

Chapter 1

Beginning Your Mindfulness Journey

In This Chapter

- ▶ Grasping the concept of mindfulness
 - ▶ Uncovering ways to practise mindfulness
 - ▶ Exploring the journey of mindful living
-

No matter how or why you decided to look into mindfulness, we believe that you've made a smart move. Everyone can benefit from the increased awareness and self-knowledge that practising mindfulness can bring.

So what do we mean by that phrase? *Practising mindfulness* means paying attention regularly and intentionally to your present-moment experience with mindful attitudes. Four of the most important attitudes of mindfulness are compassion, curiosity, acceptance and openness for yourself, other people and the surrounding world. You deepen and develop your mindfulness by practising mindfulness exercises and meditations and by living mindfully on a day-to-day basis.

Scientific studies confirm that practising mindfulness regularly allows you to begin to change the way you experience life. As a result your brain is less stressed, focuses better and reacts automatically less, becomes more resilient to future challenges and regulates your emotions more effectively. Your body also becomes better at fighting disease and your tension eases. Most likely your relationships improve and you're more engaged at work. You may well experience greater levels of happiness and peace in your life by living with mindfulness.

In this chapter we introduce you to the concept and practice of mindfulness and guide you gently into beginning your mindfulness journey.

Understanding Mindfulness

In some ways, mindfulness is simple. You pay attention to whatever's going on right now with the right attitude, whether it's an internal or external experience. But mindfulness is also much more subtle. The challenge is remembering to be mindful, rather than reacting automatically, and letting go of your self-criticism and doubt as you begin to practise.

The triangle in Figure 1-1 summarises the essence of mindfulness as proposed by Dr Shauna Shapiro and colleagues, and published in the *Journal of Clinical Psychology*.

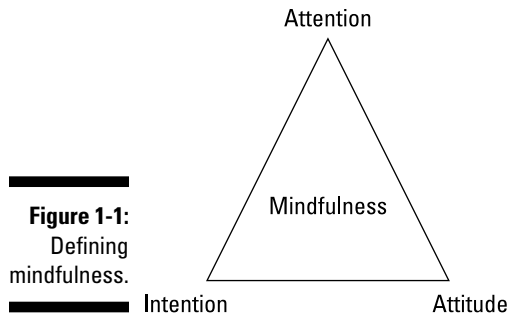


Figure 1-1:
Defining
mindfulness.

Locating the origins of mindfulness

Mindfulness isn't a new concept, although it's rapidly gaining popularity in the West, especially in the field of psychology. Mindfulness is now part of both traditional psychology, which aims to help alleviate conditions such as depression or anxiety, and modern positive psychology, which advocates scientifically sound ways to raise levels of long-term wellbeing and satisfaction (Chapter 10 discusses how mindfulness can boost your happiness).

Many consider mindfulness to have its origins Buddhism, but even before the Buddha's birth some 2,500 years ago, Hindus practised a range of meditations, some of which involved mindfulness.



Mindfulness isn't inherently Eastern, just as electricity isn't inherently Western. Mindfulness is a quality of presence that's innate in all human beings. Awareness is a natural and beautiful quality of being human that can't be limited to one particular tradition or country.



Noticing what your judgements of the word *mindfulness* are before you delve into the practice more deeply is interesting. For the next minute, write down in Worksheet 1-1 all the words that pop into your head when you think of the word *mindfulness*. Don't think about the process. Time yourself for a minute and just write down what occurs to you.

Worksheet 1-1

What Mindfulness Means to Me

Mindfulness is for all

We aren't religious in the traditional sense, and Shamash, who teaches mindfulness, offers trainings in a completely secular way. Mindfulness certainly requires no belief and has no single teacher, guru or organisation. You can discover it from many teachers or just by picking up a book on the subject (oh, you have!). This is partly why we were attracted to

the approach. The other main reason why we're so passionate about mindfulness is that it's scientifically based. Just as you expect your doctor to prescribe you medication that's been proven to work, so you should develop your mental health and wellbeing with proven techniques such as mindfulness.

