you are not going in that direction, then you are not being your best self. Your life's changes

start with you, with your personal changes. Your inner state will reflect on the outside and on your life.

As your best self is different every day that is also the case with your best life. Your life changes as you change. Things change and that is the only constant in life. Your life cannot and will not be the same forever but that is a good thing. How else would we be able to learn and grow if everything was to stay the same?

~

Every person has so much potential and is able to achieve personal greatness and a meaningful life. The question is, are you choosing to live up to your potentials? Are you choosing to live your best life?

“The meaning of life is to find your gift. The purpose of life is to give it away.”

~ Pablo Picasso

Chapter 6:

HOW CAN FORGIVENESS CHANGE YOUR FUTURE?

Your past is a big part of you. It shaped you into the person you are today, either in a way that you allowed it to define you and have power over you in the present or in a way that you chose to learn something from and used it to become a stronger and better person.

If the best part of your life is in the past, then something went terribly wrong. Your life should get better and better as the time passes because you should develop, grow, mature, and learn over time.

Maybe you are stuck in the past because it was painful and you cannot let it go and move on with your life.

Your parents did the best they could

The deepest part of your past is your childhood. I think that only a few people can say that they had an amazing, happy childhood without any pain. Considering that your parents are just humans, they could not have been perfect parents and perfect in raising you. Maybe your childhood was the total opposite of happiness and your parents were total opposites of perfection.

The thing is that even the most imperfect parents did the best they could. For some reason, they did not know better, so they could not do better. Maybe they went through their own personal trauma or hard childhood and never dealt with it or did anything to heal it. Maybe they let their issues break them beyond repair.

The good thing is that this cycle can end with you if you choose to do so. Try to be mindful of your past.

Letting go starts with forgiveness

I spent a lot of time resenting my parents until I realized that, by doing so, I am keeping that pain alive and giving it the power to still hurt me, after all this time.

My father abused drugs for almost all of his life. He started with smoking pot at the age of 17 and, in the end, he was using heroin. He had been trying to stop and he would get himself clean, only to start again a few days or weeks later. My last memories of him are really not that pretty. In the end, my mother finally faced the fact that she could not fix him. She told him to move out and he did. Police came to our door a few days later telling us that he died. He was 47. The cause of his death was not an overdose but it might as well have been because his lifestyle and decades of using drugs caused his death.

I must be honest and say that he was an amazing dad when he was clean. Even when he was not, he was trying very hard to keep me from all of that. I was 12 when he died and, at the time, I did not understand what was going on but as the years passed by, consequences remained and it all started to make more sense to me.

I blamed him for the childhood I had, for the childhood I did not have, and for the father that I lost way too soon. I blamed him for not being the father that he should have been. I blamed him for my depression and my eating disorder and everything that was wrong with my life, but then my depression and eating disorder became ways to forgive him. I felt like I could understand him because he started his drug abuse because of his depression. I started to understand what he was going through. An eating disorder and that addictive relationship with food that I had helped me realize that it is not that simple and easy to stop. I did not and still do not justify his behavior, but I understand him and I know that he did not find the strength or the will in him to change it. He just did not know better, so he could not do better. Luckily, I did. I learned from my past and his and I chose to

change my life. I chose that this was not how my story was going to end. That change started with me forgiving my father.

I overcame my depression and my eating disorder and I developed a more conscious and healthier relationship with food and myself. Also, I did so much more than that. I transformed my life. I can say that I am now living a joyful, mindful, and meaningful life that is authentic and loving. I am still growing and learning with every experience. With every day, I am trying to be even better and more authentic but it all started with letting go of the past and forgiving my parents.

Forgiveness is for you and not for others

Forgiveness is not for the person or people you are forgiving. It is for you. Sometimes the person you are not forgiving does not even know it. By not forgiving, you are only hurting and holding yourself back. Forgiveness is the kindest thing you can do for yourself.

Forgiveness does not mean that you like or justify someone's behavior. It just means that you are choosing to not let it control your life anymore. When you are holding a grudge or not forgiving someone, that takes a lot of energy. People tend to replay that one thing in their heads over and over again. They tend to go back to it and dissect it into a million little pieces and then pick up each piece and observe it from every angle. If that describes you, know that it is not healthy and it is keeping you stuck in one place. You cannot move forward with your life if you continue to live in the past. Forgiveness means taking your power and your life back.

Do not stay in the past

When you choose to stay in the past, no matter what happened or how painful it was, you are just hurting yourself more. By staying in

the past, you are conditioning your present and you are reliving old experiences instead of making new ones.

When you feel stuck in one place, it is usually a sign that you have something to forgive and let go of. Sometimes it is not about forgiving the other person but about forgiving yourself.

Forgive yourself and learn from the experience

You can easily dissect your own mistakes or choices but that will not change anything. That cannot change what happened or what you did. Going through that experience over and over again just creates more pain and misery.

A better and more mindful approach is to examine your mistake or choice and see what went wrong and what part you are not satisfied with and what you would like to change and why. Use it as a learning opportunity. Use that experience to make better and different choices next time. Use that experience to improve your life and make it better and more authentic. Mistakes are only mistakes if you do not learn anything from them.

Forgive yourself knowing that you did the best you could at the time and that now you know better, so you will do better.

~

Always be kind and loving to yourself and remember that you deserve the best of life and that you are the only one who can take that best and live that best life.

Make that step of letting go and forgiving. Forgive others and forgive yourself. Use your experiences to grow and develop. Use them to improve your life.

“Forgiveness doesn't excuse their behavior. Forgiveness prevents their behavior from destroying your heart.”

~ Unknown

Chapter 7:

COMPROMISES: HOW MUCH IS TOO MUCH?

Every person makes compromises in their life. Sometimes they make them a dozen times a day.

They can be small ones like choosing one restaurant instead of the other because of your friend. But they can also be big ones like doing something against yourself and your core beliefs to please another person.

Where is the limit? How much is too much?

Small compromises/Compromises made out of love

Those small compromises, like which restaurant to choose, are normal everyday compromises that can help you make better relationships with people. Those compromises are usually made out of love. Because of the person you love, you are choosing to give up on something you want. This kind of compromise is not something that will affect you as a person or bring any significant loss. You will still eat in a restaurant, it will just be a different one.

You share your life with other people, to a greater or lesser extent. Every person has their own unique preferences and areas of interest. Your preferences can be very similar to the preferences of people in your life but you will still have your differences. That is a good thing.

This world is a better place because of all the people and their different interests. You can learn from other people's interests and you can grow as a person by trying things outside of your comfort zone.

Therefore, compromises can be a good thing when they lead to new experiences and your personal growth, as long as those experiences are still aligned with you as a person and the values that you have.

Chronic compromises

The problem with small compromises occurs when you are the only one in the relationship that takes them and they become chronic.

When you are the only person that is constantly giving up on something in order to satisfy the other person or people, then you are diminishing yourself and your own needs and wants.

Chronic compromises will cause you to lose parts of yourself and make you unhappy. That much is definitely too much and that is the limit you should not cross in order to stay authentic.

Big compromises

Everyone has a minimum that they need to achieve in order to be happy and authentic. That minimum is different for every person. Even if you have not defined it consciously, your minimum still exists. When you get that feeling in your stomach, that feeling of discomfort, you know that you are compromising yourself as a person and that your minimum is not achieved.

That minimum includes your values and priorities that you need to honor in order to be satisfied in life. When you compromise your values for another person and when you are going against your core beliefs, that is definitely too much.

When you compromise yourself as a person, you lose parts of yourself. When you are agreeing to something lower than your minimum, you are directly affecting your inner self and you are losing your authenticity.

Compromises made out of fear

The biggest problem is when you make compromises with the life-changing decisions because you do not want to disappoint some person or people, like settling for a different school or career path because of your parents.

Also, you can compromise yourself in a way that you are settling for less, like staying in a relationship with the wrong person so you would not be alone.

Behind all of these big compromises and chronic compromises lies fear. Fear of disappointment, fear of being alone, fear of being yourself, fear of failure, fear of going for what you believe. That fear is coming from limiting beliefs such as “I am not good enough to have... to do... to be...”. Fill in the blanks.

Fear can be paralyzing and can prevent you from living an authentic life. It can cause you to give up on something important and to settle for less.

If you bring your awareness to your fears and shed some light on them, you can choose to not let them control you any longer. Be aware of those beliefs and change them.

~

Next time you are faced with a decision or with a compromise to make, be mindful about it and ask yourself why you are doing it and how you feel about it. Be careful what you compromise and what the reasons behind it are. Is it because of fear or because of love?

Do not let the fear hold you back. Everything magical in this world is happening outside of your comfort zone.

Take a deep breath, make that leap of faith and do not compromise your authenticity.

“If you limit your choice only to what seems possible or reasonable, you disconnect yourself from what you truly want, and all that is left is a compromise.”

~ Robert Fritz

Chapter 8:

REGRETS: TO DO OR NOT TO DO?

Do you have any regrets? Who doesn't? People make choices and decisions that later turn out to be wrong in their opinion. They sometimes do something that they are not proud of later in life but, more often, they do not do something they desire because of this, that, and the other, and they later regret not doing it.

Some people live their lives and make decisions entirely relying on intuition, on that gut feeling. Other people calculate, make a pro/con lists, ask others for advice or decide by relying on some other methods.

The fact is that you cannot always know what the outcome will be. Sometimes you've just got to have faith and do it regardless of that fact.

In the end, no matter what the outcome of your decision is, no matter if the result is as you planned it or not, you can always learn something from any situation.

Even if you realize that you made the wrong choice, you can use it for your growth. You can analyze the situation, decisions you made, and see what you could have done differently. You can make sure that you do not repeat the same thing again. If you learned from it then it was not a wrong choice, it was a valuable lesson.

Living life with no regrets

You do not know how much time you have in this world. If you start living your life like it is your last day on Earth, you will live more freely and you will do things that you otherwise would not.

