

Mindful Body Workbook

Create The Happy, Healthy Body You
Want Through Mindfulness



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Table of Contents

How To Use This Workbook	3
The Mindful Way	7
<i>Your Mindful Body</i>	8
Motivation	10
Goals and Intentions	12
Mindfulness: The Art of Being in the Present Moment	15
Mindful Eating and Drinking.....	18
Food Quality Over Quantity	20
Eating Healthy On the Run.....	22
Food Allergies and Intolerances	23
Mindful Eating In a Nutshell.....	26
Mindful Lifestyle	29
Removing Toxins From Our Environment	29
Mindful Exercise	33
Creating a New Habit	36
Aches, Pains and Illness	41
Sleep.....	45
Coaching and Mentoring.....	48
About Paige and Simple Mindfulness.....	49



How To Use This Workbook

The exercises in this workbook will take you on a journey of lifestyle and mindset change. This isn't something to be taken lightly. It's going to take time and consistent effort to make lasting change.

By taking baby steps every day, you'll be creating a healthier and happier you.

Below you'll find the suggested timeframe for completing the exercises in this workbook and implementing them into your life. Depending on where you are now, you may go through some of the steps more quickly or slowly.

Listen to your body and move at a pace that works for you.

Putting one foot in front of the other, taking baby steps each day will change your life.

Week 1: Complete all of the exercises in The Mindful Way section. A few days after you complete the exercises, come back to what you've written and update or revise your answers if necessary. Your thoughts in these areas will likely change over time. Feel free to revisit this section as you implement changes to ensure that you're on your right path.

Each day this week, visualize and feel the healthier and happier you that you've described.

Week 2: Complete all the exercises in the Mindful Eating and Drinking section. Use the Mindful Eating Journal to document your experiences each day this week. The Journal is one of the most powerful parts of this program.



Weeks 3 & 4: Complete all the exercises in the Food Quality Over Quantity and Eating Healthy On The Run sections. Take this time to read and understand food labels, clear out any unwanted foods and beverages in your home, discover new sources of healthier foods and different ways of preparing those foods. These are two weeks of fun exploration!

Review the section on Food Allergies and Intolerances. If you feel that you have any food allergies or intolerances, this is the time to follow an elimination diet to identify and remove these irritations.

Review the Mindful Eating In A Nutshell section on a regular basis as a refresher to the principles in this section.

Week 5: Complete all the exercises in the Removing Toxins From Our Environment section. Be mindful throughout your day, noticing how you can make small changes in your environment that could improve your health and the health of others who share your environments.

Week 6: Complete all the exercises in the Mindful Exercise and Creating a New Habit sections. Now is the time to begin a healthy exercise habit that you truly enjoy.

Week 7: Complete the exercises in the Aches, Pains and Illness section once a day this week to better understand what any dis-ease in your body is trying to tell you.

Week 8: Complete all the exercises in the Sleep section. Take this time to create your own peaceful bedtime routine to help you sleep well each night.



Each day, as you build on your previous experiences, set a daily intention to make choices throughout your day that are in alignment with your new healthy, happy self.



Week 1



The Mindful Way

Before we begin, let's get centered and focused so that everything else we do is much more effective.

Close your eyes.

Take a deep breath. Inhale slowly and deeply until your lungs are completely filled.

Now exhale slowly through your nose.

Take two more deep inhales and exhales with your eyes closed.

Pause and savor the space you just created.

While breathing deeply, notice any sensations in your body. Listen to your heart beat.

Open your eyes and look around you. What do you see? Close up? Far away? Simply notice.

Spend five minutes doing this. Noticing without judgment. Breathing.



Your Mindful Body

Now that you're relaxed and in the moment, consider how you want your body to look and feel.

What's your vision of *your* health? What's your vision of *your* perfect body?

Spend a few minutes considering what this looks and feels like for you:

How do you feel when you wake up in the morning?

How do you feel after you eat?



What kind of clothes are you wearing and how do you feel in them?

How do you feel during and after exercising?

How well do you sleep?

How do you feel about your body?



Motivation

Why is it important for you to make a change *now*? Write down *all* your reasons.

Make absolutely sure that whatever you write down makes you feel good. This is *essential!*

No negatives: not, never, should, shouldn't, can't, won't. No doing things to please other people. This is just for you.

Only present tense positives that feel good to you.

