

Meditation & Mindfulness — Workbook

This workbook turns the course into a working practice. Each section mirrors a module with exercises to try, worksheets to fill in, and checklists to keep you honest. Work through it over six to eight weeks alongside your daily sits, and use the templates to track what actually moves the needle for you.

Foundations: What Mindfulness Is and How to Begin

Set up a sustainable practice by clarifying your why, engineering your environment, and logging your very first sits.

Exercise: Three-Minute Counted Breath

Sit upright in a chair, set a timer for three minutes, and count each out-breath from one to ten, then restart at one. When you notice your mind has wandered, smile, and return to one. Do this once today and note what happened below.

- How many times did you notice your mind wander and come back? Remember, each one is a successful rep.

- What did the wandering pull toward most: planning, replaying, worrying, or something else?

- On a scale of 1 to 10, how restless versus settled did you feel by the end?

Worksheet: Your Practice Blueprint

Decide the concrete details of your practice before you rely on willpower. Fill in each field with a specific, realistic answer you can commit to for two weeks.

My deepest reason for practising (the why I will return to on hard days)

Exact time of day I will sit

Habit stack trigger (After I ____, I will meditate)

Fixed location and seat (chair or cushion)

Starting duration (5 minutes recommended)

Timer or app I will use

How I will silence notifications during the sit

The one-word log I will jot after each sit

Checklist: Environment and Setup Ready

- Chosen one consistent spot and left the chair or cushion permanently visible there
- Selected a timer with a gentle bell (for example Insight Timer or a phone interval timer)
- Set phone to aeroplane mode or do-not-disturb for the sit
- Written my habit-stack trigger on a sticky note where I will see it
- Committed to five minutes daily for the first two weeks
- Adopted the rule: noticing a wandering mind is a success, not a failure

Core Techniques: Body, Breath, and Open Awareness

Build your toolkit of formal techniques: the body scan, deliberate breathing patterns, and open awareness.

Exercise: Full Body Scan

Sit or lie down and move attention slowly from the toes of your left foot up through the whole body, softening each area on an out-breath. Take 10 to 20 minutes. Afterward, capture what you noticed.

- Where in your body did you hold the most tension you had not noticed before?

- Were there regions where you felt nothing? How did it feel to simply note that and move on?

- Did you stay awake and present, or drift toward sleep? What will you adjust next time?

Exercise: Breathing Toolkit Trial

Over three days, try one deliberate breathing pattern per day and record its effect, so you learn which tool fits which situation.

- Extended exhale (4 in, 6 out) for two minutes: what shifted in your body and mind?

- Box breathing (4-4-4-4) for four rounds: how did it feel in a moment of mild stress?

- Physiological sigh (double inhale, long exhale) for three cycles: how fast did relief come?

Worksheet: Concentration Versus Open Awareness Log

Alternate the two core practices across a week and compare them. Fill in one row per day in your own notes using these fields.

Date

Practice used (breath focus or open awareness)

Duration in minutes

Approx. number of returns to the anchor

Dominant experience (calm, restless, sleepy, busy)

One insight or observation

Checklist: Core Techniques Practised

- Completed at least three full body scans this section
- Tried the extended exhale, box breathing, and physiological sigh at least once each
- Practised open awareness with light mental noting after a breath warm-up
- Noticed at least once that a strong sensation arose, peaked, and passed on its own
- Stopped any breath-hold technique immediately if it caused dizziness

Working with Emotions and the Heart

Learn to meet difficult emotions with RAIN, cultivate warmth with loving-kindness, and recover faster from stress.

Exercise: Run a RAIN on a Real Emotion

The next time a moderate difficult emotion arises (or recall a recent one), walk through Recognise, Allow, Investigate, Nurture. Take your time with the body in the Investigate step, then write it up.

- Recognise: what was the emotion, and what changed the instant you named it?

- Investigate: where did you feel it in the body, and what was its texture (tight, hot, heavy)?