When you approach life with that attitude, you are free from fears and worrying what other people think. In that case, there are no regrets, because you take things as they come and you go with the flow and accept everything that comes your way.

People often limit themselves with a million excuses that prevent them from living the best possible life.

No matter what you believe regarding your soul or afterlife, you only get one life in the form you are now. That life is precious and you should not take it for granted.

You should give yourself permission to go after what you want, go after experiences, things, and people that will make your life better and even more authentic.

Living with your decisions

Let's be honest now, even if it sounds a little harsh. You likely will not get hit by a bus today and you will need to live with your decisions tomorrow, so, if you cannot live with your decisions then do not make them.

Decisions that you regret are often ones that you were not aligned with, the ones that you made against your heart and soul's desires.

When you do something against your own beliefs; against yourself, then you find yourself having regrets.

That gut feeling is usually a good compass. If even just the idea of something is making you feel bad, then actually doing it, whatever "it" is, will have an even bigger effect on you.

When you have that feeling of "this is wrong for me", take it seriously and pay attention.

No regrets approach

The idea of a "no regrets" approach is not an excuse to do whatever you want with no regard for other people in your life. It is also not an excuse to behave without any morals or boundaries.

The "no regrets" approach is simply a reminder that life is short and temporary and that you are precious and worthy. It is a reminder to not let fears hold you back. Life has enough of its obstacles, problems, and challenges and you do not need to create more of them yourself.

You do not need to limit yourself or not allow yourself to do or feel something. You will meet enough people that will try to do that for you.

~

This is a reminder to allow yourself to do that thing that you always wanted to do but never had the courage, time, or motivation to do it. Because it is true what they say - in the end, you will not look back and regret the things you did, you will regret things you did not do and you will regret the chances you did not take.

Let go of your fears, let go of all the excuses, make that choice and do that thing your heart wants because you deserve it. Do it now because there is no time like the present.

“We all make mistakes, have struggles, and even regret things in our past. But you are not your mistakes, you are not your struggles, and you are here now with the power to shape your day and your future.”

~ Steve Maraboli

Chapter 9:

EVERY PERSON IS YOUR TEACHER

I consider every person, that is or was in my life, a teacher. Some of them taught me how to love, how to be a better friend, how to grow, where to develop, and how to heal old wounds. Some of them taught me who I do not want to be and how I do not want to act. With some of them, I found parts of me that I never even knew I had.

With the help from my teachers, I developed my self-esteem, let go of my past, and started to accept and love myself more. I also learned new things about myself, people, relationships, and the world. Because of all the people that have gone through my life, and those that are still here, I grew and developed and because of them, I am who I am today.

Every person in my life has a story of their own. Their own problems, challenges, setbacks that they overcame, and positive, inspiring, and motivational experiences that they can share. Every life story is a lesson and can help you with your own life.

Painful experiences are life's biggest lessons

My most painful experiences with people, the ones that hurt me the most, have taught me life's biggest lessons and helped me grow fastest. I learned about forgiveness, saying no, listening to my intuition, prioritizing my life, setting healthy boundaries, loving myself first, and not being someone's doormat. I cherish those experiences and people because of that.

I am not saying that the fact that you grew from some painful experience justifies someone's behavior. It does not, but mindfully looking at the painful parts of your life can help you get through the pain, learn something, and put things in a different perspective.

People who hurt you the most are usually your biggest teachers because it would not hurt that much if you did not have an issue with it, whatever “it” is. When it hurts, you are personally involved and have a biggest opportunity to learn, heal yourself, and grow from that experience.

Maybe it is as simple as not having expectations that others need to meet, maybe it is accepting that every person is unique and has their own set of priorities and values that are not necessarily the same as yours, maybe it is a lesson in forgiveness. Whatever it is, use it for your growth and self-improvement.

Lessons from people passing through

Teachers are also people who are just passing through your life. People come in and out of your life and just a few of them stay for longer. That does not mean that people who are not here anymore were not important in one way or another. They all had some role in your life and something that they left behind, a gift, a blessing, or a lesson you needed to learn. It is up to you to decide how you are going to look at those people and experiences you had with them. Are you going to be mindful and choose to learn something from every relationship and person that walked through your life or are you going to let it go to waste?

Each and every single person that goes through your life is a teacher. Every single relationship is the opportunity to learn something and grow.

Sometimes people come into your life, stay for a short period of time, sometimes months or just weeks, and then almost disappear for no apparent reason. Those relationships can actually be very close and intense, real friendships even. Maybe you had deep, meaningful, and honest conversations. Maybe you even opened up to them on a personal and intimate level and do not understand why they left.

I had several people that I connected with on a deep level, and I could tell that it was mutual, but they did not stay for long. At first, I was hurt when that happened, when it was obvious that the person was not coming back in my life or when our relationship just grew apart. It is not great to feel rejected and abandoned but, with time, I chose to look at those relationships with gratitude. I am thankful for the time, however long or short, I had with someone and for our moments together. I also chose to look within and see why I am feeling rejected and abandoned, what triggered those emotions, and how I can heal them.

Sometimes people just grow apart and sometimes someone fulfills their purpose in your life and there is no need for them to stay anymore. Maybe you just needed someone to inspire you, motivate you and push you in the right direction and now you are good to go on our own. Maybe that someone and that experience you had was just there as a catalyst for your change and growth, the way for you to go deeper within.

Lessons from toxic relationships

In other cases, people can have a toxic relationship in their life and they are the one who needs to end that relationship for their own benefit.

However, even in those kinds of relationships, you can have amazing lessons and great gifts to take with you.

Those kinds of relationships can help you learn that you are strong enough on your own. They can remind you to put yourself first and reclaim your own personal power. They can teach you to be kind to yourself and love yourself more. That is one of the best possible lessons.

Lessons from strangers

You can even learn something from a person you crossed paths with or a stranger who walked into your life for a moment and left you with words or actions that you needed to hear or experience.

It can be some post you read from some person you do not even know, or someone you bump into at the store, or some random customer that walks into your workplace. Maybe they just say something that makes your day, or even says something that you need to hear in order to make some changes, or their words help you to resolve your problem. Maybe it is some random act of kindness like someone helping you with the stuff you dropped, maybe it is just what you need to remind yourself that good and kind people are everywhere or what you are going through will not last forever.

~

Do not ignore people around you. Strangers, acquaintances, colleagues, neighbors, friends, lovers, and family members – they can all teach you something if you pay attention.

Reflect on your life and notice people that passed through and gifts and lessons they left behind. Notice people that are still here and see how they help you to grow and develop. Be thankful for every person and every lesson. Never forget that you also have an impact and influence on other people's lives in the same way. Can you do a conscious effort to have a positive influence?

“Imagine that every person in the world is enlightened but you. They are all your teachers, each doing just the right things to help you learn perfect patience, perfect wisdom, perfect compassion.”

~ Gautama Buddha

Chapter 10:

WHAT DO YOU FEED YOUR MIND?

Feeding your mind is equally as important as feeding your body. You consume things with your mind all the time and you might not even be aware of it. Everything that goes into your mind will have an effect on you. The question is, will it be positive or negative? That depends on the type of food that you are consuming with your mind.

In order to feed your mind with food that will have a positive impact on you, you have to consciously choose what you are putting in. TV, newspapers, conversations, music – all of this can have a negative impact on your life if you are not picky about it.

Is watching TV really that bad?

Well, it is not actually bad. TV is not good or bad. It is like every other thing – it is how you use it that either makes it good or bad for you. It is not bad in itself although the majority of TV programs are not of any educational value or will not positively influence your thoughts.

One problem with TV is that people tend to compare themselves and their lives with what they see on TV and they usually do not feel better for it. It is not healthy or positive to measure your success or your personal value or self-worth with something that is not even real.

Another problem with watching TV is your brain. In a way, your brain does not know the difference between reality and fiction or past and present. Neurons in your brain interpret images as equivalent to a real-life action.

Think about one thing or one event that made you feel joy or happiness. If you are a parent, maybe it is the moment when your child was born or the day of your wedding. Maybe it is something

simple like watching the first snow of the season fall. I like to think about my dog and our walks. The memory of her running hyperactively on the grass with a tennis ball in her mouth in every direction possible always makes me smile and I feel the same thing that I usually feel when I take her out for a walk. It is pure joy. I just have to smile when I think of that.

Whatever your happy memory is, all you need to do is remember it with all the details and you will feel as though it is happening again.

That is actually the reason why visualizations work. You imagine the goal accomplished or a problem solved and your brain does not know the difference between imagery and real life. When you visualize something, the brain sends an impulse to your neurons and tells them to perform the movement. This creates a new neural pathway that prepares your body to act in a way consistent to what you imagined. This can keep you focused on your goal and increase your chances of achieving it.

Of course, visualizations themselves are not enough. You actually have to do something about it, real actions that will bring the results you are after. Just visualizing something will not do squat.

Watching TV has a direct influence on your mind, feelings, and body

OK, back to the TV. The same way you felt joy right now thinking about your happy memories, you would also feel pain if you think about something bad that happened in your life. When your brain thinks something is real, your body also reacts to it. You know how your body reacts when you are tense or frightened or in some unpleasant situation. You get that fight or flight instinct which elevates your heart rate and blood pressure and pumps adrenaline through your body. This causes stress and you want to avoid stress because you know that it is not good for you. Stress can cause a headache,

chest pain, stomach upset, sleep problems, anxiety, a lower immune system, and a lot more problems. If you experience stress over a long period of time, it could become chronic. So, why would you want to expose yourself to all of that on purpose?

Watching TV can do just that. I am not saying that watching every program on TV will do that. I am just saying that you need to be a little more conscious about what you are putting into your mind. It all reflects on your subconscious, on your thoughts, beliefs, and actions.

Your mind is like your body. What you feed it is what it will be made of. If you are constantly putting negativity into it, you cannot expect to be a positive person. Be mindful about what you feed your mind.