How important is it *to you*? Not to or for anyone else.



If you don't make the changes you're considering now, what will your life look like in one, five or ten years? What will be different?

How will you feel if you put this off again?

Put your motivation where you can see it

1. Write down your answers from the first question in this section on six pieces of paper and put those pieces of paper on your:
 - bathroom mirror
 - refrigerator
 - credit cards (those emotions are working on our wallet too)
 - computer monitor
 - bedside table
 - dashboard of your car.
2. Find an image of your 'why' and use it as your screensaver and desktop image on your computer, phone and touch pads. This could be an image that conveys how you'll feel when you're healthy and happy.



Goals and Intentions

Instead of setting big goals for yourself with this program, set daily intentions about how you want to feel and the kind of person you want to be every day.

Is the kind of person you want to be the same person who would achieve the goals you're thinking of? If not, something about the picture needs to change.

Now that you know what you want and why you want it, let's set some daily intentions to keep us on our desired paths.

Think about how you want to feel once you've created your ideal body.

Focus on feeling that feeling in the present – right now. What can you do right now to feel that way? Get into a meditative state following the steps in the first section, if that helps.



How would your moment-to-moment decisions be different that the ones you make now? Why are they different?

Keeping that “new me” in mind throughout your day, as you adopt new habits (one at a time) you’ll be acting out your average new day *every* day. You’ll be doing the things that your “new me” would do, eating, exercising and enjoying yourself the way your “new me” would.

Feel great about making choices throughout your day that support the evolution of your awesome self!



Mindfulness: The Art of Being in the Present Moment

Mindfulness is a practice. Like any practice, initially we have to remind ourselves to practice the practice.

Choose one or more of the following methods (feel free to make up your own) to remind yourself to be mindful throughout your day:

- Set a timer on your phone (there are a variety of mindfulness apps out there in addition to peaceful alarms).
- Put a ring on a finger that you don't normally wear it on.
- Put a smooth stone or something unusual in your pocket.
- Tape a reminder to your water bottle.

Whenever those things capture your attention, take ten minutes to be.

At first 10 minutes will be painful. Start with one or two if that's the case and build up slowly over time. Start wherever you are.

Commit to devoting 10 minutes each day for you. You're so worth it.

What do you *do* during those 10 minutes?

Nothing but breathe.

Don't do anything.

Just be.

And breathe.

Notice your environment. Is it quiet or noisy? Hot, cold or comfortable? What, exactly, do you hear and see? Who is around you?

Do a body scan and notice the sensations in every part of your body. Do you feel relaxed or tense? Where do you feel these sensations?

Notice your thoughts. Don't judge them or yourself for having them.



Don't create stories about them. Simply notice them as they are.

Are they here in the present moment? Or in the past or future?

How do you feel in the moment? Where in your body do you feel that feeling?

Whatever you're experiencing in the moment - experience it fully with an inquisitive mind, a beginner's mind. No judgment. No attachment.

You are not your thoughts.

You are not your emotions or feelings.

All of these things are temporary. They come and go. You are still as they come and go.

If you're experiencing something painful, stay with it. It has something very important to tell you.

Treat the pain, whether it's physical or emotional, as another person or being and have a conversation with it. Be inquisitive and light. Ask it why it's there. Ask it what message it has for you. Take whatever message you receive to heart.

How do you feel because of how you interpret all of these things? Nothing and nobody "makes" you feel a certain way. It's all about how you choose to interpret it and how you choose to react or feel about it.

These are all ways to practice mindfulness.

Be mindful now, in the present moment. This is really all you have.



Week 2



Mindful Eating and Drinking

The next time you reach for something to eat or drink, pause and take three deep, relaxing breaths before putting anything in your mouth. Consider whether you're hungry, thirsty or feeding some other need.

Consider eating half of what you normally eat at each meal. Wait a half hour to see how you feel before eating more.

Use the Mindful Eating Journal included with this program to record and become mindful of everything that passes your lips. The Journal may be the most powerful part of this program for you.

Depending on how deep your emotions and subconscious programming run, you may or may not touch upon the "real issues" behind the difficulties you've experienced in your past that affect how you eat.

How Much Water Do You Need?

A good guideline is to take your weight in pounds and divide it by two. The result is the minimum ounces of water you should be drinking every day. For example, if you weigh 150 pounds, you should be drinking at least 75 ounces of water each day (2.4 quarts or 2.2 liters).