The development of mindfulness in the West

One of the key people who popularised mindfulness in the West is Professor Jon Kabat-Zinn, together with some colleagues working at the University of Massachusetts Medical School. In 1979 he created an innovative eight-week course that eventually became known as Mindfulness-based Stress Reduction (MBSR). He tested the programme on chronic pain patients and found that not only their pain went down, but also their feelings of stress, anxiety and depression. Hundreds of research studies have been carried out on that eight-week course,

showing positive outcomes for many physical and mental-health conditions. You can find out more about the eight-week course in Chapters 7 and 8.

In the years that followed, more and more medical institutions began researching mindfulness. Mindfulness is now researched in top university departments all over the world. For example, The University of Oxford in the UK has a whole centre dedicated to researching the health benefits of mindfulness for depression, anxiety, childbirth, parenting and more.

Afterwards, consider the words you're written. Are they positive, negative or neither? Some of them may be your unconscious judgements of mindfulness, and you may find that being aware of this is useful. Your judgements may be based on what someone else has told you or something you've read in a magazine, book or seen on television. After you've discovered your judgements, try to consciously set them aside and consider mindfulness afresh. Suspend your opinions and beliefs until you've learnt and practised mindfulness yourself for some time.



If you didn't get many words coming to mind, perhaps try drawing a picture or image instead. You may well be a more visual person.

Mulling over what mindfulness means

In this section, we take a look at each concept that makes up the following definition of mindfulness: *Intentionally paying attention to your present moment experiences with compassion, curiosity, acceptance and openness.*

- ✓ **Intention:** The process of being mindful requires an intention. Your intention is your reason to practise – this may be to reduce your stress, to manage your emotions or develop wisdom. Being clear about what you hope to get from mindfulness in the long term shapes the quality of your mindfulness experience. For example, if you go to your local supermarket with a clear intention to get milk, bread and eggs, you'll probably achieve it. But if you turn up not really sure what you're after, you may end up buying anything on special offer, even if you don't need it.
- ✓ **Paying attention:** Attention can be narrow or wide. Traditionally mindfulness is about developing a wide, open awareness, but most mindfulness exercises begin with a narrow, focused attention on something – for example, focusing your attention on your breath or a part of your body. Most meditations move on to encompass a wide, open attention too.
- ✓ **Present moment:** The here and now – whatever is happening in this moment. If you're paying attention to whatever is happening now, and you're aware that you're paying attention, you're in the now. Much of the time, your mind is focused on events of the past or concerns about the future. Mindfulness values experiences in the present moment, which ironically leads to a better future! Ultimately, the only moment that exists is the present moment – everything else just exists in your own mind.



Your present moment experiences can be internal (such as thoughts or emotions) or external (such as whatever you perceive through your senses).



- ✔ **Compassion:** Kindness to yourself is the key here. When practising mindfulness, you're invited to be nice to yourself. Whenever you notice yourself judging yourself in a harsh way, mindfulness encourages you to be aware of this process and let the judgement go.

You probably have an inner critic within your mind that's often criticising you or others. Most people do. Mindfulness is about noticing this aspect of yourself and stepping back from it, rather than feeding or encouraging more criticism.

In the ancient Indian Pali language, the words for *mind* and *heart* are the same. And the Chinese character for *mindfulness* is a combination of two characters. One part means *now* and the other means *mind* or *heart*. So, when you hear the word *mindfulness* you can also consider it to mean *heartfulness*.

- ✔ **Curiosity:** Mindfulness is quite natural for children because they're naturally inquisitive and constantly asking 'why?'. Mindfulness is about rekindling your inner curiosity. If you're more curious about the world around you, you're immediately more mindful instead of behaving habitually and reacting to situations automatically. Even children can benefit from mindfulness though, as we explain in Chapter 14.

