

### #3 – Mindfulness vs. Mindlessness

What does it mean to be mindful? What does it mean to be mindless?

If you are mindful, you are aware, you are experiencing present moments with acceptance. In order to fully cultivate mindfulness, you need to intertwine all three at the same time.

Experiencing mindfulness can be elusive if you don't know what it is or how to cultivate and use it in your own life. So how can you cultivate awareness and present experiences with acceptance for yourself?

In order to understand mindlessness, you have to understand that your typical mental state is normally, virtually mindless.

What do we mean by that? We are not saying you are a mindless person. What we are saying is that you can spend most of your time lost in your past memories and fantasies of what you think your future should look like.

We tend to let our minds operate on autopilot most of the time and the result of this is that we tend to let our bodies be in one place and our minds in another.

Have you ever been distracted to the point where you don't know how you got to where you are? If you talk on the cell phone while you are driving, do you sometimes look around you and wonder, "How did I get here?" Your mind was concentrating on the conversation and your body was actually driving the car. Scary isn't it?

You could really hurt yourself (or others) if you experience this too often. We can get so distracted by interpersonal events that we do things automatically without thinking (mindlessness). Without guidance from the conscious mind, all sorts of things happen in our life.

We rush through life most of the time in a mindless state. We hurry into a coffee store, order the same coffee without even thinking. We go to eat at a restaurant and are so distracted by our conversation or others conversations that we don't even taste what we have just put in our mouths.

We tend to rush through life skipping over all of the most important events mindlessly trying to rush from one thing to the next. We always want to “get to the next best thing” (or so we think) in our life.

Time passes by so quickly and when we reflect back on our life then we wonder where the time went. It is a vicious cycle.

Mindfulness vs. Mindlessness means taking the time to “Stop and smell the Roses.” It is an old cliché but one that fits these topics perfectly.

When was the last time you actually stopped and really experienced life? Are you focusing on what you are reading right at this moment or are you wondering what you are going to do in an hour, this afternoon or tomorrow?

Stop what you are doing right now and think about what really matters in your life. Think about a memory that you really treasure. Was it with someone? Was it a vacation moment? Was it a life event? Whatever it was just fully think about that moment.

In thinking about that moment were you thinking about the past or imagining the future? To fully appreciate moments in your life, you need to be fully present and notice what is happening in the here and now.

These moments are your moments of Mindfulness when you notice everything around you and really enjoy being in the present. Mindfulness means being present in your own life.