Drink more if you have strenuous workouts, live in a dry climate or in high altitudes or are pregnant. If this sounds like a lot of water to you, you're probably slightly dehydrated.

To ensure you're drinking all your water, in the morning, fill up as many containers as you need for your daily supply (i.e. two 1 liter bottles if you weigh 150 pounds). Make sure they're all empty by the end of the day. It's best to drink an even amount of water throughout the day.

Many times we read our body's signals as hunger when it's actually thirst. The next time you feel a little hungry, drink at least 12 oz. of water first. Wait a few minutes and notice if you still feel hungry.



Weeks 3 & 4



Food Quality Over Quantity

It's best to avoid processed foods that have been far removed from their original state and replace them with foods in their natural state or minimally processed.

Out With the Old

Go through all the foods in your refrigerator, pantry and cabinets and read all the labels. If you don't know exactly what an ingredient is, Google it, look it up in Wikipedia (www.wikipedia.org) or www.cosmeticsdatabase.org.

Give or throw away anything that contains:

- high fructose corn syrup or corn sugar
- trans fats (i.e. partially hydrogenated oils)
- margarine
- high levels of sugar (i.e. drinks and drink mixes, "low fat" foods)
- high levels of salt/sodium (i.e. soups and sauces)
- artificial sweeteners (aspartame is the most common)
- artificial food colorings or flavors
- MSG (monosodium glutamate)
- artificial preservatives.

Give or throw away or use the following very sparingly:

- white rice
- white/bleached/enriched flours
- pastas made with white/bleached/enriched flours
- white bread
- white sugar
- "enriched" foods
- meats preserved with nitrates



- meats and dairy products treated with antibiotics and/or hormones.

In With the New

Find a local, organic grocery store and farmers market and explore the new, different, delicious offerings. If you're not sure about anything, ask the people who work there. They're more than happy to share their wealth of knowledge on healthier eating and living.

Many of these stores also have a selection of fresh, prepared foods where you can stock up if you need a quick snack or are in a hurry.

Be adventurous! Try new foods that you've never heard of before. Find new ways to prepare dark, leafy greens like kale, chard, collards and spinach (how about www.ILoveKale.com?). Google has an infinite supply of recipes.

Start reading labels on a regular basis to better understand the types of foods to avoid and those to try. When in doubt, look it up.

Find a local farm at www.localharvest.org and sign up for a CSA program (community-supported agriculture). Visit local farms and ranches that you discover at your farmers market or online to see where your foods come from.

Replace as much of your food as possible with locally-grown, organic alternatives.

With all of these practices, you can improve your health, support local, organic farms and businesses and enhance the environment.



Eating Healthy On the Run

Instead of running through the usual fast food joints, take a lunch hour to explore other options. Find the nearest natural grocer or health food store. Most have prepared food sections. Find healthier restaurants who advertise their use of local, organic and higher quality ingredients.

Ask health-minded friends for recommendations of stores, restaurants and prepared foods such as shakes and meal replacement bars ([Isagenix](#) has been my family's all-time favorite for years).

Keep a full bottle of water, some protein bars, unsalted nuts and dried fruit handy instead of heading for the vending machines. Restock from the natural grocer when your supplies run low. Spread your stash around in your car, desk, pantry, purse/bag so you'll always have something healthy to reach for in an emergency.



Food Allergies and Intolerances

If you experience any kind of reaction to foods you eat or have dealt with chronic health issues that doctors can't explain, review the table below to see if you may have allergies or intolerances.

If you're not sure, try removing each of the allergens below from your diet, one at a time, and see if your symptoms subside. Follow the guidelines in the section below the chart: Identifying Your Triggers.

It's frequently difficult to identify the culprits in our diet because allergy and intolerance symptoms can take anywhere from 30 minutes to two days to appear, depending on a person's digestive rate and metabolism.

Allergic reactions include a runny nose, itchy eyes, dry throat, rashes and hives, nausea, diarrhea, difficulty breathing, general fatigue and life-threatening anaphylactic shock.

Intolerances generally include digestive issues such as heartburn, constipation, flatulence and diarrhea.