When TV becomes an escape

One more problem with TV is that it can become an escape. I had my fair share of TV binge-watching to escape the feelings of dissatisfaction with my life. When I did not want to deal with something, I would watch one TV show after another. I would watch a whole season in a day or two. I can say for sure that by doing that I was not living my life but the life of actors in the shows. That was my goal at that time; to escape my own life.

Then I realized that I needed to change something. It took some time but I did it. I confronted my life and decided to change it.

Yes, of course, I still watch TV shows, but now they are not an escape from my life but enjoyment and I am more mindful and conscious about what I watch.

Are you using a TV as an escape? If you are spending most of your free time watching it and not living your life, you probably are using it as an escape or a way to not deal with issues that are bothering you. You probably have that feeling of "something needs to change" but you are choosing a motto, "I will deal with this tomorrow". I know because I used it for years but if I could pull myself from that pattern

and change my life, so can you. You can do it and you can change whatever you want!

What are good alternatives to TV?

First, let me just say that TV can be a great thing. There are lots of good, inspiring, and motivating programs and shows. There are lots of amazing movies that can have life-changing effects. Watching this kind of TV will also have an impact on your subconscious and your thoughts, beliefs, and actions but in a positive way.

If you are not sure if something is good or bad for you, ask yourself some questions. Does this show/movie/program inspire me to be a better person? Can I learn something from watching this? What message does this show/movie/program send? It is the same thing with music, newspapers, and conversations. Be sure that whatever you are putting in your mind is positive and good for you and your life.

A great alternative for TV is a book. Read a good book. It develops your imagination, expands your vocabulary, improves your memory, and helps you to improve your thinking and writing skills. It also keeps your brain active - and that can prevent or slow the progress of Alzheimer's and Dementia, brings you new information and knowledge, and many other things.

Take a walk, preferably in nature. Walking helps to improve your health and keep you vital, fills you with vitamin D, energizes you, boosts circulation, and increases the oxygen supply to every cell in your body. It also raises your serotonin which makes you feel good and happy and works as an antidepressant.

Being in nature reduces stress and negative emotions, improves your mood, helps you emotionally, and brings calmness and positive feelings. It also helps you on a physical level by reducing blood pressure, heart rate, muscle tension, and the production of stress hormones.

Now I want to go for a walk, with my dog, of course.

Another thing you can do is talk to a friend, preferably by taking a walk in nature. Friends can help you with issues that are bothering you and can be a support in your change. Also, when things are said out loud, they can lose some of their weight and become easier to resolve. Talking helps you sort through your thoughts and clarify things, giving you a new perspective. Basically, it is free therapy.

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In the end, everything can have a bad influence on you if you use it in a bad or not supportive way. Even a book or a walk or socializing with friends.

So, be mindful, start from within and ask yourself why you are doing something. Are you using that as an escape from your life and your problems? If the answer is yes, then ask yourself, what do you need to change and how can you improve your life? What is the first step you can take towards that change?

Does something have a positive effect on you and does it help you be your best self and live your best life? If the answer is no then do not watch/read/use/do it.

“I will not let anyone walk through my mind with their dirty feet.”

~ Mahatma Gandhi

Chapter 11:

HOW TO GET BACK ON TRACK: 4 STEPS FOR SUCCESS

What if you start with positive changes but, after a while, you go back to your old habits? What if you fall off the wagon?

My story is full of setbacks. My old habits find their way back sometimes. Usually, these are the habits that have been here for a long time and have deep roots and lots of layers. They sometimes require more time and more little steps until they are completely gone, but that is OK, that is also a way to learn and to improve. It is never a reason to give up on yourself.

What do you do when you get off track?

If you get off track, you can always get back on. There is no reason to give up on the whole thing. Maybe you just need a little help and that is perfectly OK.

Remember what motivated you to change

The first thing is to remember what motivated you to change that thing in the first place. Maybe it was an article or a book, maybe some inspirational video or a conversation with a friend, maybe it was that uncomfortable feeling you had for a long time or something completely different. Whatever it was, go back to it. Read that book or article again, watch that video or talk to that person again, remember how you felt before. Motivate yourself again and remind yourself why you wanted to change that thing in the first place.

This habit that you want to change is probably not so good for you and it is not helping you to live your best life. If it was then there would be no reason to change it, right?

Remember the goals that you have for yourself and your life. Where do you want to be and who do you want to become? What was the reason you wanted to change your habit and behavior? Do you have your answers? Great! Now go to the second step.

Start your steps again

The second thing is to start your steps again. Just because your old behavior came back, it does not mean that everything is lost or that all that you did does not count. This was just a little pause. You do not want it to last more than it should but you just stopped for a moment. Nothing is lost and the time that you spent with new habits was, and still is, an amazing time and precious experience for your further development as a person.

You saw that you, in fact, can change. OK, the old habit came back again, but so what? You changed your behavior. You can do it again and you will do it again. This time it will last longer. Maybe you will take another pause or two. That is also OK, and you know why? Because you will continue to walk after every pause.

Think about the steps that you took. What was the first one? Go back to that step and do it again and then just keep walking, step by step.

Kindness, love, and support

The third thing is to be kind to yourself. Treat yourself like you would treat a friend. Be full of love and support for yourself.

Be mindful of your thoughts. There is nothing worse you could do than talk down on yourself. Do not say to yourself that you are a failure or accuse yourself of doing it again, messing up, or think that you cannot do anything right. I know that those or similar thoughts can arise in your mind. They can be yours but they can also be

voices of other people. Maybe your parents (that is the most common voice in people's heads) or other people in your life. That tape is always ready to play.

This situation maybe reminds you of some previous situations that you went through. This can bring up some emotions, beliefs, and unresolved issues from the past so this is also a good opportunity to do something about that.

It is usually a chain reaction and one thing pulls out another but that is great because everything that comes to the surface you can now consciously let go of for good. So, be mindful and welcome everything that comes up, observe it, learn something from it, and then let it go. Be kind, loving, and patient with yourself in that process. Just remember that self-growth and self-development is a lifelong process and it will take some time for changes to happen. It will also take some time for past issues, beliefs, and habits to resolve.

When you catch yourself with unkind thoughts, just take a deep breath, in and out, and one more. Clear, cancel, and delete them. Then do a conscious effort to change those thoughts into positive ones.

Learn from the pause

The fourth thing is to learn from the pause. Learn something and use it for your further growth. That way you will prevent future pauses, or they will be much shorter, and it will be easier to start walking again.

Examine what happened and why the pause occurred. What led to that? Why did the old habit kick back in? What started the whole pause and what made it last? Find those answers, remember them, and use them to prevent future pauses from happening, or if they happen again, use the answers to unpause yourself.

~

Like I have said so many times, every experience is a good thing, including pauses and setbacks, if you learn something from it. You become richer for one experience and your knowledge about that issue increases. Knowledge is power and you can always use it for your own growth and change.

Things that you learned can also be applied in other areas of your life. The more you learn about yourself, the more you will grow and you will be closer and closer to the person you want to become and the life you want to have. You will be closer to your best self and your best life.

You can do it! Never ever give up on yourself!

“Giving up on your goal because of one setback is like slashing your other three tires because you got a flat.”

~ Unknown

Chapter 12:

HOW TO CHANGE OFF DAYS TO ON DAYS

On some days, I wake up and everything feels the same. I start my day and the mood just goes down and down and down some more, for no apparent reason. Then there are days with many apparent reasons but, nevertheless, the mood is down and the sunny personality that I usually have is gone. Some person appears from deep within that is cranky, moody, somewhat dejected, and altogether not me.

Always be kind, loving, and patient with yourself

There is one thing I am trying to remind myself in those situations and that is the same thing that I repeat over and over again in almost every chapter - to be kind, loving, and patient with myself. This is the best thing that you can do for yourself in any situation. I also remind myself that I am not my thoughts, emotions, or moods. I consciously observe them and detach from them.

I used to blame myself when those days happened and thought that I am not trying hard enough, but the thing is that every person has those off days and that is perfectly normal and it is just a part of life.

Those days, and the mood that is part of them will go away easier when you are mindful and just let them go in their own time instead of trying to change them by force or resist them. The more resistance you put in, the more they are determined to stay. The trick is not to get involved with them. The more importance you give them, the more they will persevere.

When that kind of day happens, when your mood is off, just observe it as neutrally as possible. This is not the real you, this is something temporary and it will go away. When you detach from your thoughts

and emotions then you allow them to just pass through you and you do not get caught in the loop, you do not make them worse, and you do not turn them into something permanent.

The important thing is to remember that this too shall pass, it is going to get better and good days will follow, but you can also do your part and take some steps to help with that process.

What can help?

The best thing would be to prevent them altogether. If you start your day with some positive practice and routine, you will set the tone of your day from the start and chances are good that this will continue throughout your day. Find the morning routine that works for you.

Unfortunately, that is not always the case, you are only human and off days will happen, I can promise you that. There are simple tips I use when off days come. Sometimes I do not detach in time and I engage with those thoughts and mood. In that case, they become very persistent and the important thing is to reverse that and to go back into that state of neutrality. Of course, when I am in that state of mind, it is not always easy to follow any tips and tricks without some extra effort in the beginning.

It is so easy to just lose yourself in that apathy, but the longer you let yourself be that way, the worse it gets, and it can become chronic. But in any moment, you can choose to reverse that. It just takes a decision and a little effort to get your ass up, but it can be done.

First things first, literally move your ass and get up from that couch or bed even if you do not feel like it. You do not need to go far, you can just step outside into your backyard or balcony even, but just change that environment of yours. Remind yourself that there is a whole world outside.

Then do that next step and go out for a walk. Go and walk somewhere in nature. Nature heals and raises your mood and a walk by itself makes you feel better. So, go out and take a walk!

Eat something healthy. Food is very important and it makes a huge influence on your mood. Start with a fruit, give it 10-15 minutes to digest, and then eat something that is not sugary and full of additives. You know, eat some real food. Also, you could make yourself a super-healthy tasty smoothie. Whatever you do, just do not eat fake food that has no nutritious value. Then do the same tomorrow, and the next day. Start with one little change in your diet, just add something healthy and, after a while, add something else. Change your diet bite by bite.

