

6.2 Everyday Mindfulness

Extend your awareness practice beyond the meditation cushion.

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Meditation doesn't have to be done sitting still with your eyes closed in a silent room. The goal of practicing is to be more aware in your daily life. To this end, bringing a meditative mindset to a variety of situations can be helpful. Sometimes, you can add more mindful minutes to your day by splicing meditation into activities you are already doing, like walking, eating, or even doing the dishes.

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- When meditating, you can also enjoy your usual activities, such as walking, dancing, and eating, at the same time.
- An open, nonjudgemental state can enrich your daily experience.
- Practicing meditation in a range of contexts sharpens your ability to remain mindful in more challenging scenarios.

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- Practicing in stimulus-rich environments can be more distracting than sitting peacefully in a quiet room.
- Meditating during an activity can feel like an extra mental effort, which you might not always be up for.

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An easy first step could be to explore meditating in your usual seated position but keep your eyes open instead of closing them. This technique exposes you to the outside world while still in a meditative context and lets you experiment with keeping your focus in the face of external stimuli. You can also try meditating in a noisy location, such as on a bench on the street. Whatever the scenario, the practice remains the same: notice whatever is happening inside or outside your body and return your attention to your chosen object of meditation, such as your breath or sensations in your body.

If you enjoy going for walks, try walking meditation. You can set a timer or just walk a predetermined route. Paying attention to your pattern of footsteps can be a useful anchor here. To start with, choosing a less-traveled path, perhaps in nature, can be easier than walking busy city streets. Another thing you can do is pick a meal and eat it quietly, without scrolling through your phone. Just focus on immersing yourself in the tastes, smells, and textures of the food. This idea can also make for an interesting mindful date night.

Another option is dancing meditation. There are many different types: Osho's Dynamic Meditation is a five-step structured progression, with different energies and guidance for each step. There are also unstructured mindful dancing events where you can move as you wish. You can even play a few songs in the privacy of your home and shake your body while keeping your awareness engaged.

You can do all these activities silently or while listening to guided meditations—whichever you prefer. In addition to these types of mindful activities, you might want to try turning transitions from one activity to the next into an opportunity for a few mindful moments. Some apps, such as Waking Up, include a “moments” feature designed to help you catch such transitions. You can also program your phone or watch to vibrate at random intervals as a reminder to be aware.

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1. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dynamic_meditation.
 2. <https://wakingup.com/>.
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