Allergen	Symptoms	Sources
Milk	flatulence, diarrhea, fatigue and skin rashes	milk, cream, yogurt and cheese), check ingredient labels for the presence of lactose and casein
Eggs	skin rashes, hives, nasal inflammation, coughing, chest tightness or shortness of breath and vomiting or other digestive problems	Watch for the general statement that the item contains egg ingredients (a federal requirement). Also be aware that more common foods like breads (and their shiny crust), mayonnaise, protein powders, whipped toppings, salad dressings and rich sauces generally include eggs. They are also a stabilizing ingredient in a variety of vaccines.
Peanuts and Tree Nuts	skin reactions (hives, redness or swelling); itching or tingling in or around the mouth and throat; digestive problems, such as diarrhea, stomach cramps, nausea or vomiting; tightening of the throat; shortness of breath or wheezing; and runny nose	candies, foods and sauces, especially some Asian and Mexican dishes. Tree nuts include almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, chestnuts, filberts/hazelnuts, macadamia nuts, coconut, pecans, pine nuts (pignolia nuts), pistachios, and walnuts
Wheat and Gluten	gas, bloating, lethargy, ADD or ADHD and other psychological disorders, dermatitis and joint pain, inflammation of the gut wall, Celiac disease	wheat, rye, barley, oats, spelt and kamut
Soy	tingling in the mouth; hives, itching or itchy, scaly skin (eczema); swelling of the lips, face, tongue and throat, or other parts of the body; wheezing, runny nose or trouble breathing; abdominal pain, diarrhea, nausea or vomiting; and redness of the skin (flushing)	anything that includes the word "soy" (also known as edamame), the following ingredients may include soy: tempeh, miso, tofu, natural flavorings, hydrolyzed plant protein, hydrolyzed vegetable protein, natural flavoring, vegetable broth, vegetable gum and vegetable starch



Allergen	Symptoms	Sources
Fish and Shellfish	tingling in the mouth; hives, itching or itchy, scaly skin (eczema); swelling of the lips, face, tongue and throat, or other parts of the body; wheezing, runny nose or trouble breathing; abdominal pain, diarrhea, nausea or vomiting; and redness of the skin (flushing)	Fish: salmon, tuna and halibut, Worcestershire sauce, salad dressings, Caesar salads and barbeque sauce. Shellfish: abalone, clams, crab, crawfish, crayfish, lobster, oysters, scallops, shrimp, cockle, sea urchin and mussels, imitation shellfish

Identifying Your Triggers

Because symptoms of intolerances and allergies can take anywhere from 30 minutes to two days to appear, the best way to identify the source of the problem is to follow a strict elimination diet.

Working with one possible allergen at a time over a two week period, completely eliminate the allergen from your diet. Read all labels carefully and ask about ingredients when you dine out. When in doubt, avoid it.

After the two-week period, reintroduce the eliminated food into your diet on a set day. Start with the highest quality and least processed form and eat a small amount two different times during that day.

On the following two days, go back to your elimination diet and see if you experience any of the reactions you noticed before you removed the possible allergen. If you have no reactions, introduce another food that contains the same allergen. Follow the two-day rule again. If you have no reactions after two or three two-day experiments with the same allergen, you can generally rule out that allergen and move on to a different one.

The process is time-consuming but it's still the best way to identify where your allergies and sensitivities lie.



Mindful Eating In a Nutshell

- Slow down and consider your emotional state before eating.
- Don't do anything else when you're eating. Savor every aspect of your food.
- Drink more water.
- Eat smaller portions.
- Consider how you'll feel, physically and emotionally, an hour and a day after eating.
- Focus on a diet rich in high quality, organic fruits and vegetables and limited quantities of pastured, well-fed meats and dairy products.
- Everything in moderation.
- Listen to your body.

Changing how, when and what we eat is a journey. Lasting change happens over time. Every day is a new adventure. Keep it exciting!

What small change can you make today to move you closer to a healthier way of eating?

- Drink more water.
- Replace processed or conventionally-grown foods with simpler, organic foods.
- Find great recipes and learn about cooking with foods as they are naturally in season with cookbooks like [Simply Organic: A Cookbook for Sustainable, Seasonal, and Local Ingredients](#)
- Search for other organic cookbooks on Amazon or at your favorite bookstore.
- Replace a serving or two of meat in your diet with vegetables.
- Replace your artificial sweetener with honey.
- Eat half of the portions you're used to eating for a day.
- Visit an organic farm.



- Read [Animal, Vegetable, Miracle](#) by Barbara Kingsolver.

