

Why Walk Mindfully?

To slow you down and let you be right where you are – right here, right now.

Most people **rush from place to place seldom taking time to be aware of their surroundings. They live in their heads** constantly thinking about the next thing that needs to happen, the next place they need to be, the things they have forgotten at home...

This produces a massive amount of cumulative stress and I suspect contributes more than any other single factor to loss of productivity, illness and inefficiency in the work force. Not to mention depriving us of the joy that is our natural birthright!



Learning to walk mindfully can open up an amazing world of richness and refreshment.

Mindful walking naturally **increases enjoyment, reduces stress, increases vitality and promotes relaxation and youthfulness. It also boosts the immune system and enhances creativity by relaxing the mind.**

Instructions for Walking Mindfully

Mindful walking will be easiest at a slower pace than usual.

If you walk for exercise try doing mindful walking for 5 or 10 minutes to warm up This is an excellent way to incorporate mindfulness into your existing routine.

Here are two forms of Mindful Walking for you to experiment with:

A: Being Mindful of Your Body

- **Focus all your awareness into the feel of your body moving.**
- Notice the different stages of movement – the feel of your foot hitting the ground; different muscles engaging and releasing.
- Notice your breathing – let it be smooth and relaxed.
- Keep an open awareness focused into your body as you walk. Notice without judging. Relax

B: Being Mindful of Your Surroundings

1. **Choose one sense** – preferably one you don't normally focus on eg smell, hearing or touch.
2. As you walk **focus on that one sense** – **notice everything you can** that comes to you. What don't you normally notice?
3. **Try to identify everything that you become aware of.** Look to see what bird has that particular cry? What flower produces that scent?

