Daily Life Mindfulness

When you wake in the morning allow yourself some slow mindful breaths before you get out of bed. Be aware of the sound, the quality of light, or the darkness. Mindful breaths are ones that come slowly from your lower abdomen as you breathe slowly in and out, concentrating on the activity of breathing and how it feels.

Take a few minutes, either at home or on your way to work to notice something enjoyable about the morning: perhaps the sunlight or the rain or the face of a child or the sounds of birds or the wind.

On your way to work or school be mindful of your traveling. Be aware of your walking, how you are sitting in the car or bus or subway. Take a few mindful breaths to relax your body and mind. Do your best to allow your steps and actions to be peaceful ones.

When driving, use a few mindful breaths to calm you and bring you in tune with your vehicle. Notice how you are holding your body and let your breathing help you relax your shoulders and soften your face. See if you can break the pressure of pushing to get where you are going and simply enjoy the process of getting there. When you see a red traffic light allow that to be a bell of mindfulness (a reminder) and an opportunity to come back to your breath: relax your face and see whether a smile is possible.

Many things happen every day that you can use as bells of mindfulness: the doorbell, the phone, and the sounds of your computer. Let each one be an occasion to notice your breathing and allows therefore some mindful in and out breaths.

Approach eating with mindfulness—a few mindful breaths before you start. During the meal, be aware of chewing your food. Pause between swallowing one bite of food and picking up the next one. Spend at least five minutes of your meal in silence.

Help to make your trip home a transition time by slowing down—walk mindfully and be aware of your breathing—notice the quality of the air. Allow your attention to be with your surroundings. As you approach home take a few mindful breaths before you open the door. Make this transition a conscious one and notice what it feels like to be home.

As you go to bed and prepare to sleep, become aware of the bed supporting you, take some mindful breaths, and allow a smile. Feel the muscles of your body relaxing as you sink into the bed. Try to let go of what has happened during the day. Try to also let go of your anticipation of tomorrow.