Continue to take one or two baby steps like these every day. Slow down to consider how each change affects you. Take the next step based on the lessons you learn along the way.

Pay attention. Be mindful of each bite.



Week 5



Mindful Lifestyle

Removing Toxins From Our Environment

While it's impossible to completely remove all toxins from our environment, there's a lot we can do to minimize our daily exposure. Here are things you can do that, cumulatively, can make a big difference.

Foods

- Choose organic and free-range foods whenever possible.
- Avoid processed foods.
- Read labels and look up ingredients you don't understand (www.Wikipedia.org and www.CosmeticsDatabase.org are great resources).
- Avoid artificial food additives of all kind, including artificial sweeteners and MSG.
- Have your tap water tested and, if contaminants like chlorine are found, install an appropriate water filter on all your faucets (even those in your shower or bath). Ensure that the filter you're using filters the contaminants in your water. Filters differ in the contaminants they remove.

Bath

- Replace vinyl (PVC) shower curtains that contain phthalates with nylon, linen, or PEVA plastic.
- Use only natural brands of toiletries, including shampoo, toothpaste, antiperspirants and cosmetics.



Home

- Replace toxic cleaners with natural or homemade products to reduce the risk of asthma, allergic reactions and eye, skin and lung irritations:
 - bathroom and kitchen scrubs: baking soda, BonAmi, or simply hot water and the green, scrubby side of a sponge
 - window cleaner: wipe glass with a clean, wet sponge followed by a clean, dry towel (“flour sack” kitchen towels work best and don’t leave lint trails)
 - bleach: lemon juice
 - floor cleaner: hot water
 - wood polish: olive oil and lemon juice
 - Understand that all the toxic chemicals you were cleaning with are being washed down the drain and returned to you in the drinking water you’ll be drinking in a couple days.
- Avoid using artificial air fresheners, dryer sheets, fabric softeners or other synthetic fragrances as they can pollute the air you are breathing and create skin and lung reactions.
- Replace laundry detergents, especially those with heavy fragrances, with natural detergents with no or naturally-based fragrances.
- Use no-VOC paints, stains and primers on walls and furniture.
- Choose furniture made of all-natural components and avoid PBDE’s found in most foam.
- Replace foam mattresses containing PBDE’s or other chemicals with natural or organic mattresses made of wool, rubber or latex.
- Replace synthetic carpets and padding with natural fabrics like wool or natural flooring products like safely-treated wood, bamboo or cork and natural fabric rugs.
- Avoid using stain guards on fabrics.
- Place houseplants throughout your house. Through photosynthesis, plants naturally filter toxins out of the air and can



reduce stress.

- Buy gently used electronic equipment, furniture and household items to avoid breathing the off-gas from new plastics, vinyl, solvents, paints, and metal treatments.
- Let in the fresh air. Open windows as often as possible. Stale, re-circulated indoor air is much more contaminated than most outdoor air.

Vehicle

- When looking for a new vehicle, consider buying used. That “new car smell” is a toxic blend of plastics and other chemicals off-gassing. You’ll also save a ton of money.
- When you get in a hot vehicle, drive for a few minutes with the windows down to release the build-up of toxic fumes from plastics and adhesives that off-gas when heated.

Lawn and Garden

- Replace conventional fertilizers and pesticides (weed killers) with natural or organic options (do you really want your kids and pets rolling around in and breathing those chemicals?)

Health

- Remove any metal fillings in your teeth as they're a major source of mercury. Be sure to have this done by a qualified biological dentist.
- To the extent possible, replace pharmaceuticals with natural remedies and better lifestyle choices.

As you implement some of these changes, share your experiences with others. Many people taking small steps make a big difference for all of us.



Week 6



Mindful Exercise

Making Time for Exercise

Do you think you don't have time to exercise? You don't have time to take care of yourself? If you don't do it, who will?

If you don't take care of yourself, what will happen when you're not well enough to take care of all the people and things you manage every day?

Know that we never "find" time for anything. We *make* time for what we deem important to us. How we spend our time says a lot about our values.

Setting aside a consistent time every day for something helps to reinforce it as a habit.

Right now, look at your schedule and book a non-negotiable appointment with yourself (include someone else if you like). Make it a recurring appointment every day. This is your movement time.

It doesn't matter how much time you set aside. The important thing is to start where you are and grow from there.

