

# The Benefits Of Mindfulness



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With Your Host

**Natalie Bacon**

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## The Benefits Of Mindfulness

Hi there. Welcome to the *Design Your Dream Life* podcast. My name is Natalie Bacon, and I'm an advanced certified mindfulness life coach as well as a wife and mom. If you're here to do the inner work and grow, I can help. Let's get started.

Hello my friend. Welcome to the podcast. Today we are talking about the benefits of mindfulness. The day that this comes out it is November 30<sup>th</sup>, which means that we are right in the middle of the holiday season. With that, I am offering something brand new that is going to be so fun and transformational this holiday season.

It's called 25 Days of Mindfulness. I'm sending out an email every single day from December 1 through December 25 with a mindfulness message. It's going to help you navigate this season, being more intentional and mindful and really showing up in a way that you want to be.

I know that the holidays can be a container where any issue you normally have throughout the year, there's like a magnifying glass on it. So if you have a challenging relationship with an in-law normally, it might not come up that often. Yet during the holidays, we have a magnifying glass on it, and it comes up more, and it's more intense.

So 25 Days of Mindfulness is going to give you a mindfulness message every single day to help you keep your head in the right place, help you navigate any big feelings that you're having, or you're having in your family, and really help you show up in a more intentional way. You can sign up for this. It's free over at [nataliebacon.com/25days](http://nataliebacon.com/25days). We get started tomorrow. You are absolutely going to love this.

With that, I thought it would be a fun time to talk about the benefits of mindfulness, specifically the benefits that I've seen in my own life as well as the benefits that so many of my clients have experienced. I think mindfulness can be a buzzword. It often gets confused with meditation. Mindfulness is not the same as meditation. Meditation is a tool that you can use that's included as one of the many tools that I teach inside of the overarching category of mindfulness.

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So when I'm talking about mindfulness, I'm talking about being aware in the present moment and accepting of it. So it's awareness with acceptance. I've talked about mindfulness specifically in a few other podcasts. You can go back and listen to that. There's one called What is Mindfulness. There's one called How to Become More Mindful. There's another one called mindfulness. That will give you a great introduction to mindfulness, specifically, if you're brand new.

But today, let's go over specifically what you should be looking for if you are applying these tools. I think that that is going to be the most helpful because consuming is great. I think that's part of it. That's the first part where you want to be learning, consuming, listening to podcasts, reading books, kind of self-educating and growing in that way.

But the way that you know if what you're learning is actually working is you will have different results in your life. You will either feel different. You will have a different shift. You will experience life differently. Your challenges will be different, and you will navigate them differently.

I'm just thinking of a DM that someone sent me yesterday saying that they actually were able to stay calm without yelling using the practices that they learned from me. That is an example of seeing a result in your life change due to the learning that you're doing. So that's what you want to be looking for when you're looking for okay, is what I'm learning actually working. If it's not, that doesn't mean that it's bad to learn. It just means that you're missing the application piece.

So the application piece, of course, is what we do inside Grow You. If you're not in there, join us over at [nataliebacon.com/coaching](https://nataliebacon.com/coaching). But I think just having a sense of what you should be looking for to know okay, is there still a gap between learning this and seeing the transformation? I always want to be asking myself that as well. I think it can be powerful for you to do.

So let's dive in. Here are some of the benefits that I think it can be powerful to keep an eye out for to see is this working in my life? Number one, you

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don't feel limited by your past. You're not past focused. You're not thinking okay because I was a lawyer in the past that means something about my future. Because I am in debt that I got in for law school, that means something about my future. Because I tried to lose weight in the past, that means something about my future.

I.e. if I was unsuccessful losing weight in the past, that means nothing about my future. My debt means nothing about my future. My career in the past means nothing about my future. When you're using mindfulness practices the way that I teach them, you won't see your past as limiting. You will see your past as circumstances that exist that you can create meaning around that serves you so that you take your past with you in a really helpful way into your future.