Talk to a friend. Friends are just the best. They can help you get out of that moody feeling and raise your spirit. Call one of your friends and just talk to them, it can help you put things in a new perspective but can also help you let go of that feeling and just have fun. You could talk on the phone or, even better, go somewhere and do something together. Go for that walk with your friend or just do whatever fun stuff you do together. In my case, a simple conversation with a friend goes a long way in improving my mood and emotions.

Read or watch something inspirational. Read some books or an article that you find helpful and motivating. Something that will inspire you to feel better and do something that will help you get through this easier. Or watch a movie, TV show, or documentary that you find uplifting and encouraging. Just carefully pick your watching and reading material so it does not bring you down even more.

What is causing it?

I noticed that moody feelings tend to come when I have to deal with something, some part of my life that I am not so happy to deal with. If I start to avoid it, I usually do not feel so good.

Your thoughts reflect on your feelings and feelings reflect on your actions. For example, fear can be a paralyzing feeling that can stop you from doing something you want and, as a result, this can reflect on your mood and bring you down. Dissatisfaction with life and your decisions can make you have many off days.

A long time ago, I realized that I had to stop avoiding things that are unpleasant to deal with, face my life and myself, question my decisions, and make necessary changes. However, the same patterns occur from time to time and I sometimes need to remind myself to deal with things instead of avoiding them.

Also, the mood can be a result of a physical state. Mood swings can be caused by a hormonal imbalance, imbalanced brain chemistry, or maybe a vitamin shortage in the body. I find it useful to take herbal supplements as support. There are so many different things that can help you in a natural way.

You are not your thoughts and your feelings

Sometimes it is easier to detach from your thoughts, feelings, and moods when you know where they are coming from and what is causing them. However, even if you do not know what is causing them, you still want to be mindful and observe them without engaging with them because they will pass and they are not you.

Thoughts have a big impact on your beliefs and actions, but only when you identify with them. Then they cause that chain reaction of turning into beliefs and actions. That is something you want with thoughts that can cause positive and life-changing beliefs and actions but you do not want that with thoughts of insecurity, judgment, or blame. You want to change them into positive thoughts or just observe them from a place of neutrality and not identify with them and not let them become your beliefs.

~

I know from experience that reading about helpful things is one thing and actually doing them is another. When you are on your own, it can be hard to move out of that state, not to get involved in those thoughts and feelings, and not identify with them.

It is helpful to know that you are not alone and you are not the only one going through these types of periods. It happens to everyone. Just hold on and keep in mind that it is going to get better but also do what you can on your part to speed up this process.

“A thought is harmless unless we believe it. It’s not our thoughts, but our attachment to our thoughts, that causes suffering. Attaching to a thought means believing that it’s true, without inquiring. A belief is a thought that we’ve been attaching to, often for years.”

~ Byron Katie

Chapter 13:

HOW TO KEEP FOCUS ON WHAT IS IMPORTANT IN LIFE

Most people are running around trying to squeeze thousands of errands in on one day, trying to be productive and efficient. They are trying to be good workers, friends, parents, lovers, children, all at the same time and they are trying to fit themselves somewhere in between.

They are trying to chase time, money, recognition, and approval. Trying to do all of the laundry, clean every part of the house, just buy that one thing they cannot live without and that they will not even use. Then they are trying to declutter their home because they have too many things. They are overwhelmed with “must do” lists and all of the little things in their schedules that are waiting to be done. In all of their busyness, they do not even see the big things that actually matter.

Stones, pebbles, and sand

You probably know the story about the stones, pebbles, and sand. If you do not know, or you need a reminder, here is the short version:

A Philosophy Professor taught a class of his students a simple yet very profound lesson. He filled a big empty mason jar with stones and asked his students if the jar was full. They all agreed that it was. Then he added in the pebbles that filled empty spaces between the stones. He asked his students if the jar was full now. They again agreed that it was. Then he added the sand into the jar and the sand filled all of the remaining space. Now, the jar was really full.

This jar represents your life.

Stones represent big and important aspects of your life. That is your physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health, as well as your family, relationships, and all of the priceless parts of your life.

Pebbles represent other things that matter but are not as important as the stones, like your job, school, car, or your house.

Sand is everything else, all of the small stuff, material things and possessions, errands, and superficial activities. All of the impermanent and fleeting things that people tend to put first and misplace for stones.

If you put the sand into the jar first, there is no room for the stones or pebbles. Even though your life's sand has its part in your life and it is not bad in itself, if you put it as a priority, you will not have the space for things that are truly important. The jar has to be filled in a particular order if you want everything to fit in.

Some versions of the story have a beer ending. One student came to the table and poured beer into the jar which actually filled all of the remaining space.

The moral of that story is that there is always room for a beer in your life. I agree with that. There is always room for that little thing that you love, that spice of life, that thing that brings you pleasure and joy. Actually, those little things, like spending time in nature or reading a book or dancing or drinking that cold beer on a warm summer evening while watching the sunset, they are part of the big important things. They are the means by which you keep your stones in place.

Prioritize your life and put important things first

The point is not to remove all of the other things. The point is that you need to prioritize your life and put important things first.

That will maybe include giving up on something like watching TV two hours less so you can meet with a friend for a cup of coffee or a beer.

You will not miss those two hours of TV because you will be making memories, sharing experiences, and living your life.

All of the little things and errands are important, they are a part of life and they should be done, but they should not be your priorities. If you make them your priorities, then your life loses its meaning, joy, and beauty.

In the end, you will not remember how many plates you washed or how many emails you wrote or which TV shows you watched. You will remember love and precious time and moments you had with your loved ones, you will remember hugs and kisses, you will remember conversations that lifted you, feelings of joy and happiness and people and moments that caused those feelings. You will remember all of your proudest moments when you did something amazing and special, moments when you stepped out of your comfort zone.

Those are the moments that count and that make life beautiful, amazing, and magical. You need to stop spending time on irrelevant things and start making room for the important ones.

Build a solid stone foundation

When you get lost in the hectic part of life and put the sands of your life in front of the stones, you lose yourself and forget what is important. You lose your physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual balance and sense of purpose because your life, in its core, is not made of sand. You need a solid stone foundation on which you can build the rest of your life, on which you can add the other parts. Your stone foundation needs to come first in order for anything else to exist. You need stones to stand upon and to hold the other parts of your life.

Empty your jar and organize it again

I had many moments and periods in my life when I lost myself. I lost sight of what was important and focused on chasing business opportunities, relationships, or just spending time on meaningless activities. As a result, I endangered my health and lost the meaning of my life, I lost myself and what was important to me.

Most of those moments started when I lost focus on the little things, spices of life, which are part of the big important things and keep them in place. I had to stop, take a deep breath, start to reorganize my life, and get back on track.

If it happens that you get your stones and pebbles a little mixed up, you can always empty your jar and start organizing it from the beginning. Make some changes in your life. Do it step by step and do it mindfully. Ask yourself: Where can I start? What step can I take first?

~

Focus on what is important and be grateful for all of the stones that you have in your life. Every day is a new opportunity to start again, to make different and better choices; it is the opportunity to do better and be better.

By the end of today, do something better than yesterday. Today, choose one of your stones over sand and create meaningful memories which will last a lifetime.

***“And every day, the world will drag you by the hand, yelling:
This is important! And this is important! And this is
important! You need to worry about this! And this! And this!***

***And each day, it's up to you to yank your hand back, put it
on your heart and say: No. This is what's important.”***

~ Iain Thomas

Chapter 14:

5 SIMPLE REASONS TO FALL IN LOVE WITH LIFE

Life is amazing and magical, but most people tend to forget that fact when they start running through it. They lose themselves in the everyday hectic world and in errands that they believe they just have to do right now. In that running, they do not even notice everyday small things that make life precious and worth living.

Most people also forget that when they were kids, they were completely in love with life. They could not wait for the next morning to discover what else they could learn about life and what new adventures and things they could do that day. They grew up and started that "important" running. They lost wonderment, excitement, and enthusiasm about life and that is a big shame.

Here are a few simple reminders for why life is just perfectly wonderful.

You are alive

That is just the best reason ever to be excited. You are here, you exist, and you have the front row seat to this show called life. Not only that. You also get to participate in the show. Not only that. You have a leading role in this show. Yes, you are the leading role of your life so it is time to acknowledge that and make it the best show possible.

“If you're reading this... Congratulations, you're alive. If that's not something to smile about, then I don't know what is.”

~ Chad Sugg

People in your life

Life is best when it is shared with someone. That someone can be a friend, partner, or a family member... Be grateful for the people in your life with whom you can share your enthusiasm and happiness. Be thankful for those people who make your life a happier place.

Share your life with those special people. Call them, meet with them, and then go and make some memories.

"Notice the people who are happy for your happiness, and sad for your sadness. They're the ones who deserve special places in your heart."

~Unknown

Nature and animals

Nature just makes you fall in love with life over and over again. It is just perfect. Warm sun on your face, a smell of flowers in the spring when everything is waking up, a soft breeze on your skin or grass under your feet, a sound of a babbling brook. Are you feeling it, that magic?

Animals are also just the best. Think of a little clumsy puppy and you will smile without any effort. Or the birds that are chirping every morning. Do you even notice them? They are here every day, just pay attention.

"I felt my lungs inflate with the onrush of scenery—air, mountains, trees, people. I thought: This is what it is to be happy."

~ Sylvia Plath

Music

Music can lift you up and make you move, make you sing, make you want to grab somebody and dance. Or just shake your booty and mumble some vowels because you do not know the lyrics but the song is just amazing.

Play that perfect song that makes you feel awesome and just sing along. Every cell in your body will sing and dance with you.

“Music gives a soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination and life to everything.”

~ Plato

Food

Don't you just love food? All of those flavors, colors, and textures. Those perfect healthy fruits, vegetables, and nuts that nourish your body.