Make the commitment to yourself to make movement happen at this time every day. Complete and sign the following:

I, _____ (name), commit to some form of	
movement every day at _____ (time).	
_____	_____
(signature)	(date)



Choose Movements That You Enjoy

If exercise isn't fun or we don't derive some benefits from it, why would we make time for it on a consistent basis?

Don't think about what you're doing as exercise. The word exercise has many negative connotations for many people.

You're simply moving your body. Anyone can do that.

Find something you love, something you can't wait to do every day, something you crave. If you go a day without it, you feel like your day wasn't complete. Find that thing for you.

Have fun experimenting. If getting outside consistently is a challenge, find something fun you can do inside. It doesn't have to be the same thing every day.

If you've been completely sedentary for a long time, moving may not feel that great at first.

Start where you are. No judgments.

Know that every day will be different. Some days your energy levels and mood will be high and you'll have no problem doing something active for longer periods of time. Other days your energy will be lower. Adapt your activity to your energy level to keep it interesting and fun.

The best thing you can do for sustained wellness is to simply do *something healthy every day*. That something can be a few minutes of activity throughout your day (a couple five minute walks). It can be time you devote to yourself at the same time every day (a 45 minute yoga and meditation practice in the late afternoon). Whatever works for you.



Here are some ideas to get you thinking and moving. Combine some of these or create your own. The possibilities for ways of moving your body are endless. Move in a way that feels good for you.

- walk in nature, around your neighborhood, around your office, anywhere, any time
- hike
- garden
- clean your house, hand-wash your car
- play sports
- row
- hoola hooping (it's bigger than you think)
- play with your kids or grandkids
- take your pet for a stroll or play in the park
- swim at a local pool, hot springs, rivers and lakes
- bike (alone, with a friend or find a club in your area)
- yoga (find an instructor as there is a type of yoga for every body of every size, shape, age, physical limitation and activity level)
- jump on a trampoline
- learn how to belly dance or ballroom dance (you don't need a partner)
- kayak or paddle boarding
- run in the sand on the beach
- Pilates
- aerobics classes
- rollerblade
- take an Aero Yoga class and learn to fly
- kickboxing (great stress reliever, especially if you're dealing with difficult people)
- salsa dancing

See the next section to learn how to turn fun into a habit.



Creating a New Habit

If you're bored with your current exercise routine or don't have one, you'll need to overcome inertia to get started. You're creating a new habit – something that shouldn't be taken lightly.

At first a new habit will seem hard to make time for and hard to do. That's the nature of change. Remind yourself frequently of the worthwhile reasons you're making this change.

Here are some ideas to make mindful, fun exercise a part of your everyday routine that I borrowed from Leo Babauta at ZenHabits.net, the master of creating habits:

1. Find a trigger.

In order to remember to do something new, you'll need a trigger – something that's already a part of your daily routine. If you want to move your body first thing in the morning, your trigger could be getting dressed or having your coffee. At midday, it could be when you break for lunch or during the mid-afternoon lull when you get a snack. At the end of the day, it could be when you get home and change clothes.

My trigger for moving my body is:

2. Set up a reminder.

At first you'll need a reminder to practice the new habit after the trigger. Consider putting your exercise clothes where you put other clothes you might have put on in the morning or evening. Or put a note where you drop your bags when you get home. Set a reminder or alarm on your phone or calendar. Put the reminder where you'll see it when you're performing your trigger.



My reminder for moving my body is:

3. Work on one habit at a time.

When we want to create change in our lives, we tend to go gung ho, trying to change everything at the same time. Don't do it. It's not sustainable.

Pick one new habit and practice only that habit for at least thirty days before moving onto the next one. It takes at least thirty days to ingrain a new habit. Give it the space it needs.

4. Start small – very small.

If you want to add walking for thirty minutes a day as your new habit, walk for five minutes each day for the first month. Add five minutes every couple of weeks after the first month until you're up to thirty.

You may feel great walking thirty minutes the first day because you're excited but, if you haven't been exercising, you'll have some soreness the next day which will probably keep you from walking again. This is how you kill a habit before it ever sees the light of day in your daily routine.

By keeping the incremental change very small, you're keeping it fun and easy. Your new habit won't "take" if it's not fun and easy. Even if you want to do more and doing more will be easy, don't. Start very small and make the increments toward your end habit small. You'll get there before you know it.