Benefit number two. Big feelings like anxiety or overwhelm aren't a problem. You're not trying to fix your feelings. When they come up, you remind yourself that you're a human, and you feel them. You go into your body, and you practice feeling them. You're not trying to avoid them, escape them, numb out. You're not trying to eat your way through your feelings or shop your way through your feelings. Instead, you're aware of them, and you allow them to be there. They're not a problem. They are part of the human experience.

The third benefit is that you're actually healthier physically because you've conditioned your body to be comfortable in a rest state. I can so relate to this one because there was a time in my life where I was not comfortable resting at all. I had to be doing more all of the time in order to feel worthy. That took a toll on me physically. Now I am so much healthier physically because I've conditioned my body to be comfortable in a rest state, which of course started from my mindset that I don't need to earn my rest. I am worthy of rest.

The fourth benefit is knowing that mistakes and failures mean nothing about you. So let's just use my career changes as an example. I quit practicing law. Then I transitioned into a career as a wealth manager, as a certified financial planner. Then I transitioned from that career to building

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my own business. I made so many mistakes along the way. I missed the mark so many different times, and I never made them mean anything about me.

Let me give you a specific example. I failed the CFP exam the first time I took it. Passed the bar just fine, failed the CFP. I was working full time. I was doing my business on the side, and I didn't get the passing grade. I remember seeing fail on the screen, and I was sort of offended that that was the word. Like I really wanted to say try again next time, or you got this score out of this score, and that means you need to take it one more time.

Like the word failure just doesn't resonate with me because I don't make it mean anything about me. I know that if I desire something, and I missed the mark, I can always keep going. That's a product of training my brain to not make mistakes or failures mean anything about me.

Sometimes I think this is harder to do as it relates to motherhood. So if I yell or get mad, and it's not my highest self, and I want to repair, not making that mean anything about me as a mom is so important. Because if I make it mean something about me, that I'm a bad mom, and I use that label, then I shame myself. Then I avoid that part of me, and then I don't get leverage on it, and I can't actually change it. So really embracing the 50/50, the human part of it. I like to say I'm a human mom, not a robot mom. That is really powerful work that only came from me managing my mind and my emotions.

The next benefit is being able to navigate life transitions, like moves across the country or bringing home a new dog or a baby or a breakup or an illness or a death, anything that you would consider a big life transition. Being able to navigate that is something that I think comes from being more mindful, being more intentional. It means making space for kind of the messiness and the resistance and the uncertainty in a transition. Knowing that the certainty is something you can create within you even when circumstances don't seem certain or they aren't certain.

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Again, it's a conditioning of the brain because underneath felt that primitive brain wants circumstances to be certain. During a transition, it's the opposite. So you have to go inward to manage your mind and your body for that.

The sixth benefit of mindfulness is that you stop trying to do more to be more valuable. You feel good about yourself just because you're choosing to feel good about yourself, not because you checked everything off of your to do list. This work is work worth doing. Because if you don't do it, what happens is you're always chasing the next thing to feel good enough, and it's exhausting.

When you see oh yeah, there's actually no end to the to do list or to the work list or to the whatever list that's in your mind. When you see that the things that you are doing are optional things that you want to be doing, instead, you can decide on purpose how you want to think and feel about that. Not believing that your worth depends on how much you do or how well you do something.

The seventh benefit of mindfulness is you allow your kids to be themselves, and you don't see them as an extension of you. I cannot tell you how powerful this has been for me. So I think on default, we see our kids as an extension of us. So their behavior means something about us. How well they do in school means something about us.

I can specifically remember all these instances on airplanes with RJ when he was first born, and he basically slept through the flight. People would tell me oh my gosh, he did so great. You did so great. Really, they would compliment me on his behavior, like I had anything to do with that.

Then I remember six/eight months later having a similar but very different experience where RJ was basically crying the entire time. People were kind, but they were saying very different things, right. They were not saying good job to me. They were saying oh don't worry about it. Babies cry, and all that sort of thing.

