

# HABITS OF MINDFULNESS

Practicing mindfulness is a great way to help quiet distractions, pull us back into the present, and live life in the moment. Though rooted in Buddhist meditation, the secular practice of mindfulness is becoming increasingly popular for its many physical and mental health benefits. Try integrating the following five habits into your daily routine to become more mindful:

1. **Take five minutes each day to stop “doing” and experience “being.”** Find somewhere quiet to relax your mind and focus only on your breathing. Just observe the sensation of your breath coming *in* and going *out*.
2. **Practice gratitude.** Journaling or just thinking about the things for which you are grateful brings your mind to the present moment and your focus to what is most important to you.
3. **Have compassion.** Having compassion for others and their struggles makes it easier to think about the positive aspects of your life and can help you cope with your own feelings of stress.
4. **Accept yourself and others.** Negative self-judgment damages self-esteem and how you interact with others. Stop striving for perfection and instead focus on taking action to improve your life.
5. **Don't take life's challenges too personally.** When confronted with a difficult situation (e.g., job loss, the end of a relationship), most people tend to blame themselves and begin a rumination cycle of “if only” questioning. Instead of getting stuck in a state of inaction and depression, acknowledge your present feelings and ask yourself what you can do, right now, to start moving forward.

*Source: Morneau Shepell*