

# INSPIRED

## To Make Healthy Choices

### Did you ever drive somewhere and not remember driving at least part of the time?

Most of us have done it, and it's an example of **mindlessness**, where we stop **paying attention to the present**, get lost in our thoughts and time passes by without our awareness.

The latest studies show that **we spend nearly half of our time (47%) thinking about something other than what we are actually doing**, distracting ourselves from the task at hand. What may be even more surprising from the results is that **this daydreaming consistently makes us less happy**. Whether the daydreaming involves reminiscing, thinking ahead or even thinking of something pleasant, studies show that it tends to make us more miserable.

We are distracted 47% of the time while doing something.

Studies also show that **happiness is found by living more "in the now" by focusing less on what's going on in our minds and more on what's going on around us**, such as the people in the room, the environment and the conversations taking place around us.

Living in the moment, also called **mindfulness**, is a **state of active, open and intentional attention on the present**. When you become mindful, you realize that you are not your thoughts; you become an observer of your thoughts from moment to moment without judging them or getting lost in them.

Many people have found **specific advantages by living in the moment**, such as:

- They are **happier**, more exuberant, more empathetic and **more secure**.
- It **improves performance** by not overthinking. If you're in a situation that makes you anxious, such as giving a speech or introducing yourself to a stranger, **focusing on your anxiety tends to heighten it**.

You are living where life is happening when you live in the present.

For more information:  
**LIVING IN THE MOMENT**  
 www.guideinc.org

- It allows you to enjoy what's happening right **now**, rather than worry about the future or the past, thereby forgetting to experience now.
- It allows your mind to focus so that you can respond thoughtfully rather than automatically, **increasing your self-control** and allowing for **better regulation of behavior and emotions**.

Through developing the habit of always noticing new things in whatever situation you're in, you will avoid becoming mindless. **One of the most common ways to bring yourself into the present moment is to focus on your breathing**. Focus on the rise of your abdomen as you breathe in and the air going through your nostrils as you breathe out. Because you're placing your awareness on what's happening right now, you propel yourself powerfully into the present moment.

It's important to stay in the moment and truly engage in your life. Consider what the Dalai Lama said when asked what surprised him the most:

"Man, because he sacrifices his health in order to make money. Then he sacrifices money to recuperate his health. **And then he is so anxious about the future that he does not enjoy the present; the result being that he does not live in the present or the future;** he lives as if he is never going to die, and then he dies having never really lived."

Not only will you enjoy being fully engaged in the present, but spending time each day actively focusing on **living in the moment will also reduce stress, boost immune functioning, reduce chronic pain and lower blood pressure**.

Most negative thoughts concern the past or the future.

Take the time to enjoy something today by staying fully in the present.

