

MINDFUL MOMENTS

MAY: MINDFUL MOVEMENT

Introduction

Mindfulness is a technique which you can learn to help you ditch the distractions and be present within the current moment, in your mind, body and surroundings. It can be used in many different situations to help you to become more self-aware, feel calmer and less stressed, more able to cope with difficult thoughts and be kinder towards yourself.

There are different ways we can use mindfulness, but this month we're thinking about **mindful movement**.



How does mindful movement impact me and my work?

Mindfulness can help to manage depression, anxiety and feelings of stress...

Mindful movement is all about noticing the feeling of your body moving. If you can get outside for your movement, you might notice the breeze on your skin, your feet against different textures of the ground and the different smells that are around you. This can improve mental health and not only benefit you in your working life, but it can also help you day to day.

Getting moving outside can have lots of positive effects, including:

- Improved mood
- Reduced feelings of stress or anger
- Improved physical health
- Improved confidence
- Better self-esteem

If you can't get outside, don't worry! Why not try walking around the building while you take a phone call, taking the stairs instead of the lift or standing at your desk?

How can I help myself?

Spending time in green spaces has a beneficial effect on mental health.

Mindful movement can be anything from getting outside for a walk, run or jog, to stretching before bed, gardening or playing a team sport. Any kind of movement can have positive effects but getting outside in nature can be even more beneficial.

Can you block out some time in your calendar to pop out for a walk, grab your lunch and sit outside with a colleague or walk to work in the morning?

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If you're looking to be more mindful or move more, there are resources to help:

- Be Mindful – www.bemindful.co.uk Information and an online mindfulness course.
- National Trust – www.nationaltrust.org.uk Lists walks and open gardens, parks and estates that you can visit.
- UK Mindfulness Network – www.ukmindfulnessnetwork.co.uk Provides a search tool to find registered mindfulness teachers in your local area.

Tips to take a mindful moment in nature

Go to a local park, woodland, beach, nature reserve or just your garden. Try to notice your surroundings and how your body feels.

1. **Find a green space**, stop for a moment and take a deep breath.
2. **Start exploring slowly**. Think about each movement you make. If you're walking, notice which part of your foot touches the ground first and feel the transfer of weight as you walk.
3. **Notice the ground under your feet**. Look at the colours and think about the textures you can feel.
4. **Think about the rest of your body**. Notice if the air feels hot or cold on your skin.
5. **Listen to the sounds around you**. Focus on individual noises like birdsong or the wind rustling through the leaves.
6. **Think about how you feel** and how much you appreciate nature.