

1. Mindfulness

Mindfulness arises from paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, without judgement.

Our never-ending mental activity means that we spend most of our time on automatic pilot going through tasks and events. Indeed, throughout most of our life we are only partially present and aware because so much of our attention is engaged elsewhere.

Have you ever driven home, and as you parked your car realised that you don't remember anything at all about the drive? Or gone around the supermarket and arrived at the checkout with a full trolley but no memory of putting anything in? Just think of all those moments

of life we let pass us by. Big deal, you may say, what's so great about going shopping in the supermarket or driving along the motorway?

Which kinds of mindlessness do you recognise in yourself?

Situations	Your comments
<p>Not being present while doing routine tasks e.g. showering, chopping vegetables, ironing etc.</p>	
<p>Not listening fully to people because you are thinking how you want to reply</p>	
<p>Wandering mind – not thinking about what you are doing (as the Harvard research described)</p>	
<p>Allowing your evaluating aspect of mind to overrun your experiencing aspect of mind – trying to make your experiences into a continuous whole</p>	
<p>Wanting to 'switch off' and rest but instead letting your mind be hijacked by worrying and anxious thoughts</p>	