This dimension of curiosity is especially helpful when dealing with difficult thoughts and emotions. Instead of automatically trying to fight or run away from unhelpful thoughts or emotions, mindfulness encourages you to become curious about them. This in turn creates a different mind state and is more likely to allow your difficult inner experience to pass away.

- ✔ **Acceptance:** One of the most important and poorly understood attitudes in mindfulness. In fact, mindfulness is sometimes referred to as an acceptance-based therapy because this attitude is so important. Acceptance for some people has negative connotations of passivity, giving up or allowing someone to do wrong without taking action – acting like a doormat. But this isn't at all what acceptance means in mindfulness.

Acceptance is an active process of acknowledging your present-moment experience and is particularly important when dealing with emotions. This example may help. Imagine that you're travelling from London to Manchester. Before you can get to Manchester, you need to accept that you're in London. That makes sense. If you don't accept that you're in London, you're never going to get to Manchester. You need to begin where you are. In the same way, if you're feeling sad, you need to accept it. Pretending, denying, fighting or running from your feeling doesn't help – in fact, you're inadvertently giving the feeling more attention and so are more likely to strengthen it.

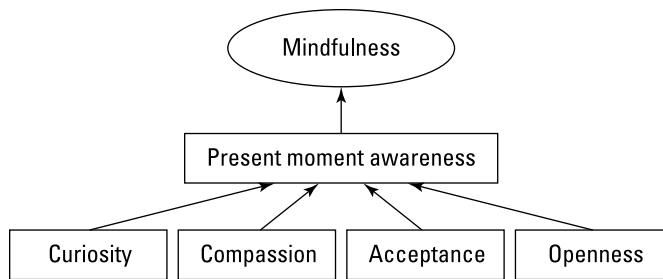


- ✔ **Openness:** Mindfulness encourages you to open up to your inner and outer experiences, as best you can. By *openness*, we also mean a sense of stepping back from your experiences, but not avoiding or running away from them. This stepping back is tremendously helpful when you're having relentless thoughts or difficult emotions. Mindfulness enables you to watch the thoughts arising and passing away without the need to cling or attach to them. You don't need to believe everything you think. A sense of detached openness also enables you to watch emotions come and go from a safe distance instead of being overwhelmed by your feelings. In this way, instead of suppressing emotions you deal with them.

For example, say you're nervous about an upcoming exam. You can watch your thoughts, such as 'I hate exams' or 'What if I fail?', as just thoughts and let them go. You can also be aware of the feeling of anxiety in your stomach with a sense of distance or perspective. You may then centre yourself by taking a few deep, slow breaths, feeling the sensation of your breath in your body. You then feel more effectively prepared to study for your exam.

Figure 1-2 summarises the four mindful attitudes. (We discuss maintaining healthy attitudes in Chapter 3.)

Figure 1-2:
Summarising
the key
mindful
attitudes.



Exploring Types of Mindfulness Meditation



Mindfulness, also called wise attention, helps us see what we're adding to our experiences, not only during meditation sessions but also elsewhere.

— Sharon Salzberg

One of the areas of common confusion is the difference between mindfulness and meditation. To clarify:



- ✓ **Mindfulness** is the act of being consciously aware with mindful attitudes. You can practise mindfulness over any length of time, for the duration of a single breath or for your whole life. You can practise it while waiting in a queue, talking to your partner or walking down the street.
- ✓ **Mindfulness meditation** is an activity where you make time deliberately and consciously for cultivating mindfulness (flip to Chapter 5 for some formal mindfulness meditations).

