

Mindfulness Doesn't Take a Summer Holiday

As our mindfulness group takes a break over the summer, it can be tempting to think that our practice does too. Yet perhaps this is when mindfulness becomes most valuable. The aim of our group has never been simply to become better at mindful meditation. Meditation is the practice ground; life is where mindfulness comes alive.



Over the coming weeks, you may find yourself in gardens, parks, cafés, on coastal walks, looking after grandchildren, travelling, meeting up with friends you haven't seen for ages, or simply enjoying a quieter time, rebuilding your balance and equilibrium. **Every one of these moments offers an opportunity to practise.**

- 🌿 Notice the warmth of the sun on your face before reaching for your phone.
- 🌿 Listen to the chorus of birds rather than hurrying to identify them.
- 🌿 Feel your feet connecting with the ground as you walk, instead of connecting with your 'to do list'.
- 🌿 Pause before responding when something irritates you.
- 🌿 Really taste the first sip of your morning tea or coffee.
- 🌿 These are not little things. They are mindfulness.

Some days you may forget to practise. That's perfectly normal. Mindfulness has never been about perfection or collecting unbroken streaks. The practice begins again each time you notice your mind has wandered. **Every return to the present moment is itself a success.**

Summer, especially during this heat wave, can also invite us to slow down. Nature follows its own rhythm without rushing. Flowers bloom when they are ready. Trees do not compete with one another. Clouds drift across the sky without needing to arrive anywhere. There is something deeply reassuring about remembering that we, too, are allowed to move at a human pace.

Perhaps choose one simple intention each day:

"Today I will notice."

Notice your breath.

Notice moments of gratitude.

Notice kindness, both given and received.

Notice beauty in unexpected places.

Notice when your mind races ahead—and gently escort it back.

You don't need an hour of meditation to remain mindful. Sometimes thirty seconds of full awareness can change the course of a day.

Until then, be gentle with yourselves. Keep returning to this moment. **After all, this moment is the only one we've ever truly had.**

Summer Reflection

During the summer, if you notice a moment that made you stop, smile, breathe deeply, or simply feel fully alive, make a brief note of it. You may wish to share one of those moments with the group. **Sometimes the smallest moments become our greatest teachers.**

A Mindful Summer — written by me and CHATgpt

The garden asks for little,
Just sunshine, rain and care;
It teaches us, in silence,
That peace is growing there.
Each blossom blooms when ready,
No flower rushes through;
The summer gently whispers,
"There's time enough for you."

So may this summer find you
With moments softly found—
A cup of tea, a sunset,
Bare feet upon the ground.
And when September calls us
To gather once again,
May hearts be gently nourished,
Like gardens after rain.

The blackbird greets the morning,
Bees wander bloom to bloom;
A breeze stirs through the grasses,
Sweet scents as beautiful as perfume.
The smallest things can fill us
With quiet joy anew;
When we are truly present,
The ordinary shines through.

Final thought - A garden is never finished. Each season simply offers a different kind of beauty. Mindfulness is much the same; we are not trying to arrive somewhere, only to keep tending what matters.