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## **2.1. The Practice of Mindfulness**

At any moment in our lives, we can make a small effort to stay in the here and now.

When you walk, you can consciously feel the soles of your feet. You can notice the touch of your hands while grasping something – like when operating a door handle. Even when brushing your teeth, you can consciously stay within your body.

Thoughts may continue to arise, but we strive not to lose sight of reality and not to fully identify with our thinking. Instead, we keep our awareness in this moment, in this body.

Mindfulness is not concentration.

**It is an open, wide awareness of the moment, grounded in physical reality.**

For example, I sit in the garden, feel the soles of my feet, the pressure of the chair beneath me, smell the fragrance of the flowers, hear the sounds of birds and insects, and sense what my heart feels in that moment.

Everything is conscious at the same time.

**As soon as someone comes, I can be fully present with them**, without being distracted by my thoughts or inner images.

**Mindfulness is not a dreamlike state**, but an alert presence in this moment.

Even when driving, you can be mindful. Here, however, full attention is directed towards the traffic - otherwise, it would be dangerous.

You see the distance to the cars ahead and are also aware of the situation beside and behind you through the mirrors. The body is noticeable, you feel the hands on the steering wheel and breathe.

**This is a rather outward-directed mindfulness.**

In meditation, on the other hand, we direct mindfulness more inward - towards what is happening in our mind and spirit.

Concentration is only initially necessary to step out of full identification with our world of thoughts and images.

**Here, a conscious concentrative effort is needed to bring us back to reality repeatedly.**

Thus begins the path.

It may take a long time until mindfulness in the here and now becomes our natural state. But a conscious, gentle effort not to lose mindfulness will always remain part of the practice.

**Mindfulness leads us to constant meditation and prayer.**

A mystic tries to remain in a mindful state throughout the entire day.

## **A deepened state of mind-body unity**

In an improved state of mind-body unity, the thoughts and processes of the mind can no longer lull our consciousness to sleep.

We remain in the here and now, with our awareness in the body. We perceive thoughts and inner images without getting lost in them.

We are self-aware, recognizing thoughts as thoughts and feelings as feelings - without identifying with them.

In such a state, one is very open to intuition.

**Our heart remains open and is easily touched.**

A deep love resonates in everything.

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**Source URL:** <https://baum-des-lebens.org/the-inner-path/21-practice-mindfulness>