Clinically proven courses usually contain certain common mindfulness meditations such as:

- ✓ **Body scan meditation:** Often done lying down, but you can use any posture you like. This meditation involves becoming aware of your bodily sensations in a mindful way, step by step. You also begin to discover how easily your attention wanders off to other thoughts and how to be kind to yourself rather than self-critical when this happens. Check out Chapter 5 for more.
- ✓ **Movement meditation:** Usually yoga, t'ai chi, qi gong or another physical mind-body exercise (see Chapter 6). This type of meditation involves focusing on your bodily sensations, breathing and mindfully watching and perhaps letting go of whatever thoughts and emotions arise as you practise. Slow walking meditation is another possibility that's sometimes used. For how mindfulness can help with physical pain and illness, turn to Chapter 13.
- ✓ **Breathing space meditation:** A short, roughly three-minute, meditation that we describe in Chapter 6. We recommend that you do this practice a few times a day and whenever you experience a highly stressful situation or difficult emotion. The idea is to create a mindful awareness of your experience instead of avoiding it. This approach has been shown scientifically to be much more effective than avoidance. For more mindfulness approaches to stress and anxiety, check out Chapters 11 and 12 respectively.
- ✓ **Expanding awareness meditation:** Usually called sitting meditation, but it can be practised in any position. The meditation involves focusing, often in this order, on your breath, body, sounds, thoughts and feelings, and finally developing an open awareness where you're choicelessly aware of whatever is most predominant in your consciousness (see Chapter 5).

You can break down the expanding awareness meditation into separate meditations, each powerful and transformative in themselves:

- **Mindfulness of breath meditation:** Focusing your attention on the feeling of your in-breath and out-breath. Each time your mind wanders, bring your attention back non-judgementally.
- **Mindfulness of body meditation:** Feeling the physical sensation in your body from moment to moment. You can also practise this together with the awareness of breathing.
- **Mindfulness of sounds meditation:** Being aware of sounds as they arise and pass away. If no ambient sounds exist, you can simply listen to the silence and notice what effect doing so has for you.
- **Mindfulness of thoughts meditation:** Being aware of your thoughts arising in your mind and passing away and having a sense of distance between yourself and your thoughts. You allow the thoughts to come and go as they please, without judging or attaching to them.
- **Mindfulness of feelings meditation:** Noticing whatever feelings arise for you. In particular, you notice where you feel the emotion in your body and bring a quality of acceptance and curiosity to your emotions.
- **Open awareness meditation:** Sometimes called choiceless awareness, because you become aware of whatever's most predominant in your awareness without choosing. You may be aware of any of the above meditation experiences as well.

Another group of mindfulness meditations are more like visualisations. These meditations slightly expand the definition of mindfulness, which usually involves paying attention to present-moment experiences. However, many people are quite visual and find the meditations valuable. The two main visual meditations included in the audio of this book are:

- ✓ **Mountain meditation:** This meditation helps you to cultivate stability and groundedness and feel more centred. For details, flip to Chapter 9 and listen to Track 4 on the accompanying audio.
- ✓ **Lake meditation:** This meditation is about exploring the beauty of accepting and allowing experiences to be just as they are. Check out Chapter 3 and listen to Track 5 for more.



If you've already tried some form of meditation in the past, use Worksheet 1-2 to record your experiences and what you discovered.

Worksheet 1-2 Recording My Past Experiences of Meditation	
<i>Type of Meditation</i>	<i>What Did I Think of the Meditation? How Was My Experience of It?</i>

Reflecting on any past meditation experience allows you to see what type of meditations seem to work well for you. If you've never practised meditation, don't worry. You're in a good position because you're starting with a blank slate.

Setting Off on a Mindful Journey



In the end, just three things matter: how well we have lived, how well we have loved, how well we have learned to let go.

— Jack Kornfield

Going on a holiday is similar to the journey into mindful living. In this section, imagine that you're going on a trip and reflect on how the journey is like the inner journey of mindfulness.

Taking the first steps: Choosing your learning method

The journey of a thousand miles begins with a cunning plan . . . and then a single step.

