Guided Notes for Trying to Change that Negative Loop of Self-Criticism and Perfectionism?  
Mindfulness Practices Can Help!  

Created by Renée K. Van Norman, PhD

Guided Notes are designed for you to follow along and actively participate with the PowerPoint slides and webinar. You can make notes, write questions, expand your thinking on a topic, or doodle. These notes correspond directly to the content presented in the PowerPoint Slides.

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Today’s objectives

• Describe how mindfulness practices can work to interrupt unhelpful habit loops.
• Identify ways to start a mindfulness practice.
• Learn guided meditation practices.

Agenda

| Set our intention                |
| Mindfulness meditation techniques and practices |
| How a habit loop forms          |
| How mindfulness can help interrupt unhelpful habit loops |
| Self-management for habit change |

INTENTION SETTING

Right now, I will put aside my thoughts of…

by…

so, I can…

Set our intention: Right now, I will put aside my thoughts of…”

by…

so, I can…
Get into a comfortable position

If you’re comfortable, close your eyes, gaze downward or gently focus on something in the distance

Take a deep breath in, and let it out

1. Touching your thumb to your index finger, travel back to a time when you felt a healthy exhaustion after exerting yourself physically, such as cleaning out the garage, rearranging your classroom, working out.
2. Touching your thumb to your middle finger, travel back in time to a loving exchange with someone special, such as reading a touching card, a peaceful moment with a student, a positive comment from a colleague.
3. “Touching your thumb to your ring finger, try to recollect the most caring gesture you ever received. Take this opportunity to truly accept this gift.”
4. “Touching your thumb to your little finger, travel back to the most magnificent place that you’ve seen or dreamed about. Take this moment to absorb all the beauty that surrounds you.”

“This five-finger relaxation is your ticket to building inner strength, harmony, and a sense of ease.”

**Definitions of Mindfulness**

- “Paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally.”
  - Jon Kabat-Zinn
- “Paying attention with openness, curiosity, flexibility and kindness.”
  - Russ Harris

**Mindfulness 101**

*Unfortunately, I was unable to get permission to use the infographic in the guided notes that I have in the presentation slide.*

Here are some of the **BIG IDEAS**

**BIG IDEA #1:** This theory believes there are **6 primary emotions** frustration, anger, sadness, joy, fear, & surprise.

**BIG IDEA #2:** We **don’t choose** to have these 6 primary emotions they are hard wired in us; **they are just reactions to life’s events.**

**BIG IDEA #3:** What we do with them **IS** up to us! We get to choose what comes next.

**BIG IDEA #4:** We can choose path A or B:

- **A.** Add judgement and opinion which can often lead to pain and suffering **OR**
- **B.** Observe without judgement which can lead to mindful acceptance and often lead to less pain and suffering
Practicing Mindfulness

**What Skills**
- Observe
  - Wordless watching
- Describe
  - Put words to experience
- Participate
  - Jump in and do

**How Skills**
- Nonjudgmentally
  - Not “good” nor “bad”
- One-mindfully
  - One thing in the moment
- Effectively
  - Do what works

How can you practice your how and what skills? What routine activities will you try?
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

**Meditation as a Tool to Achieve Mindfulness**
- “Meditation is a tool to achieve post-meditative mindfulness,”
- Ideally, as you practice meditation regularly, you’ll find yourself being more mindful, aware, and focused throughout the day. Ellen Langer [https://positivepsychlopedia.com/year-of-happy/how-to-cultivate-mindfulness/](https://positivepsychlopedia.com/year-of-happy/how-to-cultivate-mindfulness/)

 Vimeo Meditation 101: A Beginner’s Guide Narrated By Dan Harris by Happify [https://youtu.be/o-kMJBWk9E0](https://youtu.be/o-kMJBWk9E0)

**Notes:**
Some Potential Benefits of Mindfulness & Meditation Practices

- Your brain releases happiness chemicals
- Increased Compassion
- Digestion runs more smoothly
- Attention increases
- Diminished pain
- Emotion regulation
- Swelling subsides
- Decrease in irritability

For review Linehan, 2015
Full citations in resources
Notes:

Four Square/Box Breathing

If you are able, sit up straight in a comfortable chair. Put your feet flat on the floor and relax your hands in your lap. You may overlap your hands or let them lie separately with palms facing up. The important factor is to maintain an aligned posture and to be at ease.