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If I had taken the initial compliments on those first flights to mean that I did a good job, the inverse of that means that when RJ does throw a tantrum that I'm doing a bad job. What this means is that I am either a good mom or a bad mom dependent on whether my child "behaves". That is really dangerous territory to be in for yourself because we can't control our kids.

So we want to allow them to be themselves, allow them to have big feelings. Kids are born with the capacity to feel every single feeling, and yet they have no skills to feel them. So it's allowing them to be themselves. Of course, have boundaries for actions, but when we're talking about feelings, we want to allow them to have their feelings and feel those feelings, and have boundaries in place if they're taking actions that are not appropriate. But do that seeing them as their own person, not as an extension of you.

I like to remind myself that RJ is his own person, and that my role is to love him and mentor him and guide him. I don't make his actions a reflection of my worth. They're separate. We are both independently whole and worthy. Sometimes he takes actions that are not so great. The same is true for me. It means nothing about how good we are.

Okay, the eighth benefit of mindfulness is that you can always reinvent and redefine your relationships. You can do this intentionally because a relationship exists in your mind. When you think about your relationship with yourself, with maybe your spouse, with your kids, with your in-laws, with your life. Did you know you have a relationship with your life, your home, with the weather? Anything that you are thinking about in your mind, you have a relationship with. At any time you can decide to think about and relate to that thing differently.

So you can decide to reinvent your marriage. You can do that all on your own. It doesn't mean going to a place where you don't believe what you're thinking. So you don't want to say my relationship with my spouse is the best it's ever been if that's something you don't believe.

But instead of looking for all the things that are wrong with your marriage, you might decide to look for some of the things that you genuinely believe



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are pretty dang good. Like I love that I can trust my spouse. I love that we are working on our marriage together. I love that I'm learning so much during this season of our marriage. Whatever it is.

The idea though is that you can change any relationship that you want in your mind. It doesn't take anything from anyone else. This is a skill because often we are reactive in relationships. We look to other people. Part of mindfulness is bringing it back to you and you deciding who you want to be in the relationship because that's what you have the most control over. It's so freeing, so amazing, so empowering. I love, love, love that specific benefit, particularly with relationships with other people.

The ninth benefit is that you enjoy the present more. I know this sounds like such a cliché, but it is true. You learn the skill of delighting in your life. You don't think that over there is better because you know that over there, whether it's when all of your kids are in school or when all of your kids leave the house. Whether it's when you lose the weight, or whatever your mental over there is, you take your brain with you. So you just trade in challenges.

I like to think of it with respect to the dating analogy. So when I was single, I had single people problems. Then I got married, and I don't have those single people problems anymore. Now I have married people problems. So I still feel the full range of emotions. They're just sort of dressed up in a different outfit. Instead of thinking about dating or going on dates or different guys that I might be dating, now I'm thinking about the challenges in a marriage. So the feeling is the same, it just has a different outfit.

Knowing that really helps you become more present because you know that as you grow, as you change your life, truly you keep your humaneness, and that that's not a problem. That's the 50/50 of life. Interestingly, it allows you to indulge in the present more because you're not thinking I need to get over there where I'll be happy. Because of course, that's always a lie.



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The tenth benefit to mindfulness is that you really create this internal balance in all of the areas of life that matter to you. So, for example, if you decide to downshift in your career a little bit to raise your kids, and you're not seeing your friends as much. Maybe you're working part time, and you're focusing on family. Those are the two areas that are most important to you during this season.

Even though that looks a lot different than maybe five years ago or 10 years ago, it feels internally balanced to you because you've set your priorities intentionally. So there's this internal balance. It's not externally focused. It's not based on the number of hours you allocate to different roles. It's an internal decision, and therefore it feels steady and grounded and balanced because you've decided on purpose how you want to live your life, which is just the most amazing gift that you could give yourself.