- Nurture: what kind gesture or phrase did you offer yourself, and how did the wave change over the next few minutes?

Exercise: Loving-Kindness for Yourself First

Sit for five to ten minutes offering the phrases may I be happy, healthy, safe, and live with ease. If self-directed kindness feels hard, begin with a benefactor or pet, then turn the warmth toward yourself. Place a hand on your heart.

- Which recipient was easiest to feel warmth for, and which was hardest?

- What happened in your body when you directed kindness toward yourself?

- Did any resistance or self-criticism show up? How did you respond to it?

Worksheet: My Stress Early-Warning System

Map your personal stress signature so you can catch activation early and respond on purpose. Fill in each field from your own experience.

My earliest physical signals of stress (for example shallow breath, tight jaw)

My typical autopilot reaction when stressed

The breathing tool I will use to down-regulate in the moment

The naming sentence I will say (I am feeling ____ right now)

The response I would rather choose instead of my autopilot

One recurring trigger I will treat as a cue to pause

Checklist: Emotional Skills Rehearsed

- Applied RAIN to at least one real difficult emotion this section
- Practised loving-kindness for at least four of the six recipients
- Used affect labelling (naming the feeling) in a stressful moment
- Tried urge surfing on one craving or impulse instead of acting on it
- Noticed and widened the gap between a trigger and my reaction at least once

Everyday Mindfulness and a Lasting Practice

Carry mindfulness off the cushion, apply it to focus and sleep, and build a habit that survives real life.

Exercise: Choose and Run Three Daily Anchors

Pick three informal anchors (for example mindful first-three-bites, mindful walking, the mindful pause at red lights) and practise each at least once a day for five days. Record what you notice.

- Which anchor was easiest to remember, and what cue triggered it?

• What did you notice that you normally miss on autopilot?

• Where could you add the STOP practice during a reactive moment this week?

Worksheet: Lasting-Practice Design

Define the system that will keep your practice alive past the motivation of week one. Fill in each field with a concrete commitment.

My realistic daily minimum (the amount I keep even on my worst day)

My stretch target for good days

How I will track consistency (log, app streak, calendar)

My weekly variety plan (which practices on which days)

My never-miss-twice recovery move after a skipped day

My support or community (course, group, friend, app)

Exercise: Name Your Hindrance

During your next three sits, when you hit an obstacle, silently name it using the five hindrances (desire, aversion, sloth, restlessness, doubt) and apply the matching fix. Note the results.

- Which hindrance showed up most often across the three sits?

• Which fix worked best for it (for example sitting upright for drowsiness)?

• How did naming the hindrance change your relationship to it?

Checklist: Lasting-Practice Foundations in Place

- Practised at least three informal anchors daily for five days
- Used the STOP practice in at least one genuinely reactive moment
- Set a realistic daily minimum and a stretch target
- Started tracking consistency with a log or app streak

- [] Identified my most common hindrance and its fix
- [] Decided on one form of ongoing support or community

Your Action Plan

1. Week 0: complete the Practice Blueprint worksheet and set up your seat, timer, and silenced notifications.
2. Weeks 1 to 2: sit five minutes daily using counted breath; log a one-word note after each sit.
3. Week 2: add a daily full body scan of 10 to 20 minutes and capture where you hold tension.
4. Week 3: extend sits to ten minutes and trial the three breathing tools, noting which fits which situation.
5. Week 4: alternate breath focus and open awareness across the week using the comparison log.
6. Week 5: practise RAIN on real emotions as they arise and run loving-kindness two to three times.
7. Week 6: build your stress early-warning system and rehearse responding instead of reacting.
8. Week 7: layer in three informal daily anchors and the STOP practice during reactive moments.
9. Week 8: finalise your Lasting-Practice Design, set never-miss-twice, and choose ongoing support.
10. Ongoing: keep the daily minimum sacred, vary practices weekly, and review your logs once a month.