Like deciding to set out on a mindfulness journey, the start of an excursion is tremendously exciting! You're going on an adventure and aren't sure what you'll experience. So you need to have at least a rough idea of where you're going. And when you're planning your journey, you need to know what you hope to get from the trip. Here are the kind of questions you may consider:

- ✔ Are you interested in connecting with nature or finding adrenalin-rush activities?
- ✔ Will you have lots of free time or are you on a tight schedule?
- ✔ What's your budget?
- ✔ Will you be sleeping in a tent, a campervan or checking into a motel or 5-star luxury accommodation?
- ✔ What type of traveller are you? Do you like to go with the flow or prefer to have every day pre-planned?

For me (Shamash), I prefer planning trips by speaking to someone, and I don't like to pre-plan too much. So I just turn up to a tourist office when I arrive and have a nice chat with the representative and plan that way. You may prefer to read books. Others like asking all their friends or discussing the trip online. You can plan a trip in loads of different ways.

Discovering and integrating mindfulness into your life is similar. The first stage in the mindfulness journey is to find out about mindfulness. Do you prefer to learn from just reading a book such as this one or to complement the experience with further support? If so, you may consider:

- ✔ An online course.
- ✔ A workshop.
- ✔ A course in person with a teacher.
- ✔ One-to-one coaching with an expert, on the phone or in-person.

Your choice depends on what you've preferred in the past, your budget, how much time you have and so on. You may just decide to read this book and use the audio to begin with – that's a perfectly good way to start.



Go with whichever option you prefer and let the process unfold naturally. Just as planning a trip isn't the trip itself, so planning to practise mindfulness isn't mindfulness! Until you have a go and see what effect the mindfulness has, you haven't started. You're close if you're planning, but not quite there yet.



Mindfulness isn't something new for you to learn; it's the rediscovery of a world you used to live in as a child, with the added wisdom of experience. Mindfulness is an innate quality in every human being (check out Chapter 4), and you experience mindfulness from time to time in your daily life. Each time you really see a sunset, marvel at the beauty of your baby, take a deep conscious breath or listen to piece of music, you're being mindful.



Use Worksheet 1-3 to evaluate your experience of past learning methods. This exercise can help you to decide what would be the best method for you to learn mindfulness.

Worksheet 1-3		
Deciding How I Want to Learn		
Method of Learning	Have I Tried this Learning Method Before? If so, for Learning What?	How Effective was the Learning Method for Me?
Online		
Weekly group course		
Half-day workshop		
Weekend workshop		
One-to-one coaching		
Audiobook		
Anything else		

Treading the path: Committing to practise mindfulness regularly



Life is what happens to you while you're busy making other plans.

— John Lennon

After you plan your trip, you need to go! You don't want to be an all-talk but no-action kind of person. So, pack your bag and go. As you're travelling you may stop in some unexpected places, just out of curiosity. Yesterday I (Shamash) was driving on a small road and noticed a beautiful turquoise lake. I stopped my car and asked a coffee-shop

owner if she could recommend a walk. She did. I found myself walking up to an observatory at the top of local peak and seeing the lake from high above, with ice-capped mountains in the distance.

You need to practise mindfulness regularly. If possible you need to practise the mindfulness meditations every day, or at least make an effort to be mindful in your daily activities (as we discuss in Chapter 6) as best you can. Your reward is a brain that's more focused, creative, productive, emotionally resilient and peaceful. Not bad, eh? (To read about all the benefits that mindfulness can bring, check out Chapter 2.)

One of the challenges that most people have is remembering to be mindful. Drifting back into your usual habits on autopilot is just so easy. Therefore you need to think of ways to support yourself to keep going. For more help on your motivation, flip to Chapters 2 and 16.



Which of the approaches in Worksheet 1-4 do you think is going to help you stick to practising mindfulness regularly? You know yourself better than anyone else, so trust your intuition and see what answers you come up with.