5. Log it.

Create a way to visually show that you performed your new habit every day for the first thirty days. Create a chart. Post a calendar. Write “I did it!” on a piece of paper next to numbers counting from one to thirty. Whatever works for you.

One idea that has been very effective is to put a big, red X on each day of a calendar that you practice your new habit. You’ll feel motivated to see the beautiful chain of X’s build across your calendar.

This is a very effective way of creating accountability with yourself.

6. Tell others.

In addition to creating accountability with yourself, you’ll want to create accountability with other people. Enlisting a friend or two who gets out and has fun with you is especially effective. You’re more likely to show up if you know that someone is waiting for you.

You could also email, text or call friends telling them what you’re up to and that you’ll report your progress to them every day. You can also accomplish this by posting your progress to Facebook or tweeting about it.

I will involve others in my progress by _____
_____.

7. Focus on the fun.

If you see your new habit as a chore at any time, stop and figure out how to infuse it with fun again. If you find that you don’t enjoy the form of movement you chose, find a new one. There’s



no rule that says you have to stick with the same type of movement for the full thirty days.

Every time you practice your new habit, do your best to stay in the moment, enjoying how your body feels as it moves. Feel how open your mind is. Be grateful that you can practice your new form of movement and have the freedom to choose anything you want.



Week 7



Aches, Pains and Illness

Most physical issues are the manifestation of emotional issues. Our body's aches, pains and diseases are its way of telling us that we need to address something inside ourselves (fears, blocks, anger, negative beliefs, etc.).

While acknowledging your dis-ease is the first step, acceptance is the next. Without acceptance, nothing can change. If you're not accepting then you're resisting and what you resist persists.

Acknowledging: I have a sore back.

Not acknowledging: My back isn't sore. It's just a nerve thing that will go away.

Write a statement acknowledging the dis-ease you're working with:

Accepting: I have a bad back now and I'm finding a way to cure myself.

Not accepting: This can't be. I've never had a problem with my back before. What did I do to deserve this? I'll just take some pain killers and it will go away.

Write a statement describing how you accept the dis-ease you're working with:



Learn From Your Dis-ease

Fighting is a form of resistance to what is. Instead of fighting dis-ease, open to it and receive the message your body is trying to give you. Work with it to guide you in your own healing.

Sit in a quiet place with no distractions. Go into a room away from phones and electronics so you won't be tempted by their little notifications.

Sit and breathe deeply. Start by taking ten deep breaths, counting each breath. Focus on the breath filling your lungs deeply and exhaling slowly out of your nose. Try to clear your mind of its incessant chatter and just focus on your breath and the counting.

If your mind wanders, don't beat yourself up. Just release the distracting thoughts and start back at one. You may have to repeat this process a few times before you finally reach ten. This will help you to focus and center yourself so that you can listen to your body.

Slowly perform a body scan from your head, down your neck, arms, fingers, back, hips, legs and feet.

What kind of sensations do you feel?

Be curious about the painful sensations you may be feeling. *Exactly* where are they in the specific muscles and joints?

If you notice an area that's sore or tense, don't try to relieve it or judge it as bad. These are forms of resistance and will only guarantee that the dis-ease will persist. You're going to make friends with it. Open up and take a good look at it.

Think of that area as something separate from you. Another being that has inhabited a part of your body.

Ask that part of your body what message it's trying to tell you. What is



the negative emotion trying to protect you from? How is it trying to help you? It wouldn't be there if it weren't trying to help you. Wait for the answer.

Our body is always looking out for us and would never seek to cause us harm. While we may be experiencing self-destructive thoughts and behaviors, when we look deeply into this, our body is seeking our highest good. We may not be choosing the most productive ways to manifest these goals.

Know that there is good behind these feelings. Ask the pain what the message is and be open to whatever comes up. Listen. You may hear things you don't want to hear. Listen anyway. Without listening and really hearing, you'll go back to repeating the negative things you're trying to resolve.

Each time you receive an answer, ask again to go more deeply. You might have to peel off many layers to get to the essence of the feeling.

Once you feel that the answer is about unconditional love, you'll know that you've gotten to the core.

Feel the love throughout your body. Know that this love is always there to be accessed whenever you want.



Week 8



Sleep

How Much Sleep Do You Need?

To get an idea of your own natural sleep rhythm, consider turning off all electronic devices, including all televisions, one hour after you finish dinner (earlier would be even better so you could mindfully enjoy your food).

