

Mindfulness Steps & Characteristics

5 Steps of Mindfulness:

1. DESCRIBE your moment by moment actions to yourself. "I am getting out of bed, the floor is cold, I'm turning on the shower..."
2. NOTICE past/future oriented thoughts. "I am noticing that I'm thinking about my work meeting tomorrow."
3. GENTLY DISMISS past/future oriented thoughts. "Now is not the time to think about my work meeting. I will spend 30 minutes tonight preparing for my meeting. Right now, I am focusing on..."
4. RETURN to describing your moment by moment experience using your senses. "I see a blue umbrella, I smell fresh rain, I feel moisture on my skin."
5. REPEAT the process over and over knowing you are retraining your brain. At some point in the near future, you won't have to work so hard at it!

8 Characteristics of Mindfulness:

1. Mindfulness means noticing your surroundings as you observe them through your 5 senses. "I see a red car, I hear my favorite song, I feel cool air blowing on me, I feel the smooth steering wheel, I smell my peppermint car freshener."
2. Mindfulness means letting go of trying to control what is outside your control. Accept what is happening and think about how you can bring the best version of yourself into that situation.
3. Mindfulness means letting go of judging people and circumstances as good/bad. Instead notice and accept behavior and circumstances as they are. Recognize your response does not need to be determined by others behaving well or badly.
4. Mindfulness means noticing and naming feelings without allowing your feelings to determine your response. "I'm noticing that sadness is surrounding me right now and I can feel it in my throat and in my eyes." A feeling can just be a feeling when you understand and name it.
5. Mindfulness means noticing thoughts and feelings come and go like waves and usually move on if we do not grasp or avoid them.
6. Mindfulness means participating fully in exactly what you are doing right now. Let go of ruminating and begin describing your present experience to yourself through your senses. Allow yourself to become immersed fully in the present experience.
7. Mindfulness means tending to each thing in its own time. If while you are focusing on the present moment, you are noticing a repeated invasive thought about a future task, set aside a specific time later to give the future task your full attention.
8. Mindfulness means doing one thing at a time. There is something relaxing about refusing to multitask.