

The Mindfulness Playbook

weightwatchers

A growing body of evidence suggests that paying attention to the here and now can help you develop healthier eating habits, achieve your weight-loss goals, get happier, build confidence, and create deeper connections with those you love.

This concept is called *mindfulness*.

Here Are a Couple of Simple Strategies for Living in the Now:

Look at everything with beginner's mind

When we pay attention to everyday experiences and surroundings with a sense of curiosity and enthusiasm, free of preconceived ideas, we make room for a fresh outlook. By introducing curiosity to the equation, we can effectively start to consider triggers in our environment (we see a cupcake); our behavior (we eat the cupcake); and the reward (we feel pleasure). We can then decide whether the reward will be as great as we originally thought. And even when we do decide to eat the cupcake, being mindful throughout the experience sets us up for next time.

Don't believe everything you think

We each think thousands of thoughts every day. Unfortunately, most of them are unhelpful – especially the ones we have when we're stressed, anxious, or in pain. Becoming aware of our thoughts and seeing them for what they really are – just thoughts, not facts – will liberate us. Here are just a few of the ways we limit our thinking:

- **Mind-Reading:** Convincing ourselves that we know what other people are thinking. ("She thinks I'm stupid.")
- **Polarized Thinking:** It's all or nothing. ("I ate a donut. Game over.")



- **Overgeneralizing:** When something bad happens once, we expect it to keep happening, no matter what we do. ("I tried that once. It didn't work, so it'll never work.")
- **Catastrophizing:** Expecting disaster to strike. ("Well, I ate way more than I expected to today. There's no way I'll ever drop the weight.")
- **Discounting the Positives:** When we start with something positive, then use the word "but" to lead into a negative. ("I lost weight this week, but it's the first time in three weeks.")

Bashing yourself is a surefire way to derail your plan. The next time you experience negative self-talk, go from *"What if it doesn't work?"* to *"What if it does?"* Notice how that feels in your body.