

Mindfulness in your ...

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Your life is probably jam-packed. You could be juggling work, children, a partner and a home. It's a good time to adopt the practice of mindfulness, says Dr Russ Harris, author of *The Confidence Gap* (\$29.95; Penguin). Consciously focusing your awareness on the here and now can help you deal with life's challenges and cope more easily. Harris suggests working through a process that he calls **NAME**. **Notice** your feelings: work out where they are in your body and how they feel. **Acknowledge** your feelings: say something like "I'm noticing anger or fear". Remind yourself that you are not your feelings. **Make** room for your feelings: breathe deeply into them. **Expand** awareness: observe what you feel and where you're holding it in your body. Stay engaged with the world around you, noticing what you see, hear, smell, taste and touch.

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Now that your priorities are changing, you may be re-evaluating your passions and deepest desires—and wondering how you can bring them to life. The quickest way to connect with your life purpose is to revisit your values. Maybe they haven't changed, but your focus has. Or perhaps you're unsure of the difference between values and goals. Values are how we want to behave, and goals are what we want to achieve.

If you're having trouble working out what you're really passionate about, reflect on your life and then finish these sentences: *I've spent too much time worrying about ... I've spent too little time doing ... If I could go back in time, I would ...*

This exercise reveals the areas where you may have lost touch with what truly matters to you—what you want to stand for and the personal qualities you want to cultivate.

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The prospect of change can be more daunting in this decade. You may know what would make your life more fulfilling, but you may also lack confidence that you can make it happen. Mindfulness can help you move out of your comfort zone towards your goals. You may have forgotten what's really important to you, says Harris, who suggests that you consider the following in order to move past any barriers:

1. Examine the thoughts you're hanging on to. Catch your mind in the act of creating a story—and let it go.
2. Accept that change and discomfort often go hand in hand.
3. Ask yourself: "What's the smallest, easiest step I can take in the next 24 hours to bring me closer to achieving my goal?"
4. Consider what kind of life you want to live. Are your values still aligned with what you really want? **P**

