

my reflection

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I chose to try out both mindful breathing and mindful eating. Before I started both, I was focusing on everything that I had to get done today, and thinking ahead on the week to come. After I took five minutes to just breathe, I felt like things were happening much more slowly, and felt less of a sense of urgency in general. Actually, I found myself dreading taking five minutes to just breathe and not think of anything else, as I thought the minutes would go by slowly and I would not be able to calm my racing thoughts, but the timer ended up going off in what felt like just two minutes. For the most part, I was able to keep my thoughts on my breathing for the full five minutes, having to guide them back just a few times.

Before I practiced mindful eating, I was in the headspace of just eating to become full and get back on with my day. After, I felt humbled by how such a seemingly little thing carries so much sensory power, and just how much there is to be grateful for when it comes to food. I felt a sense of general gratitude for all of the seemingly small things in my life that actually hold so much value and bring me happiness everyday. I preferred the breathing exercise though, because it felt more like something I could do everyday. As a student, most of my meals have to be a bit rushed because of my packed schedule. Taking five minutes out of the day to breathe is something I could do everyday, even in between classes. Also, my racing thoughts often cause me stress, and I was able to slow them down by taking five minutes just to focus on my breath. This is something that will really help me moving forward.

I was actually able to find time to be by myself to do both of these things, but in the future I can see a lack of time being an issue for me. That is why I liked the breathing exercise though, because I will be able to fit it in even on my busiest days. One barrier I did face was feeling a bit frustrated during both exercises when my mind started to wander. I was able to guide it back, but it can be tough to get into the right mindset, especially in the midst of a busy day. To eliminate that in the future, I will keep practicing mindfulness, and make sure to be gentle with myself when my mind starts to wander instead of feeling frustrated. Because of my experience with this, I made sure to make it a point in my social media post!



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mindfulness matters

**two quick practices to help reduce your
stress, improve your attention span, and
boost your memory**



mindful breathing

Pick a moment in your day to set aside five minutes. This does not have to be a time that you are alone, just a time when your attention is not needed elsewhere. **Set a timer for five minutes and just breathe.** **Focus your attention to your breaths**, your chest moving up and down, and how your body feels as you breathe. **Be gentle with yourself** when your mind strays, and **guide your thoughts back to your breathing**, taking care to not become frustrated with yourself. Mindfulness takes practice!

mindful eating

Choose a meal or snack time that you will be able to eat by yourself. **Eat slowly, and focus on each sensation as you go.** Think of your five senses, and how your food appeals to each one of them. **Think about how it feels to eat; tasting, chewing, swallowing.** Reflect on the experience of eating as you take each bite. **Appreciate the food and all the sensations that it brings as you eat it.**