When was the last time you actually sat at the table and ate your breakfast instead of eating it on your feet on your way to work? When was the last time you really felt and tasted what you are eating? That sourness of a lemon, sweetness of broccoli, that texture of an oatmeal, the softness of a banana, crunchiness of almonds, and colors of zucchini. It is just beautiful.

“Don't eat anything your great-grandmother wouldn't recognize as food.”

~ Michael Pollan

Bonus. The combination of everything mentioned.

Just invite your friends and family, make a picnic in nature, and bring some music. It will make you come alive and fall in love with life all over again.

“A picnic is more than eating a meal, it is a pleasurable state of mind.”

~ Dee Dee Stovel

~

The point is to enjoy simple things in life. They make life so special, beautiful, and unique.

Take some time each day to do something that makes you come alive and fall in love with life. Whatever that something is, prioritize your life and make time to do it. It will make all that running a little easier.

Chapter 15:

WHEN THE STUDENT IS READY, THE TEACHER WILL APPEAR

When I started this inner journey over a decade ago, I did not even know it at the time. I was not aware that I was starting the most important process and journey towards change and an amazing life full of happiness. I just needed help at the time to deal with my depression and wounds from my childhood. I did not realize that I set the intention to resolve those challenges, I just knew that I was so desperate, miserable, and sad that I would do anything to change it and I knew I could not live that way anymore.

At that time, one person came into my life who set everything into motion. My problems began to surface and my wounds were asking to be healed. My past was screaming at me to deal with it. So, I did. One bit at a time. Step by step.

After I was done with one part, another person showed up in my life that guided me to deal with other parts. Then a book, then a conversation, then a movie, a song, an article, more people, more books, more conversations, more movies, songs, articles... Step by step and teacher by teacher, my life was leading me towards the change, development, and growth.

When the student is ready, the teacher will appear

This cannot be truer. When you become ready to deal with things that you need to deal with, help and guidance will come. In one form or another. I did not realize it at the time, but every time I needed guidance and help, a teacher appeared. It did not matter if it was a book or a person, it was always the right thing and the right help for me.

Now, when I understand this, I use it consciously. I set the intention to resolve some challenges, questions or concerns that I have and then I wait for some guidance and answers. I never know in what form they will come so I do not expect anything and I am open to everything – and the help and answers come every time.

There are lots of ways someone can ask for help and guidance. Some people pray, some people ask angels for help, others do it through meditation, some ask God, universe, their spiritual guides, higher power, or their higher self. I believe that, in the end, it does not matter how you get there, it is just important that you get there. Whatever works for you and however you want to call it.

When there is no way but up

Unfortunately, people often need to hit rock bottom first in order to set that intention towards change. I needed that, too.

A lot of people are missing or deliberately ignoring the little signs along the way that are trying to warn them. The little whispers of life that are saying that it is time to change something before it is too late.

Maybe they are just getting a little tired now and then and do not have enough energy throughout the day, but they ignore it and drink more coffee.

After a while, they get a slap in the face. Maybe they faint in the middle of the street. This cannot be good but they choose to deal with it tomorrow. Only, they do not actually deal with it and then life throws a brick on their head and they end up in the hospital with a serious health problem. Then they start to pay attention and then they put some effort and set that intention towards change.

They could avoid all of that trouble and pain if they listened to that first sign and warning, but people usually do not do that. Maybe we all learn this way and maybe we all need to go through rough times in order to grow.

Take responsibility for your life and pay attention

A lot of people hit rock bottom but that does not change anything for them. They just stay there, feeling hurt and miserable and feeling like victims. They blame everyone else and refuse to take responsibility for their life.

That is the first thing you need to do in order to change anything - take responsibility for your life. Only after you make that step, a teacher can appear. Or more accurately, a teacher will appear and you will recognize it.

Of course, you also need to pay attention and be open to welcome teachers in your life and accept that sometimes answers will not be what you expected them to be. In order to learn from your teachers, you need to be open-minded and you need to be ready to let go of the limited beliefs that are holding you back.

Be open to change and learn from the resistance

It is not always easy to hear or read what your teacher has to say and it is not always easy to follow through. Every change is hard and people often tend to resist it, but resistance can also be a teacher. The more you resist something, the more important it is for you to pay attention to it and change it. Things you resist the most are usually the biggest things holding you back and, the more resistance you have towards something you heard or read, the more truthful the words are. So, use the resistance as a road sign and a pointer to what needs to be changed.

People can be scared of change because they do not know what it will bring. One of the reasons people stay in their pain is because it is familiar and they know what to expect. Change, on the other hand, is unfamiliar and they do not know what to expect, it is a voyage into the

unknown. Sometimes people satisfy themselves with the familiar because of that fear.

Albert Einstein said: "Definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results."

Different results cannot happen if you do not change something. You can actually change whatever you want, you just need to set the intention, start acting on it, and do it step by step. You can run part of the way but not all the way because you will get tired soon. Do it step by step and save your energy. Sure, from time to time you will need to stop, pause, and rest a little bit and that is OK. Just make sure you start walking again.

When you set that intention to change yourself, you are not trying to become someone that you are not already. You are just uncovering the real you that is underneath of all the clutter that you collected throughout your life. You are just uncluttering all of the mess that is covering your true self, your best self, your authenticity.

If the intention and the end goal is to live authentically and be the best version of yourself, then you can be assured that the right teacher will appear in the best possible way and in the best possible time.

~

Every person is so unique and individual and every person has their own authenticity. That is why there are so many different teachers and so many different ways and techniques to achieve that end goal. Every person needs to find their unique way and their authentic path of life. There is no one way fits all. There is no one recipe or one street. No one can tell you exactly how to get there. There are some pointers and road signs but the way you get there is up to you and it needs to be truthful to you.

I also do not have a recipe for you, I do not have all the answers and instructions - nobody does. Only you know what works for you and

what resonates with you. I can only tell you my story and things I did on my journey but that will not work for everyone. My process was, at times, trial and error. As my journey developed, my self-improvement techniques changed and developed with me.

You are the only one qualified to decide what technique you want to implement and what approach you want to use. So, set that intention of yours and match your actions with that intention. Then pay attention and listen to your teachers, your inner voice, and your truth and do not let anyone distract you from your journey.

Change is not something to be afraid of. Life is constantly changing and you just need to allow it to happen and to unfold naturally. Just go with the flow of life and let your best self unveil.

"While the intent is the seed of manifestation, the action is the water that nourishes the seed. Your actions must reflect your goals in order to achieve true success."

~ Steve Maraboli

PART 2

EVERYDAY MINDFULNESS IN PRACTICE

*Simple and practical ways for everyday
mindfulness*

INTRODUCTION

EVERYDAY MINDFULNESS

What is mindfulness?

According to the Oxford Dictionary's definition, mindfulness is the quality or state of being conscious or aware of something, a mental state achieved by focusing one's awareness on the present moment, while calmly acknowledging and accepting one's feelings, thoughts and bodily sensations.

Mindfulness is more than just a practice, more than meditation and more than a stress reduction program. Mindfulness is a way of living and a way of being.

You can practice mindfulness in a way that you become aware and present in everyday life, in everyday experiences, on a moment to moment basis and this awareness will become a natural way of expressing yourself and perceiving life. In a way, mindfulness is a new skill that you need to learn and by practicing it, you are making it a part of your being. Eventually, mindfulness will become a natural part of you, effortlessly and organically. It will become a way of being.

Mindfulness is a way of perceiving the world. It includes living in the moment, being in the now, but also, it is the way you look at your emotions, thoughts, events that are happening to you, your circumstances and the world around you. Mindfulness includes viewing all of those things from a place of non-judgment, acceptance and neutrality.

The goal is to perceive all events as neutral and just experience them without attaching any labels and meaning to them. The goal is to accept all of your expressions as they come and let them unfold naturally without putting any attachment on them.

Usually, people's suffering and pain comes more from their story and interpretation of some event, some emotion or thought, than from the event itself.

Maybe you were just leaving your house on your way to work and you saw your neighbor in his yard. Maybe you said hello but he did not respond. Maybe you waited for him to greet you first but that did not happen. Now, on your way to work you are creating a whole story around that event. You are thinking about how rude he was that and you cannot believe that you lived next door to that guy for years and he pretends that you are invisible. He clearly saw you. Then you go on to add all kinds of adjectives. After a while, you come to the conclusion that you will not greet him anymore unless he does it first. You arrive at your work all grumpy, angry and, altogether, not in the mood for anything. Your day started in a negative way and it will possibly continue that way until something bigger catches your mind in a new loop.

In reality, your neighbor maybe did not have his glasses on at the moment you passed his yard and he really did not see you. Or maybe he was wrapped up in his thoughts because his mother is in a hospital and he is really worried about her. But even if he really did see you and did not want to greet you, so what?

If you look at this situation from a place of mindfulness, you would greet your neighbor, he would not greet you back, you would shrug your shoulders and go on about your day without that whole story. You would maybe think: "I hope everything is all right with him." Maybe you would yell louder: "Good morning!" so he could hear you and greet you back. However, whatever happens, you would not think twice about it. Or, if you would, you would consciously let go of those thoughts because your peace is more important than some story that probably is not even true.

This was a simple example but it illustrates how your thoughts create your reality. How you create your reality and how you have the power to choose. You can choose serenity and peace of mind – a mindfulness approach, or you can ruin your whole day.

Mindfulness is not about removing your thoughts or preventing your feelings to appear. It is about observing them from a detached place, it is about not judging them but about acknowledging their presence and just letting them go.

With this practice, in time, your thoughts will appear less and less, stories you have will become shorter and shorter and your view on life and your experiences will become more positive.

Imagine applying that approach of just observing everything without adding any story to it. Imagine the peace and serenity that you would feel, that surrender to the flow of life.

Is that not worth trying?

“Mindfulness is the aware, balanced acceptance of the present experience. It isn’t more complicated than that. It is opening to or receiving the present moment, pleasant or unpleasant, just as it is, without either clinging to it or rejecting it.”