Close your eyes if you choose or gaze downward. Closed eyes meditations or breathing exercises should always be a choice.

Close your mouth and breathe in slowly through your nose. Count to four if that is comfortable to you as you inhale. Hold your breath for four seconds. You are not trying to deprive your body of oxygen but need to allow a few seconds for the air to fill your lungs. Concentrate on your belly and notice how it also moves when you inhale deeply.

Open your mouth slightly and slowly exhale to a count of four. Hold the exhale to another count of four. Ideally, we would repeat the exercise for four minutes, but we'll do it for three times and perhaps you'll achieve a relaxed state, relieve any tension and settle any nerves.

So, on your own counts. Allow the air to fill your belly and notice how it passes over your chest. Continue your box breathing for 3 more rounds. Or until you hear my bell ring.
Things that can get in the way of mindful/meditation practice…

1. No time to practice
2. Can’t get comfortable
3. Don’t know why I would practice
4. All or nothing thinking
5. Lose concentration, “Not doing it right”, Monkey Mind

Intention for Practice

*Strategies for Getting Unstuck*

What is your intention?

• Why do you want to practice? ________________________________________________
• What are your values around practice? _________________________________________
• What do you hope to gain? ________________________________________________

Recommendations for Meditation Practice

*Strategies for Getting Unstuck*

• Set up a regular practice time
• Few times per week; 10 – 15 min
• Find a comfortable position (highly individualized)
• Straight back, relaxed neck, chin slightly tucked in
• Hands on lap or knees

• Set an intention
  • Be clear on your reason for practicing (e.g., stress reduction, more peace, joy)
  • Make a commitment, practice with intention

• Recommendations for Meditation Practice
  Strategies for Getting Unstuck

• Take it one day at a time
  • Recommit missed days
  • Be patient, have self-compassion

• Proceed mindfully
  • Resume your day with mindful awareness
Improving Concentration in Meditation

1. Sitting for longer periods of time in meditation
2. Receiving one-on-one guidance about your practice
3. Studying different techniques for focused attention
4. Finding environments that are quiet and conducive for meditation
5. Attending a concentration meditation course
6. Having a strong intention to release mental distractions, thoughts, plans and concerns during meditation

Brief Review

1. Many different definitions of mindfulness
2. Meditation one way to cultivate mindful awareness
3. Many benefits to mindfulness practices
4. Breath as an important part of meditation practices
5. Many ways to practice meditation, improve practices & concentration
How a Habit Loop is Formed
Positive & Negative Reinforcement
Habit of Eating the Donuts in the School Breakroom
Positive Reinforcement
Get the yummy goodness from the donut

Habit of Not Telling the Truth about How Sam Really Feels
Negative Reinforcement
Sam avoids Golf with Dad
Too Much Social Media Getting in the Way of My Other Values

START

CUES AND TRIGGERS

See phone. “This is a heartwarming story about a teacher and his students”

MIND AND BODY

“Wow! It is so amazing! What an incredible teacher!” Feel joy, excitement in body.

EFFECT

You got 3 likes!

HOW A HABIT LOOP FORMS

ACTION

You share the post & wait for the reward

URGE

“’I’ve got to share this!”
Perfectionism Getting in the Way of Other Things I Value

START
Just finished webinar slides and I'm reviewing them, have the thought..."these aren't good enough."

MIND AND BODY
Body tenses, heart rate increases, shallow breathing
"Maybe I should keep working?"
"What if it goes sideways?"

