

Mindfulness: A Wonderful Anxiety Cure You Ought to Know

by [Jordan Bates](#) | [15 Comments](#)

Last week, I was crippled by pointless worry. Little stresses here and there snowballed into serious anxiety.

I began imagining worst case scenarios about the future, my hectic schedule, and my relationship. I allowed myself to be consumed by needless fretting.

Instead of being swept up in these negative thoughts, I should've focused on being mindful.

Mindfulness is a practice that allows you to be content and alive in the present moment.

More on mindfulness in a second.



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Why Anxiety is a Waste of Time

Anxiety, when reduced to the basics, is an **irrational form of fear**.

Anxieties try to tell you that something bad *might* happen, that you *might* not be good enough, or that someone *might* be thinking poorly of you.

The world of anxiety is a world of fiction. Anxiety stems from the evolutionary by-product of exaggerated fear. For primitive human beings, constant fear was a necessity.

When only the strong survived, being ever-vigilant of danger was necessary to live. It kept you on your guard. It drove you to seek shelter, food, and water.

In our world today, basic amenities are covered. We don't have to worry about threats lurking around every corner. **Yet, certain prehistoric parts of our brain are still inclined to be afraid and anxious.**

Seth Godin calls this irrational fear “the resistance” and believes we must constantly wage war against it. We must never allow our pointless anxieties to sabotage what we can achieve.

I've understood for years that anxiety is counterproductive, but *knowing it is* and *actually stopping it* from affecting me are two different things.

Anxiety inevitably finds us, but rather than allowing it to multiply, we should be quick to recognize it and seek a cure.

Enter Mindfulness

Although there are plenty of tactics you can use to relieve anxiety, I want to focus this post on a single, highly effective practice: mindfulness.

If used correctly, Mindfulness is nearly infallible for helping to alleviate stress and worry. So what is it?

Mindfulness is a conscientious activity. It is an effort to do the opposite of what our brains naturally do.

As we go about our days, our minds drift about, unchecked, and think about any number of things. When you're being mindful, you actively work against this phenomenon.

Being mindful means focusing wholly and completely on the present task and present moment.

Mindfulness While Working

When performing a task, mindfulness means directing our entire focus to that one task. No multi-tasking. No daydreaming. Just an active effort to be absorbed in whatever we're doing.

While washing dishes or sweeping, direct your attention to the rhythm of the action. Listen closely to the swishing or scratching noises, smell the soap suds, or concentrate on your contracting muscles.

The goal is for your mind to be transfixed on the action of the second.

Mindfulness While Idle

When you're just relaxing, mindfulness means focusing entirely on your bodily sensations. We don't often notice, but our senses of touch, smell, sight, and sound are constantly at work.

When we're mindful, we focus entirely on these subtle sensations.

Feel the warm muscles of your legs supporting you. Smell the crisp air of the autumn morning. Look intently at the blue of the sky. Listen closely to the wind whistling and birds chirping.

And most importantly, **quiet your mind**. The goal of mindful practices is to force us to be present, so we don't waste precious days worrying.

Why it Works

Needless anxiety and stress cannot burden us if the thoughts don't enter our mind. And fortunately, we are only capable of focusing on one thing at a time.

When you're aware of only what you're working on and the sensations of your body, conscious worry is not possible.

The Necessity of Practice

The ability to be mindful is not something we're born with. Like most skills, it must be developed and refined. However, mindfulness is awesome because you can practice it anytime you want.

At first, you'll find that your mind wanders like crazy. It's difficult to quiet your thoughts.

This is completely fine and expected. Try to quiet your mind and focus on your sensations for even 10 or 15 seconds at a time.

View anything as an opportunity to be mindful. Practice mindfulness while walking, cleaning, and showering. Once you begin to practice, it will become easier to keep your thoughts in check for longer amounts of time.

My Happy Ending

After a couple days of awful anxiety, I remembered the importance of being mindful.

After an invigorating workout, I was able to sit peacefully in the sauna, focusing entirely on the sweat cascading down my skin and the space my body was occupying.

As I rode my bike home, I felt my leg muscles working mechanically to turn the pedals. I noticed the brilliant green of the trees and the faces of people I passed. I smelled the succulence of a nearby grill out.

My anxieties became non-existent. I was once again at peace.

Thanks friend, and take care.

- See more at: <http://www.refinethemind.com/mindfulness-cure-anxiety/#comments>