Worksheet 1-4		Maintaining My Motivation	
<i>Method or Approach</i>	<i>How I Can Use this Method to Help Practise Mindfulness Regularly</i>		
<p>Learning with a friend, putting mindfulness exercises in your diary, joining a class, reading more books on the subject.</p>			



Overcoming difficulties along the way

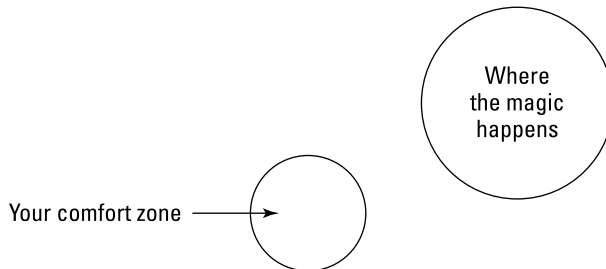
'I have not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work.'

— Thomas Edison

To enjoy an excursion, you need to let go of your expectations and instead go with the flow. If you're obsessed with planning and something goes wrong, you may get upset rather than enjoy the adventure. The same is true for the journey into mindfulness. You need to practise the mindful exercises as best you can and just see what happens. Letting go of your goals, desires or specific outcomes makes the process work far more effectively. You may feel calm and peaceful, or you may release more emotion and feel a bit drained. Whatever happens, happens. That's the attitude you want to cultivate to keep your journey running smoothly.

Journeys are almost guaranteed to have difficulties. Without difficulty, you're probably too far inside your comfort zone. Sometimes you need to move out of that zone to experience something radically exciting and different. Figure 1-3 contains a great picture we saw online the other day.

Figure 1-3:
The benefits
of leaving
your com-
fort zone.



You need to take a chance sometimes and do things that feel slightly uncomfortable. Practising mindfulness can itself be outside your comfort zone. You may think that when you practise something scary could happen: difficult emotions might come up and overwhelm you, or thoughts that you've been suppressing may suddenly arise. Chapter 9 covers dealing with difficulties in your practice.



Meditation has been shown to be a very safe process and many people feel much better and happier through mindfulness practice. Consider it as a bit like flying in a plane: it may seem risky, but in fact travelling in a car is far more dangerous. Mindfulness is a very safe way to travel.

Staying flexible

Here's an example from a recent trip. I (Shamash) stopped at one scenic point and admired the view. As I was returning to my car, I spotted a few brown streaks on my bonnet. Just out of pure curiosity, I decided to look at the engine. To my astonishment, the oil cap had come off and engine oil had spilt all over the engine. If you're not mechanically minded, basically this isn't good. Fortunately I was in a mindful state and saw the whole thing as quite an adventure. I was grateful I'd

spotted the problem before it got worse, and I managed to get myself to the nearest garage and have the problem fixed.

Journeys are only frustrating if you plan for an outcome and fixate on that desire. If I'd planned exactly what I was going to see and do that afternoon, I may have been quite upset and reacted negatively.

Your own thoughts may well be the biggest barrier to your mindful journey. ‘I can’t meditate. My mind never shuts up!’ is an excuse we hear again and again. But mindfulness isn’t about shutting your mind up; it’s about becoming aware of your thoughts in a different way.

Nonetheless, when planning an excursion, expecting the worst and making sensible provisions for it is a good idea. You might have a first-aid kit and medical insurance in case you get ill. You can take a similar approach in anticipating difficulties in your mindful journey ahead.



Use Worksheet 1-5 to spell out what obstacles you expect to encounter when practising mindfulness and how you can handle them.

Worksheet 1-5 Problems I Expect and Their Solutions	
<i>Difficulties I Expect with Practising Mindfulness</i>	<i>How I’m Going to Manage Them</i>
Examples: Lack of time, discipline, not sure what to do, lack of motivation, too excited about the process.	Examples: Use my mindfulness diary, learn with a friend, do a course after reading the book, reward myself after a month of practice, try and practise before I preach about the benefits to others.



Accepting that the journey is the destination

It’s good to have an end in mind but in the end what counts is how you travel.
— Orna Ross

Mindfulness is all about the journey rather than the destination. In fact, getting caught up in fixed ideas of what you have to achieve almost certainly makes them harder to meet. See a personal experience in the nearby sidebar ‘Seeking perpetual bliss: Simple!’.

