

Why is everyone talking about mindfulness?

Takeaways

- Mindfulness increases our ability to focus in the moment.
- The benefits of mindfulness include behavioral (mental health) and physical health.
- You can increase the time you spend in mindfulness by practicing different focusing techniques (saif.com/s1063).

It seems these days everywhere you go, there's talk about mindfulness. Latest fad or something life-changing? Fad or not, it can definitely change your life.

Mindfulness is the practice of being present in the moment. When you're mindful, you're not thinking about the past or the future, not planning something, or processing what has happened. Being mindful means your thoughts are right here, right now, thinking about this very moment.

Studies estimate that we are in the moment less than half the time. But there are positive changes that can come from being mindful, such as:

- Increased resilience
- More life satisfaction and meaning
- Reduction in unconscious biases and stereotypes
- Better response to stressful and uncertain situations
- Increased ability to focus
- Prevent inattentive eating

- Improved health effects, including lower blood pressure and reduced stress
- Better decisions and fewer injuries at work

Here are some ways to increase mindfulness:

- Meditation
- Martial arts
- Breathing exercises
- Scanning your body or your brain to see how you are feeling
- Taking the time to think about or work on just one task
- Slowing down your brain

With practice, you can increase your ability to stay in the moment and reap the many benefits of mindfulness.



Take action (Complete one or more activities as a team)

- GROUP DISCUSSION:** After talking about the benefits of mindfulness, ask others to share what they do to stay in the moment.
- GROUP ACTIVITY:** Have someone lead a breathing exercise in your group. A good one is to have everyone focus on their breathing for one minute. Let them know that when their mind wanders (and it will) to just bring it back to thinking about breathing and not to be hard on themselves for getting distracted. After the minute, ask the group to share their experience.
- PRACTICE:** Find a mindful activity that feels right for you. Commit to practicing it daily for 10 days. At the end of that time, see if you feel a bit more present in your daily life.

