

The Joy Toolkit

10 Simple Steps to Improve Mood, Positivity, & Awareness

Life can feel overwhelming. Maybe you're juggling too many responsibilities, struggling with emotional exhaustion, or feeling stuck in patterns of negative thinking.

If you're someone who often feels stressed, burned out, or overwhelmed by ADHD symptoms, you might think mindfulness is just another thing to add to your endless to-do list, but it doesn't need to be!

Mindfulness can help you find the space to breathe, reset, and feel in control again.

This toolkit is designed for busy women like you

Women who want to feel

- **Calmer and less reactive to life's stresses.**
- **Want tools to manage emotions & focus their thoughts.**
- **More positive, present & connected with themselves.**

Let's dive in.

You don't need hours of free time, a perfectly quiet mind, or to 'get it right.' Every small step is a gift to yourself—a gentle move toward a life that feels more balanced, joyful, and manageable.

Think of this toolkit as your daily companion—a reminder to pause, breathe, and explore moments of joy, kindness, and awareness in your day

It's not about being perfect it's *about being present*. Each small step you take can lead to powerful changes in how you feel, think, and interact with the world.

#1. Morning Joy Reminder

Consider placing a Post-it note or sign somewhere you'll see it first thing in the morning.

You might write something like: 'What will bring me joy today?' or 'I choose to start with joy.'

When you wake up, take a couple of minutes to reflect on something that sparks joy—a warm hug, shared laughter, or a moment of gratitude—and notice how it feels to let that settle in *xx*

Transformational Benefit

Starting your day with joy can create a “positive emotional inertia,” which research shows improves resilience and mood throughout the day (Fredrickson, 2001)

#2. The Power of a Smile

Explore the simple act of smiling—even if it doesn't come naturally in the moment. A smile can gently invite positive emotions. Perhaps try smiling at yourself in the mirror or as you enjoy your morning coffee, and notice how it feels.

Transformational Benefit

Research by Kraft & Pressman (2012) shows that smiling, even when forced, can reduce stress and improve emotional recovery. Smiling activates neural pathways that increase feelings of happiness.

#3. Be Kind With Your Inner Voice

Take a moment to pause and check in with yourself. If you notice self-critical or harsh thoughts, gently explore what it feels like to shift your tone. Speak to yourself with the same kindness and compassion you'd show to someone you love—a close friend, your child, or even your pet.

Consider setting an hourly reminder on your phone with the question: 'How is my self-talk today?' Use it as a chance to offer yourself a kind word or two x

Transformational Benefit

Research by Dr. Kristin Neff (2003) shows that practicing self-compassion reduces anxiety and self-criticism while improving emotional resilience and overall happiness. Regularly checking your inner dialogue can rewire your brain to be more supportive and compassionate.

#4. Practice an Act of Kindness

Today, I invite you to explore doing one small, kind thing for someone, without expecting anything in return. Perhaps it's holding the door open, offering a kind word to a stranger, or sending a supportive message to a friend.

Kindness can also flow toward yourself—maybe by allowing yourself a moment of rest or treating yourself to something that brings you joy

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Transformational Benefit

Studies by Lyubomirsky et al. (2005) demonstrate that performing acts of kindness increases happiness, life satisfaction, and feelings of connection with others. Small acts of kindness release endorphins, improve mood, and even reduce stress.

#5. Gratitude Journal at Bedtime

At the end of the day, I encourage you to take a moment with your journal and reflect: 'What am I grateful for today?'

Gently explore the moments that brought joy or connection—perhaps a smile you shared or a small act of kindness.

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Transformational Benefit

Gratitude journaling has been shown to improve sleep, increase positive emotions, and reduce depressive symptoms (Emmons & McCullough, 2003).

#6. Set Your Intention

Each morning, I invite you to take a moment to look at your joyful note. Let it gently inspire you to explore mindfulness and presence throughout your day. See how small, simple steps can bring a sense of joy and calm

Transformational Benefit

Setting intentions helps direct your focus and energy, reducing stress and increasing goal achievement (Locke & Latham, 2002).

#7. Notice Your Breathing

Once today, I encourage you to take a brief moment—just 1-2 minutes—to gently focus on your breath. Notice the sensation of the air as it enters and leaves your body. Explore how this small pause can bring a sense of calm and presence.

Transformational Benefit

Mindful breathing activates the parasympathetic nervous system, reducing stress and lowering heart rate and blood pressure (Zautra et al., 2008).

#8. Be Fully Present in One Activity

Today, I encourage you to explore one everyday activity—maybe drinking your coffee, walking, or washing the dishes—and approach it mindfully.

Notice the smells, sounds, and sensations as you go. See what it feels like to fully enjoy the moment, no matter how small it might seem

Transformational Benefit

Being fully present increases focus and reduces feelings of overwhelm. A study by Killingsworth & Gilbert (2010) showed that people are happiest when their minds are focused on the present moment.

9. Say Something Positive About Yourself

Today, I invite you to take a moment to pause and say (out loud, if it feels right): 'I'm proud of myself for ____' or 'I'm doing my best, and that's enough.' Gently explore what it feels like to celebrate even the smallest wins

Transformational Benefit

Positive affirmations have been shown to improve self-esteem and resilience. According to Creswell et al. (2013), they activate brain regions linked to self-reward and motivation.

#10. End the Day with Compassion

Tonight, I invite you to gently place a hand on your heart and take a deep breath. As you do, softly say to yourself: 'Today was enough. I am enough.' Allow yourself to explore the ease of letting the day go and welcoming rest with kindness..

Transformational Benefit

Practicing self-compassion at the end of the day reduces cortisol (stress hormone) levels and promotes emotional balance (Breines & Chen, 2012).

Gentle Reminder

Mindfulness isn't about being perfect; it's about showing up for yourself, moment by moment. Start small, keep it simple, and notice how these tiny practices make a big difference.

Benefits

With consistent practice, these steps can help you:

- Feel calmer and more in control of your emotions.
- Rewire your brain for positivity and resilience.
- Strengthen your relationships with yourself and others.
- Build a happier, more peaceful life—one mindful moment at a time.

You've got this. 💛

Kindfully
YOU

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