

Example of essay on home practice (p 38)

[Health & Medicine](#), [Stress](#)



Questions

In preparation for your first Mindfulness Life skills session complete the Five Factor Mindfulness Questionnaire (over the page) and calculate your scores for each of the factors. Tell us something about your attention (p33).

I noticed that my way of doing things is deviated from how I should be doing them. It seems that I'm running on 'automatic' and that I don't put much attention to details of what I do and how I do it. It is more of routine for me than being part of the process.

I want to be able to do things the way they are supposed to be done. My way of observing and describing things should be in an attentive manner. I want to be aware of my actions and know how to judge and react to my inner experience.

- Practice the sensory awareness meditation daily – you can use the recording or simply bring awareness to your surroundings and your body breathing as you walk, wait for the bus, sit outside, eat your lunch. This is often not as easy as it sounds! Discuss what you have discovered.

In practicing this, I have realized how hard it is to give attention to these details. However, I feel more relaxed and aware of my surrounding. This has enabled me avoid silly mistakes that often hurt me. I'm more aware of what is in my surrounding and hence I can avoid what could be harmful.

I want to pay attention to how my mind interprets what my body tells it. In so doing, my acting should be based on awareness rather than perception to enable me act in the best way possible.

Home practice (P 45)

- What challenges have you encountered around doing / not doing the practice?

I encountered the challenge of breathing correctly. It could have been because I normally don't pay attention to how I breathe. After some practice, I was able to coordinate my breathing and now I can breathe correctly.

- Have you learnt anything new about yourself? Please discuss.

- The first step in responding in a healthy way to stress is being present and aware of what is occurring. We all respond to what is happening around and within us with familiar patterns. Recognizing our patterns gives us a greater flexibility in how we respond.

- Reflect on a situation that you find challenging. Please discuss.

I find sitting in a job interview very challenging. No matter how qualified and prepared I'm for it, I always tend to be stressed about it. I'm yet to know how to contain myself in an interview setting so as not to give my interviewers a wrong impression.

- How do you know that you are stressed? (E. g. cues in the body of sweaty palms, tightness in the chest, certain behaviors such as eating drinking, arguing).

When stressed, I tend to be nervous all the time, and I also get sweaty palms.

- Have you recognized any patterns that you employ automatically to avoid unpleasant activities or difficult thoughts and emotions? If yes, please discuss (e. g. over eating, alcohol, keeping busy, rumination – going over things over and over again in your mind, avoiding particular situations).

I have noticed that I automatically tend to keep myself busy. This tends to keep my mind from thinking about the unpleasant activities or emotions. However, I still have to think about them at the end of the day and get some solutions.

- When you recognize cues in your body that you are stressed, what would, or has been helpful for you in that moment? (E. g. bringing awareness to breathing, opening to positive, naming the emotion, shifting perception of the thoughts by labeling them and seeing them just as mental events not facts).

When I notice these cues, I take ten deep breaths in through my nose and out through my mouth. These breaths help me relax and be composed, and then I act appropriately to the situation.

- List 5 activities that are supportive and nourishing for you (e. g. speaking to a friend, engaging in a hobby, listening to music, getting some exercise, taking some quiet time to practice mindfulness either with a formal practice or during everyday activities).

The activities that support me are going to the gym, playing piano, going for a walk in the park, visiting a children's home and watching football.

Questions (p 52)

- What is your maximum heart rate (220- your age)?

Maximum HR = $220 - 21 = 199$ bpm.

- At what exercise intensity would you rate the RPM/spin class (moderate, vigorous)?

Moderate. I based my rating on the heart rate.

- How long did the exercise session last for?

Thirty minutes.

- What was the highest heart rate recorded during the exercise session?

The highest heart rate was 155 bpm.

- How many calories did students expend? How many kJ is this?

On average, each student lost 215 calories. This is equivalent to 899.56 kJ.

- List a healthy food and drink as well as a less healthy food and drink that have an equivalent number of kJ as the spin class?

For a healthy food and drink, 1.25 cups of fortified cereals and a large glass of water will give 864 kJ.

For a less healthy food and drink, 1 toasted English muffin (554 kJ) and 1 glass of whole milk (361.41 kJ) will give 915.41 kJ. These two sets of food show what could be lost, approximately, in a spin class.