~ Sylvia Boorstein

Benefits of mindfulness

Mindfulness is all about the mind, body, and spirit. It can benefit you in all of these areas. Although mindfulness is not a religious practice, it can be spiritual.

The practice of mindfulness can help you be more engaged in your activities, be more present in everyday life and everyday experiences, have better and deeper connections with other people, improve your relationships, and help you focus. It can decrease anxiety, worry, fear, concerns, low self-esteem, and emotional reactivity. It can increase empathy and compassion. It can deepen your connection

with yourself and your needs, wants, and desires. It can improve your whole well-being and quality of life.

Also, mindfulness can improve your physical health by reducing stress, lowering your blood pressure, alleviating gastrointestinal difficulties, improving sleep, and boosting your working memory.

It can improve your mental health by helping you with depression, eating disorders, addictions, anxiety disorders, and obsessive-compulsive disorder.

People are holistic beings and everything is connected and intertwined – mind, body, and spirit – so when you affect one part, you are affecting all of them. Mindfulness can offer that holistic approach to life, to health, and to your well-being.

“When your attention moves into the Now, there is an alertness. It is as if you were waking up from a dream, the dream of thought, the dream of past and future. Such clarity, such simplicity. No room for problem-making. Just this moment as it is.”

~ Eckhart Tolle

Basic principles of mindfulness

Detachment – people often get attached to feelings, emotions, and thoughts. They tend to replay pleasurable experiences over and over again, but also tend to dwell on unpleasant experiences. By letting go (not forgetting but releasing attachment) of everything that comes your way, you remain unstuck, in the flow of life.

Being in the now – by letting go, you are able to focus on the present moment, live in the now, and that is the only moment that exists. The past is behind you and you cannot change it, you can just learn from

it, and the future is yet to come and the only place from which you can influence its outcome is in the present.

Non-judgment – people tend to attach labels to their experiences and judge them as good or bad and view their emotions as positive or negative. One of the mindfulness principles is to not judge anything or add your story to it but observe things as they are.

Openness – this means letting go of your rigid view of the world, thinking that your way is the only way, letting go of thought patterns and beliefs and being open to everything, being open to new experiences, other perspectives, and other points of view.

Acceptance – acceptance means to stop trying to change your reality by force or acting like a victim. With acceptance, you are aware that you can change your reality only by taking responsibility for your life and your actions. By acceptance, you are both trusting and surrendering to life and taking conscious actions to make things happen.

~

Mindfulness is a very simple and powerful practice but it is not always easy.

When you deal with minor events that do not have significant meaning to you then you can accept, detach and let go easier. However, some emotions, thoughts, and beliefs go deep, often deep into the childhood, and observing them without engaging is not easy. In those moments, kindness, love, and non-judgment are very important, as are patience and persistence. With time and practice, even those deep beliefs can be released for good.

Often times, people tend to suppress their emotions and thoughts because they do not want to feel that discomfort, they think that the pain is unbearable and they will not be able to deal with it. However, the truth is the total opposite. The longer you suppress something,

the longer that something has the power over you, the longer it poisons you from the inside, and the longer it stays.

You are not your emotions, you are not your thoughts. You are the one behind them, you are the one observing them. If you approach them from that detached place, from the place of non-judgment, if you just observe them to see what happens, how they look, what color they are, how they taste, and what shape they have, then you will see that they have no power over you. You will see through them, you will see the space behind them, they will just dissolve and all that will be left is you as an observer. From that place, answers and solutions to your struggles will come.

“The best way to capture moments is to pay attention. This is how we cultivate mindfulness. Mindfulness means being awake. It means knowing what you are doing.”

~ Jon Kabat-Zinn

Chapter 1:

EVERYDAY MINDFULNESS IN PRACTICE

How to be mindful every day while dealing with everyday stuff?

The beautiful thing about mindfulness is that everything can become mindfulness practice – literally everything. Whatever you do mindfully, with presence and an awareness of what you are doing, you are practicing mindfulness.

This can be as simple as drinking your tea, washing your dishes, petting your cat. If you are fully in the moment and aware of the cup you are holding and the warmth you are feeling on your skin, and if you are present and observing every sip of tea that you take and how it tastes in your mouth, you are practicing mindfulness.

That said, there are also some simple ways and techniques that you can apply in your life throughout the day that can help you with your mindfulness practice.

Everything I share with you is my personal experience and practices that I tried and that worked for me.

We will cover several morning, day and evening mindful practices:

Mindful morning:

- Mindful breathing
- Mindful meditation
- Sun Salutation

Mindful day:

- Mindful work
- Mindful eating
- Mindful communication

Mindful evening:

- Mindful walking
- Gratitude
- Body scanning

Chapter 2:

MINDFUL MORNING

You can start your mindfulness practice from the moment you wake up. I would encourage you to do that because the way you start your morning will reflect through the rest of your day.

You can develop a morning routine that best suits you. Try to do it every day for a week or two and see how you feel, observe what is changing in your inner and outer world. If you need to, alter it according to your lifestyle and preferences. After you see the results and benefits it brings, this will become a positive habit that you will not want to change.

Mindful breathing

The first simple thing you can do in the morning is focus on your breathing. You breathe anyway so this is not something new or complicated or something that requires a big effort. However, mindful breathing or intentional breathing requires your presence in every breath. It requires for you to focus on your breath and observe it.

You can do this before you even get out of bed but if you feel more comfortable, you can sit upright.

First, bring your attention to your breath. Breathe in and out, in and out and in and out some more. Just let yourself breathe as you normally do. Do not try to slow your breath or speed it up. Let it be natural and just observe it without any judgment or story about it. There is no wrong way of doing this. If those kinds of thoughts come up, just let them pass without engaging with them.

Observe your breath and how it flows through your body – your nose, chest, and abdomen.

You will probably notice that with every breath you get more and more relaxed and more and more peaceful.

After a few breaths, set your intention on your abdomen, you can even place your hand there to help you focus. Start taking deeper breaths through your nose and fill your whole lungs and abdomen. Hold your breath for a few moments or however long it feels comfortable to you, and then slowly exhale through your mouth. If you feel up to it, you can also add some sound when exhaling, such as “Ahhh” or “Ommm”.

If you find it difficult to focus on your breathing and your mind becomes overactive, you can attach your breath to a simple word or a mantra. This can be as simple as “In” or “Inhale” when you breathe in and “Out” or “Exhale” when you breathe out. This can help your brain to calm and focus easier.

Do this for however long it feels comfortable. Maybe you can set a timer for 3 or 5 minutes or you can count your breaths.

~

This is something you can do at any time and any place throughout the day but by doing this first thing in the morning, you will start your day in a calm place, more relaxed, peaceful and stress-free. You will also fill your body and your brain with more oxygen.

Over time, you will notice that you are breathing more fully and deeply most of the time and this will have long-term positive effects on your body, mind and spirit.

***“Breathing in, I calm body and mind. Breathing out, I smile.
Dwelling in the present moment I know this is the only
moment.”***

~ Thich Nhat Hanh

Mindful meditation

When you finish your mindful breathing exercise, you can from there just slip into the meditation.

You can return to your normal breathing and observe it. Again, just follow your breath as it goes in and out. You can then expand your awareness to your whole body. Observe how you feel, start from the top of your head and proceed down to your feet. If any part of your body feels tight, just consciously relax it. Release all of the tension from your body.

There are many ways that you can meditate and you should find the one that feels best for you.

If you want, after relaxing your body, you can return to your breath and just observe it. When thoughts appear, just let them go, let them pass through you like they are clouds and you are the sky. If you engage with them, do not judge or blame yourself, just gently return to your breath again.

Thoughts will not disappear, that is not the point of meditation. The point is to observe them and remain neutral. This is something that will happen with time and practice and it is nothing that you need to force.

If you like, you can again add some simple word or mantra to your breathing to help your mind stay calmer. You maybe want to try Hawaiian practice of Ho'oponopono in your meditation by simply using “Thank you” or “I love you” as your mantra.

Maybe you wish to add relaxing music to your meditation, binaural beats or different healing frequencies such as 432 or 528 Hz. Another great way are guided meditations. You can try my free meditation at Everyday Seekers or try different meditation apps.

Find someone that resonates with you, or simply practice breath meditation.

If you like, you can again set the timer for 5 or 10 minutes or you can simply let your inner guidance let you know when you have had enough.

~

Benefits of meditation are incredible. To name a few, meditation can reduce stress and anxiety, improve focus and concentration, bring calmness, happiness, and acceptance, increase your health, quality of life and well-being.

Try different ways of meditating so you can find what best works for you.

***“Life is a mystery – mystery of beauty, bliss and divinity.
Meditation is the art of unfolding that mystery.”***

~ Amit Ray

Sun Salutation

The Sun Salutation, or Surya Namaskar, is a yogic technique that contains a series of postures, or asanas, that are practiced in a consecutive sequence. There is a whole science behind this ancient

technique, as it is behind yoga in general, but we will not go into that now.

The Sun Salutation can be a warm up for a yoga routine but it can also be practiced on its own and this is one more morning mindfulness technique that I recommend. Practiced on its own, this is a complete exercise that engages every part of the body, energizes it and helps start the day in a mindful, aware and positive way.

Do it at a pace you feel comfortable and do not worry about doing it perfectly. There is no need to force anything. You can repeat the sequence as many times as it feels good for you.

Yoga is a great mindfulness practice because it can help you be in the moment, in the movement, and in the breath. As you move through the postures, try to observe your inhales and exhales and feel your body's movements.



- Start by standing upright with your feet together and balancing your weight equally on both feet. Relax your shoulders and expand your chest. As you inhale, lift both of your arms up from the sides. As you exhale, bring your palms together in front of the chest in a prayer position.
- As you inhale, lift your arms up and back, keeping the biceps close to the ears. Try to stretch your whole body up, from the heels to the tips of the fingers.