Read. Go for a walk. Journal. Take a bath. Do some other light exercise. Simply relax and have a great conversation. Have sex. Play with your kids or partner (board games can be exciting!). Enjoy your unplugged time.

Go to bed when you feel tired.

Instead of waking up with an alarm clock, wake up when you feel rested.

Do this for three days straight and see how you feel. Give yourself a gift and take a three day weekend to do this.

Resolving Sleep Issues

Specific steps that you can take before bedtime to support you in getting a good night's rest are:

- Go to bed at the same time every night. Creating a routine tells your mind and body that it will get a break at a certain time each evening. When you vary your schedule, your system is slightly stressed by not knowing when it will be able to rest. Don't skimp on sleep during the week thinking you'll "make it up" over the weekend. It doesn't work.
- Eat a light dinner at least two hours before going to bed. Make breakfast or lunch your biggest meal of the day. Eating big before bedtime keeps your internal systems busy into the night which can interfere with the rest and cleansing processes that normally happen during sleep.



- Stop using all electronic devices (TV, phone, computer, games, etc.) an hour or two before bedtime. Whether you realize it or not, these devices, their screens and their output keep your mind racing long after you turn them off. Give yourself time to decompress before attempting to sleep.
- Take a hot bath before bed to relax your muscles and your mind.
- Read something relaxing.
- Avoid alcohol and caffeine at least two hours before bedtime. While alcohol might make you sleepy at first, it interferes with normal sleep patterns causing you to wake up in the middle of the night.
- Using your journal, a notebook or anything else you can write on (do not use a computer), write out all the thoughts, questions and worries swimming around in your head. Getting them out of your head and onto paper helps to clear and relax your mind so you can sleep. It also helps to move things from your conscious mind where ‘what if’s’ and other worries plague you to your subconscious mind where your ingenious solutions come from.
- Practice some light exercise and stretches to work out the kinks from the day and relax your muscles. For example, take a walk after dinner or do some stretches before bed. Save the more vigorous exercise for mornings or mid-day when your body has time to calm down.

Create a bedtime routine that you enjoy and that you can follow every night. You’re creating a new habit so you’ll need triggers that you’ll follow without thinking about them. Follow the steps on page 32 for creating a new habit.



Naps

If you're feeling run down during the day (most of us feel this in late afternoon), napping is a great idea. Your body is trying to tell you something. Listen to it.

In your daily schedule, set an appointment with yourself for 15-20 minutes to nap. At that time, simply put your head on your desk, sit in your car, relax in a comfortable chair – whatever works for you. Don't lie in bed or get too comfortable as you'll be more likely to sleep for too long causing you to feel tired the rest of the day. Close your eyes and relax.

It helps to tell yourself that you will wake up in 20 minutes. This sounds strange but it works. With practice, it's also a way to get up in the mornings without an alarm clock. As you're going to sleep, tell yourself what time you want to get up. You'll be waking up a little before your alarm goes off after about three days.

Taking one or two naps a day will help you to stay awake and feel refreshed. If you've been trying to wake up earlier in the morning to practice your passions or squeeze a bit more out of each day, naps are the way to make that happen.

To boost the benefits of your nap, follow it with a ten minute walk outside. The exercise, sunshine and fresh air will revitalize you and you'll be much more effective at whatever you do for the rest of the day.



Coaching and Mentoring

If at any point in your journey you feel that you could use someone to help you focus, keep you accountable, walk through the process or simply someone to talk to, I'm here for you.

I offer a variety of [mentoring packages](#) that include one-time or ongoing email and phone support. Your success is my highest priority and I will do whatever it takes to support you toward being healthier and happier.



About Paige and Simple Mindfulness



I hope you enjoyed and, more importantly, will get a lot of value from this program. May it serve you on your journey.

It's my mission to support you in new, mindful ways of being that will allow you to live a happier and more fulfilled life.

If you have any comments or feedback, I would love to hear from you. Feel free to contact me at Paige@PaigeBurkes.com.

To help spread the good word, tweet about the program on [Twitter](#) or post about this program and my blog on [Facebook](#). Check out my blog at www.simplemindfulness.com and sign up to receive the latest posts, updates and your free Mindful Living Guide. It only takes a second and it would mean a lot to me.

Thank you for being here and being so awesome!

Big Hugs!

Paige