HOW A HABIT LOOP FORMS
Stay up late, neglecting other obligations which I value

URGE TO CONTINUE WORKING TO MAKE THE PERFECT WEBINAR

REWARD/RESULT
Start to feel better, escape some of those negative emotions and sensations

BODY 

7

8
Simply notice what you are experiencing in your thoughts and body

"Paying attention with openness, curiosity, flexibility and kindness." Dr. Harris
Recognize the craving and the possibility of NOT acting on it

I'm having the thought that I want to keep working. It's a passing thought. I'll put it on the conveyor belt and watch it move along and see what my partner’s doing. That is something I value.
When I stay up late, although I seem to feel better in the moment, I miss out on a lot of things I enjoy doing. There are other things I value; I am also tired and unhappy the next day.

Mindful Curious Awareness & Reflection

Start to feel better, escape some of those negative emotions and sensations

Start to accept some of those negative emotions and sensations as part of life.
Self-Management for Habit Change

1. Specify a goal & define a behavior (action) to be changed
2. Self-monitor the behavior (action)
3. Set up new triggers (cues) and rewards for your new behavior
4. Go public with your commitment to change your behavior
5. Get an accountability partner
6. Continually evaluate your progress and adjust if necessary

Adapted from Cooper, Heron, Heward, 2020
Social Media has taken over my life! I’m missing out on other things I value.

Less Social media distraction in my life

When I feel the urge to post I will do a body scan and use the conveyor belt meditation

Leaving my phone out where I can see it all the time and boredom

Put my phone away at a certain time of day, find accountability partner, set up an initial reward system, find a hobby

Level of Commitment to your Goal 0 to 5

5 = Totally Committed, Going to Start Today!  1 = I’ll get around to it, eventually  0 = Not going to do it

If less than 4, what would have to happen to get to a 4 or 5? Is that a goal?

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I value stress reduction and want to increase the joy I experience in my life.

A 5-min daily meditation practice

Installing the headspace app, finding a space to meditate, picking a time of day

Workload, quiet space, all or nothing thinking

Find accountability partner, use conveyor belt meditation, set up an initial reward system

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THANK YOU

With Gratitude
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# Building a Mindfulness/Meditation Practice

## Committed Action Plan

Why do you want to build a new mindfulness/mediation practice? What do you value about a mindfulness/meditation practice?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What do you want? (Goal)</th>
<th>What action will get you there?</th>
<th>What gets in the way?</th>
<th>What strategy will get you unstuck?</th>
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Resources


Davidson, R. J. (2003). Alterations in brain and immune function produced by mindfulness meditation. Psychosomatic Medicine, 65(4), 564-570. [Happiness chemicals]


Human, E. Mindfulness 101 https://erinhuman.com/


Meditations and Related Apps

Insight Timer https://insighttimer.com/

Hugh Byrne https://insighttimer.com/hughbyrne

Calm App https://www.calm.com/

Mindfulness Magazine https://www.mindful.org/

Headspace Meditation for Beginners https://www.headspace.com/meditation/meditation-for-beginners

Body Scan Meditation https://www.mindful.org/a-3-minute-body-scan-meditation-to-cultivate-mindfulness/ (Greater Good Science Center)

Mindful Activities for Adults and Children


Observe Describe One-Mindfully and Non Judgmentally
Video
Judson Brewer TED Talk A simple way to break a bad habit [https://youtu.be/-moW9jvvMr4](https://youtu.be/-moW9jvvMr4)
Just Breathe Video by Julie Bayer Salzman & Josh Salzman (Wavecrest Films) [https://youtu.be/RVA2N6tX2cg](https://youtu.be/RVA2N6tX2cg)
Meditation 101 for Beginners by Happify [https://youtu.be/o-kMJBWk9E0](https://youtu.be/o-kMJBWk9E0)

Other
Jon Kabat-Zinn [https://www.mindfulnesscds.com/](https://www.mindfulnesscds.com/)