Seeking perpetual bliss: Simple!

When I (Shamash) first started practising mindfulness, I was told that as long as I practised the process diligently, it would lead to a state of enlightenment without any worries or concerns – the end of suffering. I'd live in a state of perpetual bliss! This idea appealed to me greatly at that time. I practised for hours daily, diligently hoping to reach a state of enlightenment as soon as possible. 'If you're not enlightened in this life, don't worry, you'll reach the

state in your next life,' my teachers reassured me. I had lots of blissful experiences but none ever lasted.

I began to understand and really benefit from my mindfulness practice only after I started to let go of my attachment to achieving perpetual bliss, or any other fixed, final state like perfect relationships, zero stress or no more anxiety.



Here are a few encouraging insights that we've discovered from years of mindfulness practice:

- ✔ **Seeking a particular, permanent state of mind, such as freedom from all suffering, or anything like that, is a form of 'spiritual ego'.** Just as someone obsessed with becoming a millionaire focuses on gaining riches and can miss out on living a fun, balanced life, so someone obsessed with being enlightened or being totally free of all difficulties can also miss out on life. Far healthier to just live a mindful, balanced life and fully participate in what life has to offer.
- ✔ **Mindfulness isn't a final destination.** Mindfulness is present-moment awareness and can't happen in the future. The very point of mindfulness is to be in the now; you can be mindful right now, or not! Dreaming of a mindful future is pointless – as the saying goes, tomorrow never comes!
- ✔ **Mindfulness isn't a special state of mind that you reach after reading lots of books or doing lots of courses.** Mindfulness is an ordinary, everyday awareness in many ways. Sometimes that awareness may seem special, peaceful or restful, and at other times it may feel like a struggle, a practice that you don't want to do, or even painful. This is what mindfulness is about. Rest assured, you're not doing the practice wrong. The idea is simply to be present and open up to whatever experience arises in your awareness. Actually, you can't do mindfulness wrong. As long as you're practising as best you can, you're going in the right direction.
- ✔ **Mindfulness is counter-intuitive in some ways.** It's not a goal to achieve, more effort doesn't necessarily get you closer, you don't get there in the future and in many ways, you already have it. You just need to water the seeds of mindfulness that lay latent within your being and see what unfolds.



Here's an example to illustrate what mindful living is about:

As I sit here, writing, I can see some horse chestnut trees out of the window, on the other side of a road, swaying in the wind. I notice as the sun eventually breaks through the clouds and makes the green, lush leaves even more vivid. Then, a few moments later, the sun is once again shielded by clouds. As I sit, a little slouched on my chair, I feel my right shoulder is a bit tense. I take a deep breath, sit up a little and enjoy the feeling of slowly breathing out. My shoulder eases a bit, but there's still some tightness. I turn back to my computer. I type a few more sentences before getting lost in thought. I eventually notice this and bring my attention back to the work in hand.

That's it! That's mindfulness: an awareness of whatever experience is arising for you. You're being mindful right now, as you're conscious of reading this book, or waiting for the bus in the cold or whatever you're doing, when you have a sense of curiosity, self-compassion and acceptance, or even if you're just trying to bring those attitudes to your awareness.



Letting go of your goals is partly what mindfulness is about. As Chapter 4 describes, mindfulness is about *being* rather than *doing*.



Use Worksheet 1-6 to identify what goals you have for mindfulness and see how they may help or hinder your progress.

Worksheet 1-6 Considering How Goals May Help or Hinder Me		
<i>What I Hope to Achieve from Mindfulness</i>	<i>How This Goal May Help My Progress</i>	<i>How This Goal May Hinder My Progress</i>
Peace of mind	The hope of greater peace will give me some motivation.	Whenever I find the mindfulness process stressful, I may get frustrated because I feel that I'm not moving towards my goal.