- As you exhale, bend forward at the waist, slightly soften your knees and fold forward with your hands down to the floor, beside your feet.
- As you inhale, flat your back and lengthen the spine with your hands on the fingertips on the floor in front of you.
- As you exhale, push your right leg as far back as possible, put your knee to the floor and look up. If you feel more advanced, you can also jump back, directly into the next posture with both of your feet (as explained in the video below).
- As you inhale, plant the palms and put your left leg back and bring the whole body in a straight line.
- As you exhale, bring your knees to the floor, slightly take your hips back, slide forward, put your chest and chin on the floor.
- As you inhale, roll forward and upwards, keep your elbows bent and shoulders away from the ears. Keep the back of your neck long and look up.
- As you exhale, ground your hands and feet into the floor, lift the hips up and put your chest downwards. Take a few deep breaths.
- As you inhale, put your right foot forward in between your hands, left knee down to the floor and look up. If you feel more advanced, you can jump forward, directly into the next posture with both of your feet (as explained in the video below).
- As you exhale, put your left foot forward to join the right. Keep your palms on the floor.
- As you inhale, roll the spine up, put your hands up and bend backward a little bit.
- As you exhale, straighten your body and put your palms together in front of the chest in a prayer position. Relax and observe the sensations in your body.

You can search YouTube for visual guidance. Or maybe try some other yoga practice.

~

When done regularly, Surya Namaskar can help your nervous and digestive system, improve lung function and blood circulation, correct hormonal imbalances, help with weight loss, strengthen muscles and joints and maintain overall health. Every part of the body can benefit from this practice.

The Sun Salutation, or yoga in general, is one more way to boost your body, mind, and spirit.

“Yoga does not remove us from the reality or responsibilities of everyday life but rather places our feet firmly and resolutely in the practical ground of experience. We don’t transcend our lives; we return to the life we left behind in the hopes of something better.”

~ Donna Farhi

Chapter 3:

MINDFUL DAY

After the morning routine, when you go about your day, it is easy to get lost in everyday tasks. Everyone has a million things to do throughout the day but if you consciously practice mindfulness, you can be aware and present in anything you do. Even more so, you can do your tasks with more ease, focus, and efficiency.

Mindful work

When you practice mindfulness, your work can become a perfect place for that.

No matter what you do and what your job is, you can put your focus on the present moment and the task that is in front of you. This takes a little bit of practice, but with time, it gets easier and easier.

Observe your hands on the keyboard, or the object they are holding, hear the ticking of the clock, or birds outside. Feel the chair you are sitting on. Maybe you are working in nature. Observe the trees, feel the breeze on your skin, the sun on your face. Go to your breath again. Become aware of your thoughts about the job you are doing. Observe your thoughts that are not related to the job you are doing. Observe how you can do the job without even thinking about it. Notice when you go on autopilot and gently return to yourself, to the present moment.

It is amazing when you realize that most of the time you are not even here, you are not in your body. You are miles away, thinking about other places, thinking about your past or your future, but your body still works without being told.

Your heart still pumps blood and brings oxygen and nutrients to the organs and tissues of your body. Your lungs still expand and contract twelve to twenty times per minute so you can breathe. Your body still produces 25 million new cells each second. All of that while you are thinking about your grocery list and what you need to buy on your way home from work.

Amazing is the fact that you are also working while thinking about your grocery list and you are not even present most of the time. Imagine how much more you could accomplish if you are actually present and aware of what you are doing.

~

Mindful work is mindfulness in practice, in everyday life and everyday tasks. Mindfulness is not something that only Buddhist monks can practice isolated from the world and people. Mindfulness is something that everyday people, regardless of their circumstances, can practice in each and every moment.

The most important thing is to keep returning to yourself, to your body, to the present moment. At first, this will maybe happen once or twice in an hour, when you realize that your mind and your thoughts are caught up in that loop again, in some story that is playing in your head, a story that you became a part of without even realizing it.

In time, you will realize that you are more and more present, more and more here and now. You will notice that your mind is more peaceful and that you are more focused on where you are and what you are doing.

“We’re so busy watching out for what’s just ahead of us that we don’t take the time to enjoy where we are.”

~ Bill Watterson

Mindful eating

The same principles can be applied to eating. People often eat without even tasting the food. They eat on their feet or are distracted by the TV or newspapers. They are not aware when they are really hungry or what their bodies need and want to eat.

For mindful eating, all it takes is a bit of awareness.

Mindful eating means to pay attention to the food you are eating, before and during your meal.

When you feel hunger, pay attention to your body. Observe how it feels. Observe where you feel hunger. Is your body really hungry or is your mind the one that is craving food? On a scale from 1 to 10, how hungry are you? We are often actually thirsty when we think that we are hungry. Did you drink enough water today?

If you indeed feel physical hunger, observe what your body craves. Which food do you need? It may take a little bit of practice to be able to distinguish the difference between your body's actual needs and your mind's cravings. If you pay attention, your body will let you know what food you need, what is maybe missing in your organism and what food you need to eat more or less.

After you identify what food you want to eat and when you sit down to eat it, try to do it in a peaceful place. When you are eating mindfully, this means that you are paying attention to the food. You can even make it a little ritual of yours.

You do not want distractions such as TV or newspapers, because when you are trying to do two things at the same time, you are actually not able to enjoy and be present with either of them, and you cannot be fully aware of your body and its signals.

Start by observing the food in front of you. Notice the colors, smells, and texture. Then take a bite and really taste it in your mouth. Notice how it feels and how it tastes. Maybe you will notice that it tastes

different than you remember because this is the first time you are eating this food consciously. Maybe it is even tastier than you thought or maybe you do not like it as much. When you are eating this way, you can enjoy your food much more.

Pay attention to your body and your stomach. Is it full? Have you had enough to eat? Do you need more? There is no need to eat after you are full. People are mostly raised to not throw food and to eat everything that is on their plate, but if that means that you will overeat and feel discomfort and pain afterward, then this is a belief that no longer serves you. You can always eat the rest of the food later but, let's be honest, no matter if you eat the food or throw it away, it turns to waste. In time, you may even notice that you need smaller meals and you will learn to prepare them that way.

When you are finished, sit for a moment or two and let yourself enjoy the fullness. Let the food settle for a while and give your body time to digest it.

Also, observe your thoughts around the food. If you keep counting your calories or combining your food, if you keep telling yourself that you eat too much or that you need to lose weight, be gentle with those thoughts and emotions that follow them.

Try to be kind and loving with yourself and not judge anything that shows up. Allow your thoughts to pass through you and let them go. Always gently return to the now moment.

~

Just do your best to incorporate mindful eating into your every meal. Remember to slow down, pay attention to your body and its signals and needs, do one thing at the time and enjoy your every meal with all your senses.

“Mindful eating is a way to become reacquainted with the guidance of our internal nutritionist.”

~ Jan Chozen Bays

Mindful communication

By practicing mindfulness, you can deepen your relationships.

People are often somewhere else in their mind and not with the person they are talking to. More often than not, while the other person is talking, they are thinking about what they are going to say next, or they are checking their phone, and they are not fully present in the conversation.

When you bring your awareness in the conversation and when you are fully present, you can actually hear what the other person is saying to you. You can then engage and contribute to the conversation in a meaningful and deeper way.

Try to be fully open to the other person and his or her words and perspective and allow it to be different to yours. Observe it openly and maybe you will notice something that will broaden your beliefs and opinions.

Try to fully listen and pay attention to the conversation. Observe the other person, their body language, and the energy behind their words. People are not talking to each other just with words.

When you are aware and present in the moment, you will be able to notice that subtle messages beyond the words.

When you are talking, also be present in the moment. The interesting thing is that when you step out of that mind loop of thinking and storytelling, your conversations can become more fluid, more real and more from the heart. Words will come out of your mouth regardless of

the thinking process. When you are practicing mindful conversations, your relationships become mindful and more meaningful.

Another benefit of mindfulness in relationships is that when you are fully present and when you observe your emotions, thoughts, and feelings that appear when you are engaging with someone, you can very quickly notice how someone is resonating with you.

You can more easily sense their intentions but, also, you can sense your response to that person and whether you want to spend your time and energy on them or not. You can sense with more ease if a person is toxic or if they are someone who will enrich your life with their presence.

You are also more aware of your core values, needs and wants and can express them to the other person in that moment, rather than having any regrets later. You are becoming more and more authentic in your everyday life.

By being mindful, you can also let go of things with more ease and your emotional reactivity can decrease, so you can resolve conflict and forgive more quickly, or not even hold a grudge about insignificant things. When you are not attaching any additional story to someone's actions, and when you are fully present and can easily see someone's intentions, then your relationship with that person becomes easier.

~

When you are aware of the other person and yourself in the present moment, you can be more understanding, compassionate and emphatic, be more aware of their needs and feelings, and altogether be a better friend, lover or a parent. Through mindfulness, you can connect with people on a much deeper level. Mindfulness can help you have more heart-based relationships.

“Remember that there is only one important time and it is now. The present moment is the only time over which we have dominion. The most important person is always the person with whom you are, who is right before you, for who knows if you will have dealings with any other person in the future? The most important pursuit is making that person, the one standing at your side, happy, for that alone is the pursuit of life.”

~ Leo Tolstoy

Chapter 4:

MINDFUL EVENING

When you practice mindfulness in the evening, you can let go of your day, leave its tasks behind you, relax fully into the evening and prepare yourself for a good night sleep of rejuvenation. Everything that happened throughout the day is over, it is in the past, and everything that you will need to address tomorrow is in the future and there is no need to worry about that either.

However you like to spend your evening and whatever your evening activities are, always return to the present moment and observe.

There are some simple ways that can help you be mindful in the evening. Of course, you can practice any of the mentioned activities at any time, but in the evening, they can help you let go of your day with more ease. Commit to this practice for a week or two and see how you feel about it and what changes it brings to your life.

