

## 17 Ways to Practice Mindfulness Meditation in Everyday Life

The following is a very short list of some of the opportunities that we can use to check-in with our mind during the day. While far from extensive, this list can act as a reminder to us that there are unlimited moments within our day when we can take a “time out” from our distraction and attend to our mind.

1. **While taking a shower.** There’s singing in the shower, and then there’s meditating!
2. **While brushing your teeth.** I work on this one with my son all the time. It’s so easy to check out while doing this mundane task. Why not turn it into a short meditation practice. Since we’re supposed to brush our teeth at least twice a day, for at least 2 minutes each time, that’s an easy 4 minutes of meditation a day!
3. **While eating**
4. **While eating...**did I say this twice? Right, how many of us rush through our meals without even remembering what it was that we ate? Eating is one of the best times to practice being mindful and aware. It’s amazing how our food intake, what we take into our body, how much we eat, and—surprise!—how much we gain weight can be due to not being present with what we’re eating. Try it! You have three times a day to work with this one.
5. **While driving** to: work, school, play, shop, run errands, vacations, distraction.
6. **While surfing the web** or being otherwise involved on the computer. Who knows, you may be less inclined to impulse-buy on the Internet.
7. **While exercising.** This is a great one. I used to run a lot—marathons, 10k, etc. I also still like to bicycle quite a bit. But how to find the time to practice when I want to bike? Exactly; practice while biking. This means seeing my surroundings, feeling the road, smelling the smells, feeling my heart pounding, noticing the patterns of my breathing. Zen and the art of biking!
8. **While at work.** Right, this is why we’re learning about this, isn’t it? We spend so much of our time at work, why not turn our workdays into meditation days? What about when your boss is telling you that you need to work harder? Or less hard? Or maybe you’re the boss? Right. Work.
9. **Stuck at a traffic light?** Meditate. But don’t forget to be aware of the light. This isn’t about spacing out, remember? Gee; what are those cars behind me honking at me for? I’m at one with the light...except that it’s green!
10. **Folding laundry.** Zen and the art of suds!
11. **Doing the dishes.** I love this one. As a kid, my mom figured out early on that kids were valuable...for doing the dishes. I think that I became a Zen dishwasher at the age of 10!
12. **When you’re sick.** Have you ever sat at home, feeling lousy, just wishing that you were “doing” something. Illness can really get us down because it takes us out of our routine and away from our (busy?) life. Why not use this downtime and an opportunity to practice. Then we can really transform our suffering into the cause for happiness – what a bonus!
13. **When you’re in pain.** Similar to what we do when we’re sick, if we’re experiencing a lot of pain, it’s very easy to get caught up in the sensations and forget about everything else. When we work with pain, we may find that while the sensation itself doesn’t go away, our aversion or fear of it decreases. By the way, I’ve personally tested this one – repeatedly – through two surgeries as well as through years of chronic pain due to a neck injury sustained while bicycling – it works!
14. **When you’re sad or when you’re happy.** It’s so easy to get pulled to and fro by the momentary emotions of joy or sadness. When you find yourself experiencing either of these emotions, see what happens if you just settle into your mind, neither following after joy nor running away from sadness.
15. **As you’re going to sleep at night,** having set aside the cares of the day, bring your attention to your mind and just relax into an undistracted state of mind.
16. **The first thing in the morning,** as you’re arising, see what your mind is like before it’s become preoccupied and distracted with the day’s to-do list.
17. And the list goes on and on. Truly, since we’re trying to become more present and less distracted at any and all moments, there’s never a time where practicing won’t work. Try it.