The 11th benefit to mindfulness is that you become your own best friend. Meaning when you make a mistake, when you get it wrong, when you yell or you say something rude to your spouse, you have love and compassion for yourself. The more love and compassion you have for yourself, the more equipped you are to love others and have compassion for others.

So you will show up as a more compassionate, connected, loving mom or loving wife the more you love yourself. So the more that you work on yourself, the more that you practice this, the more that you become your own best friend, the more able you are to be a best friend to others. It's just the way that it works.

The 12 benefit is that you choose who you want to be on purpose. So, again, that default brain that wants to focus on things outside of our control. We want to control the people. We want to control the world. If everyone just acted how we thought then it would be better, right? That's sort of the default brain thinking that it needs to control everything outside of us.

With mindfulness, you redirect your brain back to what you can control, and that's you. So you can choose who you want to be on purpose. This goes for little things, like maybe your kids aren't turning in homework. It goes for

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big things like maybe you know your mother-in-law just received a diagnosis or anything else. You can always shift your focus back to you and ask yourself who do I want to be?

Again, this is a skill because on default, your brain will not do that. On default, your brain will want to control people in the world. So you have to practice redirecting your brain back to you, back to what you can control.

The next benefit of mindfulness is that you have confidence deciding how you want to live your life. That includes the expectations you have for yourself, for your kids, for your life. It's coming from within. So instead of looking to your neighbor or the next person you see in your social media scroll for what you should be doing, you let them be them, and you decide who you want to be. You decide what expectations you have for yourself. You decide what expectations you have for your kids. You don't let other people or society define them for you.

The next benefit of mindfulness is that fear and insecurity don't stop you from your greatness. So if I think back to changing careers, I had so much fear, so much anxiety. But because I understand the brain and the mind and the body, I didn't let those feelings stop me. I just allowed them, and I made decisions from my highest self, from that prefrontal cortex. That allowed me to quit practicing law, to transition from being a CFP to running my own business. It was hard, but because I was using these tools, I was able to do it.

The 15th benefit of mindfulness is that you have inner confidence. You believe in your ability to use your mind and to feel your feelings. So it doesn't mean arrogance. It means you are loving and accepting of yourself, and you will have your own back. So if you go on stage to speak, you feel the fear and you do it anyway. If you trip and fall, or if you make a mistake, or if everyone in the audience laughs at you. You say you know what? It's totally fine. I bombed, and I love me anyway. That's inner confidence.

The next benefit is that you pay close attention to your mind and your body. You manage them. It's a skill. It's like showering. We do it daily. It's not like

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going to college where you go for four years, and you're done. It's like showering or exercising. As long as you are living, you have a brain and a body to manage. Practicing managing them will help you live more fully, more confidently, and have all of the benefits that I've talked about so far.

The 17th benefit is that you don't feel like a victim of your life. When you have challenges, when things are hard whether it's a little thing, like the day is just exhausting, or whether it's a big thing, like your spouse wants a divorce, whatever it is. You know that you can work through any challenge. You know that your life is happening for you.

Which leads into the 18th benefit. It's not that your life is easier. So when you're practicing mindfulness, when you are using these practices and tools, it's not that your life is easier. It's that you are easier on yourself when your life is hard. So really think about that. When you make a mistake, when you get it wrong, when something happens in the world that you don't want to be happening, are you easier on yourself, or are you hard on yourself?

The 19th benefit is that you have self-compassion. I like to think of you putting your hands together, and you're holding your feelings with love. So when you feel sad, when you feel disappointment, when you feel anger, you have your hands out in front of you, and you're holding that anger with love. That's self-compassion. The last benefit, the 20th benefit, is that the world is the same, but you are completely different. That's what I have for you today my friends. I love you so much. Take care.

If you loved this podcast I invite you to check out Grow You my mindfulness community for moms where we do the inner work together. Head on over to [nataliebacon.com/coaching](http://nataliebacon.com/coaching) to learn more.