

THE MINDFUL KIND



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Welcome to The Mindful Kind Interview Series!

I've decided that it's time to throw convention out the window and get a whole lot more excited about mindfulness! We know that being mindful can bring richness, meaning and calm into our lives and can also offer amazing benefits, from better sleep to lower stress. However, I believe that our mindfulness journeys can also be refreshing, fun and inspiring! Discover which animal best represents mindfulness, what the strangest mindful practices are and how to use interesting mindfulness tools.

You'll find out all of this and much, much more, as this interview series comes to life!

Introducing the beautiful Erin Williams, from the inspirational In Our Stillness. Erin has filled this interview to the brim with mindfulness goodness- not only will you find lovely tips for beginners, a brilliant mindful walking practice and what inspires her to keep being mindful, you will also read about her (very exciting!) strange mindfulness practice.

How would you describe mindfulness?

For me, mindfulness is all about presence. It's about feeling into a moment, no matter what it may be, and soaking in as much of it as I can.

What is your favourite mindfulness practice?

My morning walk. I leave my phone in the car, then walk barefoot along the beach watching the sun slowly rise. Not only does it start my day off on a high note, it also helps me feel connected to my body, my breath and my surroundings.

Why do you keep practising mindfulness?

Before I started practicing mindfulness I was a total stress-head. I was constantly worried about something - whether it was being late, what someone thought of me, looking awkward - and it took me a really long time to fall asleep at night. I keep practicing mindfulness because it calms these worried thoughts, reminds me of what's truly important and helps me unwind at the end of a busy day.

If mindfulness were a landscape, what would it be?

It would be the ocean. It doesn't matter if it's a blue day and a still sea, or a grey sky above wild waves, the ocean always brings me back to the present moment. I find the ocean always serves as a reminder to slow down, to lose the distractions and simply focus on one thing at a time.

What is your best tip for introducing a mindfulness practice for a beginner?

I think when you're starting to practice mindfulness it's important to start small. It's impossible to practice mindfulness constantly (as nice as that would be) so don't worry when you find yourself distracted or disconnected from what you're doing. Simply pause, breath and do your best to come back to the moment - whether that's eating something delicious, walking through the park on a beautiful day, reading a book, or listening to a guided meditation.

Do you think mindfulness is a good practice to teach children?

Definitely. I've got a little one on the way and I've been thinking a lot about how I want to raise him, and mindfulness is definitely on the list. I'd love to teach him how to meditate and how to eat mindfully. I also think children naturally practice mindfulness, they are easily absorbed in the present moment and their presence can be infectious, and I can't wait to learn to tap into that inquisitiveness.

Which type of food best represents mindfulness and why?

Mangoes. When I'm eating a mango I find it forces me to do so mindfully. The mango season is far too short so I try and savour the taste, and the juice that always seems to drip down my arms brings me back into my body and how enjoyable it is to eat one of my favourite foods.

What is your strangest mindfulness practice?

Right now, my strangest mindfulness practice happens whenever my growing baby decides to dance up a storm in my belly. When I feel him wriggling I drop whatever I'm doing, and either watch my belly move or place my hand on top of his kicks. I know this feeling is going to be short-lived and I want to soak it in while I can. The email I'm writing or the Instagram scrolling can wait.

Is there anything you use to inspire your mindfulness practice?

The feeling I experience from mindfulness serves as a reminder to keep practicing it. Whenever my mindfulness practice slips away I quickly notice the difference in how I feel, and it's a feeling I don't particularly like. On a day-to-day basis I use my breath to inspire my mindfulness practice. My breath can always bring me back to the moment and to how I'm feeling.

If you could choose one activity from the following three, what would it be and why? Mindful eating, mindful walking or mindful breathing?

Mindful walking. It's such a simple way to reconnect with my body and the present moment. Even if I only have 5 minutes a mindful walk around the block can clear my mind and anchor me back into the moment. If I have an hour, a mindful walk is my favourite way to start the day.

Erin is a self-care devotee, a wellness coach and writer. Erin blogs at In Our Stillness where she shares her passion for healthy living and commitment to self-love. She inspires busy women to infuse their lives with self-care, find their own brand of wellness, and connect back to their inner wisdom.