

MENTAL FITNESS: BEING PRESENT

Think about when you wake up every day. You are either thinking about the past, the present, or the future.

1. What percentage of your mindshare is thinking about the past? ____
2. What percentage of your mindshare is thinking about the present? ____
3. What percentage of your mindshare is thinking about the future? ____
4. When you are thinking about the past, what percentage of your thinking is positive ____, and what percentage of your thinking is negative? ____
5. When you are thinking about the present, what percentage of your thinking is positive ____, and what percentage of your thinking is negative? ____
6. When you are thinking about the future, what percentage of your thinking is positive ____, and what percentage of your thinking is negative? ____

What does this tell you about your thinking patterns?

How would your perspective change if more of your mental energy focused on the present moment?

How would your perspective change if you could see the past with more gratitude?

How would your perspective change if you saw the future with more optimism?

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16 Ideas to help you stay present in the moment:

1. Celebrate the tiny joys.

Find appreciation in the smallest joys of life, like the sky, a warm smile or a purring cat.

2. Take in your senses

Savor your food. Smell the roses. Pause and take notice of what you see, smell, taste, hear and feel.

3. Develop a mindfulness practice.

There are many great ways to develop a meditation practice, but a simple five minute breathing exercise in quiet can reset your whole body and mind.

4. Listen intently

Engage in conversations without worrying about what you will say next

5. Become comfortable not knowing all of the answers.

There are much fewer worries in the future when you admit you simply don't know what it holds. Needing to have the answers is a form of control. Learn to release control.

6. Listen to your body.

Your body knows when it needs to eat, rest, exercise or release stress. Honor what it's saying

7. Feel your feelings.

Rather than try to push your feelings away or judge them for being the wrong feelings, just have them. Experience them. Let your body feel what it needs to feel.

8. Reduce distractions.

Identify your top distractions and avoid them. Keep your attention on the same thing longer

9. Savor your rituals.

Is it your morning coffee? Walking the dog? The commute to work playing that certain album? Find the parts in your day that help you feel centered and enjoy them

10. Know when to plan or go with the flow

Planning your days, weeks and months are important. So is going with the flow and being flexible. Learn the right balance.

11. Reflect.

Start a journal to reflect on your day. At the end of each day, point out what was good that happened or what you're grateful for that day.

12. Shut off the phone

Have a window of time that is tech-free in your home. (I recommend 8pm-8am)

13. Plan time to worry

If you're a worrier, mark a window of time (maybe 15 minutes at a certain time of day) on your calendar to give energy to all the worries. The rest of the day, compartmentalize them away until it's their time.

14. Daily Goals

When focusing on your goals, focus less on the long term goals or the mistakes of the past. Focus simply on the small, baby daily step (the daily habit) that will get you where you want to go

15. Take advantage of the red lights

When you're driving and you end up at a red light, do not reach for your phone, or the radio, or a phone call. Consider red lights a gift you have been given to slow down. Use it as an opportunity to take deep breaths. Use red lights as an opportunity to calm your mind and your body.

16. Take a walk in nature

As you walk outdoors, take in the smells, sounds and small creatures around you