

# Mindfulness Exercises



Mindfulness means living in the present moment and being intentionally more focused on what is happening in your surroundings – without judgement. Mindfulness encourages slowing down and letting negative thoughts pass before responding to situations. When you give yourself time to pause, you likely will notice a sense of calm and a greater awareness of your emotions. Mindfulness as a tool is beneficial for overall wellness and can be utilized at any time with noticeable results. Like anything new, it takes practice to become efficient at using mindfulness in times of need.

## Mindfulness Exercise # 4: Cleaning the House

The term “cleaning house” has a literal meaning we are all too familiar with (cleaning up your actual house). It also has a figurative one (getting rid of “emotional baggage”, letting go of things that no longer serve you), and both can be great stress relievers! Because **clutter** has several hidden costs and can be a subtle but significant stressor, cleaning house and de-cluttering as a mindfulness exercise can bring lasting benefits. To bring mindfulness to cleaning, view it as a positive event, an exercise in self-understanding and stress relief, rather than as a chore. As you clean, focus on what you are doing as you are doing it – and nothing else. Feel the warm, soapy water on your hands as you wash dishes; experience the vibrations of the vacuum cleaner in your feet as you move it across the floor; enjoy the warmth of the laundry as you fold it; feel the freedom in letting go of unneeded objects as you put them into a donations bag. It may sound silly, but if you shift your approach to cleaning as an exercise in mindfulness, it can become one. If you find that trying this exercise alone does not quite make the cut – add music.