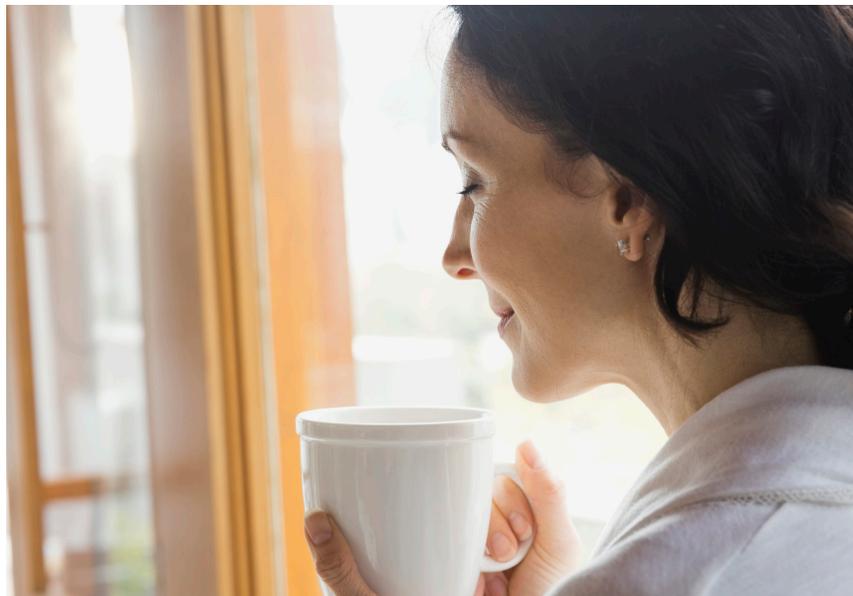


Find Mindfulness Hard? 9 Little Tricks You Can Actually Do

THESE SIMPLE MINDFULNESS TECHNIQUES REQUIRE LIMITED TIME AND EFFORT.

You've probably heard all about the health benefits of practicing mindfulness: But how do you actually make yourself do it? The key is to quit thinking of it as a chore, says Rohan Gunatillake, author of *Modern Mindfulness* and creator of the app Buddhify. Approach it in a fun way that fits your lifestyle, he says. Follow these how-tos.



Step 1: Pick a go-to move.

You don't have to escape to a quiet room, says Gunatillake. Practice a core meditation technique that you can apply anywhere, anytime.

Observe your body: Ask yourself, "What physical awareness can I pick up on?" "Think about your feet on the ground, your hand on your coffee cup," suggests Gunatillake.

Focus on one thing: Choose an object or sound and keep your attention on it for a few minutes. If you get distracted, pull yourself back to it.

Show compassion: Mentally send someone kind vibes.

Step 2: Use tech wisely.

It may sound counterintuitive to channel calm with a gadget. But these apps and computer hacks act as digital coaches to help you decompress.

Try a guided app: Top-rated smartphone programs like Headspace and Whil offer short guided practices.

Turn up the tunes: Dial back stress with a mindful-music playlist, like spiritual author Eckhart Tolle's "Music to Quiet the Mind."

Find Zen on the web: Visit donothingfor2minutes.com, which displays an ocean landscape, plays audio of waves crashing, and instructs you to relax for a full two minutes. If you touch your mouse or press your keyboard, the timer resets.

Step 3: Make it physical.

Physical exercises help you reduce your bodily response to stress and in turn ease your mind, says Emily Fletcher, founder of Ziva Meditation.

Stretch out: Sit on one hand and drop your head to the opposite shoulder. "This stretches your trapezius muscle, where most of us store stress," says Fletcher. Repeat on the other side.

Walk it off: Go for a quick walk or run outdoors, suggests Gunatillake. "Seeing the sky and having a wider perspective can make stress feel less intense," he says. "And the physicality of it can be super grounding."

Breathe deeply: Make your exhalations twice as long as your inhalations for three to four minutes; slowing your breath calms your nervous system, Fletcher explains.

