

ADDITIONAL AWARENESS EXERCISE YOU MAY FIND USEFUL

1. Try to be mindful for one minute every hour.
2. Touch base with your breathing throughout the day wherever you are, as often as you can.
3. For one week, be aware of one pleasant event per day while it is happening. Record these, as well as your thoughts, feelings, and bodily sensations...
4. During another week do the same for one unpleasant or stressful event per day while it is happening. Again, record your bodily sensations, thoughts, feelings, and reactions/responses. Look for underlying patterns.
5. Bring awareness to one difficult communication per day during another week, and record what happened, what you wanted from the communication, what the other person wanted, and what actually transpired...Look for patterns over the week. Does this exercise tell you anything about your mental states and their consequences as you communicate with others?
6. Bring awareness to the connections between physical symptoms of distress that you might be having, such as headaches, increased pain, palpitations, rapid breathing, muscle tension, and preceding mental states and their origins. Keep a calendar of these for a full week.
7. Be mindful of your needs for formal meditation, relaxation, exercise, a healthy diet, enough sleep, intimacy and affiliation, and humor, and honor them. These needs are the mainstays of your health. If adequately attended to on a regular basis, they will provide a strong foundation for health, increase your resilience to stress and lend to greater satisfaction and coherence to your life.
8. After a particularly stressful day or event, make sure that you take steps to decompress and restore balance that very day if at all possible. In particular, meditation, cardiovascular exercise, sharing time with friends, and getting enough sleep will help in the recovery process.

In summary, every moment of your waking life is a moment to which you might bring greater stillness and awareness. Our suggestions for how to do this will pale next to your own as you cultivate mindfulness in your life.