Mindful walking

After a long day of sitting in the office, a mindful walk could be just the thing that your body needs. If your job is more physical, you will still benefit from this but maybe you will find other practices more appealing in the evening. However, whatever your job is, a mindful walk, preferably in nature, will help you leave your job behind you for that day and just be here and now, and reconnect with yourself.

If possible, wear something comfortable. If you can, go for a walk in nature, somewhere away from the traffic because this is a great way to connect more with nature. It also makes your walk a more enjoyable experience.

Start your walk at your normal pace, there is no need to rush anywhere. There is also no need for a specific destination as the walk itself is the purpose. Become aware of your body, of your feet touching the ground, of the sounds and smells that surround you, sensations that you feel on your skin, everything that you see around you. Notice your posture, your movements, your breathing. Observe the present moment and everything that is in it.

When you notice that you drifted away into your mind, observe your thoughts, emotions, and moods without any judgment and without any extra story. Just observe what is happening and gently focus your attention back into your physical body, back to the walking.

If it helps, you can add some words to your breathing, just like in meditation, to replace your mental activity. Maybe “Inhale” and “Exhale” or just a mantra like “Omm” or “Thank you”.

Pay attention to your environment; notice what is there. If you are in nature, connect with it, let it heal you, immerse yourself in that pure reviving energy.

Walk for however long it feels comfortable for you, 5, 10, 20, 30 minutes or more if you like.

The benefits of mindful walking are similar to meditation, but walking - physical movement - can have additional benefits to your health and well-being such as relieving arthritis, improving digestion, increasing stamina and strength, reducing the risk of heart disease, stroke, diabetes, preventing dementia, boosting vitamin D, increasing oxygen supply, filling you with energy and boosting your mood.

Mindful walking is a practice - something you will get better at over time. At first, your mind could be overactive and you maybe notice that your autopilot took over and you came home without even realizing it. That is okay, in time, your mind will become quieter.

Whenever you notice that your mind drifted away, just come back to yourself, come back to the here and now, come back to your body. Soon you will notice this more often and more quickly.

The point is to just come back from wherever you went and whenever you realize it. Just come back again and again. The best thing is that you can practice mindful walking every time you walk.

~

Walking is a simple yet incredibly powerful way that can bring you fully in the present moment and in your body. This is an active practice and an active form of meditation and a great way to integrate mindfulness into your everyday life.

“In every walk with nature, one receives far more than he seeks.”

~ John Muir

Gratitude

The practice of gratitude can bring you into the present moment because you are focusing on what is already here in your life. To be grateful means to focus on the blessings you have in the present moment, no matter how small or big they are. It means becoming fully aware of your life and not taking anything for granted.

Gratitude practice can slowly change your mindset and perspective on life and how you perceive life's situations by shifting your focus.

People who practice gratitude experience more positive emotions, express more compassion and kindness, are more satisfied with life, sleep better and even have stronger immune systems.

Before sleep, go through your day and find 1 or 3 or 5 things you are grateful for. On some days, you will have more to write and on some

days, you will have less, and that is perfectly okay. When you actively start looking for things you are grateful for on an everyday basis, more and more will appear.

You can use some pretty notebook or your computer or phone to keep a gratitude journal. Or try Gratitude Journal from Everyday Seekers. Maybe you will take some notes during the day that you will enter in your journal when you notice something you are grateful for. Maybe you will reflect upon your day in the evening and write them all then. Find what works for you. If journaling is not your thing, try to find other ways to express your gratitude.

Things to be grateful for can be big, like the birth of your child, but they can also be, and usually will be, small, like having a meaningful conversation with a friend, eating a delicious lunch or watching a breathtaking sunset. Try to really feel what you write.

Be creative with this if you like. There is no rule that you only need to write lists. Try adding some photographs, tickets, pressed flowers, turn your diary into a scrapbook at times, draw something, add whatever is meaningful for you and represent something you are grateful for.

To help you maintain the practice of gratitude, try to notice different things every day, be as specific as possible so you do not repeat the same phrase over and over again, even if you are grateful for the same thing every day. Avoid making superficial lists. For example, if you are writing about your family try to write about specific situations from that day. If keeping a journal becomes just another chore in your day, try writing it every other day or twice per week - see what works best for you.

When you are writing about what you are grateful for, observe your body, your thoughts, and emotions. Observe how you feel when you think and write about these moments. Observe the pen leaving its trail on the paper, or letters that are appearing on the screen, observe your hands and fingers as you write. Be mindful about the whole process.

~

Even when life is hard, even when it feels unbearable, the practice of gratitude can help you to see that there is always beauty present, that there are always opportunities that are available, and that there is joy in the simple moments. It can help you to see that everything does not need to be perfect for you to be happy, that you can be happy in the little now moments because there will not be an “everything is perfect” moment anyway.

If you go through your day looking for something to be grateful for, something will always show up. Always.

“It's a funny thing about life, once you begin to take note of the things you are grateful for, you begin to lose sight of the things that you lack.”

~ Germany Kent

Body scanning

Body scanning is a conscious awareness of physical appearance, sensations, and movement in the body. It means observing your body, becoming aware of its different regions and just feeling the sensations in them, without any judgment or story. Like with any mindfulness practice, the point is to just notice, to be in the now with acceptance and openness.

You can do this lying in your bed just before you go to sleep. In fact, you will probably fall asleep with ease with this practice. If you fall asleep during your body scan, that is also okay.

Start by feeling the sensations of your body on the bed, feel your back touching the mattress, feel the warmth of your body, feel the clothes on your skin. Observe how it feels to be lying on the bed.

Bring your attention to your breathing. Notice every breath, every time you inhale and exhale. Observe the rhythm of your breathing, your lungs expanding and contracting, your abdomen moving, and your breath flowing through your body.

Bring your awareness to the top of your head. Notice any sensations or the absence of them. Observe how it feels. Notice how the sensations are changing. If any thoughts appear, do not judge them but notice them and let them go. Return to your body and continue with your scan.

Focus on your face, feel the muscles, feel your jaw, is there any tension there? Are they relaxed? Just observe without any need to change anything. What sensations are you feeling? What color are they, what shape? If you like, you can breathe in every part of the body you observe. Also, try to wide and narrow your focus. Feel a particular part of your body such as your ear, or expand your focus to your whole head.

Continue to move down the body. Come back to attention each time you notice that your mind has drifted into thinking. Become aware of your thoughts and let them go, let them flow through you without attaching to them, without engaging with them. Be kind and patient with yourself.

If you notice any pain or discomfort, just observe it as neutrally as you can. When you do not avoid these sensations, when you lean into them and let yourself feel them without any additional thoughts and story, you will reduce their power over you. By removing any thoughts attached to these sensations, you are removing a big part of your pain or discomfort. Sometimes thoughts about the pain that you keep repeating to yourself are more painful than the feeling itself.

When you finish your scan, bring your attention back to the whole body and its sensations. Notice your breathing again, the feeling of

the clothes on your skin, texture of the sheets. Stay there for several moments and observe.

This can be a 3, 5 or 10-minute scan, or longer if you feel like it. See what works for you.

You can also listen to a guided body scan if you like. You can find them free on YouTube. Try several versions and see what feels best for you.

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With this practice, you will get in touch with your body, release tension and stress from your day and return to the present moment. By doing this practice regularly, you will notice that you are living from your body more and more. Your mind will become quieter with time.

You will also be more connected with your body's signals and sensations and will be able to detect with greater ease what it needs for its optimal health. You will develop more appreciation and gratitude towards your body. This can help you to release unhealthy body image, judgment, and self-criticism.

Through the body scanning practice, you can learn to connect with your body on a much deeper level and love and respect your body more.

“The body always leads us home... if we can simply learn to trust sensation and stay with it long enough for it to reveal appropriate action, movement, insight, or feeling.”

~ Pat Ogden

CONCLUSION

Thank you for reading “*Mindfulness for everyday people*”.

I hope this book was able to provide you some inspiration, motivation, and a new perspective about everyday mindfulness.

The next step is to implement this in your life and continue to strive for authenticity and your highest potentials. Be your best self and live your best life.

Maybe you will just want to try one or two practices mentioned in this book or maybe you will want to create your own morning or evening routine and ritual.

Go for it! Include mindfulness in your everyday life in a way that resonates and works best for you, your body, mind, and spirit.

I wish you all the best on your journey.

Anna

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

I am a life coach, writer, producer, entrepreneur, designer, dreamer, seeker, life passionista, and a much, much more.

But first of all, I am just a regular everyday person and I have spent a lot of years of my life seeking the answers on how to be my best self and live my best life – a mindful life. I am trying to improve, grow, and learn. That is something that never ends. I am trying to live authentically every day and I am striving to be the best version of myself and live up to my potentials.

I have read many books and taken many courses, programs and workshops to find those answers, but most importantly, I lived through a lot of experiences that made me who I am today and helped me grow and become my best self. I struggled with depression, an eating disorder, health problems, pain from losing my father at the age of 12, a challenging and painful childhood, and finding my purpose and meaning.

I overcame a lot of pain, struggles, obstacles, and setbacks and I can tell you from experience that it can be done. You can come to the other side stronger, wiser, better, and more complete as a person. You can find yourself and your truth through life's hard situations and moments. You can have mindfulness in everyday life.

I'm in love with life and I think it's magical. I'm a big kid and a dreamer. I do what I love, I love what I do, and I don't see it as work.

I love and enjoy reading (anything and everything, from spiritual literature, literary classics, and expert books to SF and romance novels), music (I perceive music very emotionally so I listen to whatever moves me), long walks in the woods, long conversations with loved ones (if they are combined with long walks then you can't shush me), laughing (especially with loved ones during long conversations combined with long walks), dancing (to 50's, 60's, 70's, 80's rock music), good tea (my favorites are Yogi teas, all tastes and types), rain (especially walking in the rain, but it's not bad under a blanket either), snow and snowflakes (and again, there are those walks but also a blanket, especially with a good book or good music and a cup of tea)... and the list goes on.

Connect with me at www.everyday-seekers.com.