

# Operating on Autopilot

## Mindfulness Worksheet

Date / Time:

What have you brought mindful awareness to today? Check all that apply.

☐

Heart

☐

Mind

☐

Body

☐

Breath

☐

Environment

*To begin this Meditation, please bring kind awareness to*

- why you chose this topic
- how your belly, chest, and head each feel when you reflect on this topic
- the emotions that you can associate with these visceral feelings
- the positive or negative impact of any stories you believe in regarding this topic
- the fact that many others are feeling similarly about this topic as you
- how you might feel with increased awareness around this topic
- when you can apply increased mindfulness to this topic in your day-to-day life



1. Habitual routines in our daily lives help us get things done efficiently and oftentimes more quickly as we rely on that automatic response instead of taking time to stop and think about what we are doing, but sometimes operating on autopilot can be counterproductive.

2. This is especially true with stress and anxiety. When you condition yourself to automatic responses you may impulsively react to stressful situations based on past conditioning without realizing you can choose a different response. Mindfulness offers a different solution.

3. Mindfulness helps you to focus on what you are doing and why you are doing it. If you look at things with a beginner's mind, like you are seeing it for the first time, you may see other possibilities available to you.

4. Adversity causes some people to freeze up with apprehension and revert to that conditioned response of past situations but mindfulness can help you to see things differently and view adversity as a challenge, offering you the opportunity to learn and grow instead of shutting down and operating on autopilot.

5. Do a self-evaluation. Do you have habitual patterns resulting from anxiety or stress? For example, do you bite your nails when you are nervous? Do you eat more or less when you are anxious?

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6. Do you say things you wish you hadn't when you are upset? Do you continually repeat certain actions to get temporary relief from obsessive thoughts? Write down any habitual patterns you have that come to mind.

7. Consider your response to the previous question, do you have any habitual behaviors that could be contributing to you stress and anxiety?

8. For example, do you constantly stay up late instead of getting a good night's rest? Do you run yourself ragged trying to do everything for everybody instead of taking care of yourself?

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9. Do you eat unhealthy fast food to save time rather than eat healthy, well-balanced meals? Write down any habitual behaviors that could be contributing to your stress, anxiety, or other adversities in your life.



10. People are creatures of habit. Some habits can be beneficial, like eating healthy and getting regular exercise, and some are detrimental, like not getting enough rest and overworking or overdoing. Most of us have a combination of both.

11. Applying mindfulness to your life can help you identify these patterns, giving you the opportunity to make changes.

12. Over the next week, make a conscious effort to be mindful of your habits, both healthy and unhealthy, and notice if you make any different choices with this awareness.

13. How will you take what you learned from this forward into your life?