



A month of mindfulness

Can you dedicate a daily minute to mental peace? All it takes is 60 seconds to transform stress into serenity. Here in this special in-depth report is a guide to making the next 30 days a month of mindfulness to alleviate anxiety, anger and depression.

Words CAROLINE ROBERTSON

Are you here enough to know you're here? Where are you now reading this? Absorbed in reading or only partially present? Today it's trendy to talk about enjoying the moment, being present and the power of now. However, it's easier said than to sustain. Until the habit is instilled in your cells, you're bound to time travel.

How can you put philosophy into practice? You can press pause in the present briefly but quickly revert to rewinding to the past and fast-forwarding to the future. Wishing you could change the past or control the future is where stress starts. The present is your point of power, your place of acceptance, efficiency and energy.

It takes perseverance and practice to retrain your brain to be here now. It takes awareness to make time a friend rather than a foe. Long meditation retreats are impractical for most people. However, everyone can spare a minute a day to buff their mindfulness muscle. Take the one-minute meditation challenge this month.

Your daily meds

Meditation is the best medication for mental peace. Being mindful for a minute becomes the sustained soundtrack to your life when you practise presence consistently. Tune in to station NOW and turn up the volume to hear a euphoric song you can't unhear.

DAY 1: Turn on

"If you are depressed you are living in the past.

If you are anxious you are living in the future.

If you are at peace you are living in the present." ~ Lao Tzu

You have a healing haven within, a happy home inside. Switch on your light to shine through transient tunnels and reach inner serenity.

1. Lift your lips in a gentle smile and place your hands over your chest.
2. Close your eyes and see a golden sun in your solar plexus.
3. Feel it warm and energise every cell.
4. See its radiant aura emanate to all.
5. Inhale and exhale deeply to beam the light brighter.
6. The sun expands to encompass you, your country, the planet, the universe.
7. Visualise one light animating and amalgamating all.

DAY 2: Tune in

"No yesterdays are ever wasted for those who give themselves to today."

~ Brendan Francis

Mindfulness from moment to moment is your bridge to bliss. Plug into the present through your physical portal. Tune your senses to anchor your awareness now.

1. Remaining still, feel any sensation, inhaling deeply into it.
2. Smell yourself and your surroundings.
3. Listen to the chorus of sounds including your breath.
4. Taste your essence and the air on your tongue.
5. Focus on a central dot, then slowly pan out to see all with fresh eyes.
6. Say, "I am here."
7. Softly smile and savour this fresh energy flowing through you.

DAY 3: If not NOW, when?

"Are you going to be here now or not?" ~ Ram Dass

Today invite your total focus to the party of the present.

1. Right now set up a verbal or visual cue, such as your screensaver or phone notification ringtone, to be here 100 per cent. See, say and hear the word NOW through the day. Write NOW where you'll see it often, hear NOW through an alarm and say NOW with every cue.

2. When NOW grabs your attention, stop, say "now" and observe anything.
3. Enter into it with your full attention for 10 seconds.
4. Inhale and absorb its qualities into you; eg, cooling green leaf.
5. See it as a mirror and a messenger of your state. It reflects you and is teaching you.
6. Accept the cue as part of you with a soft smile.
7. Relax and feel how it affects you and how you affect it.

DAY 4: Time of your life

"Right now a moment of time is passing by! ... We must become that moment."

~ Paul Cezanne

Babies exist in a timeless flow. As we age we become bound by clock concepts, even anxious about ageing and time passing. Do you treat time as a friend or a foe? Release time tyranny by trusting that timing is perfect. There's always time for everything it's time for. Make friends with time by understanding you're time-rich, you make the most of your time and you are one with time. Sir Winston Churchill said, "It is a mistake to try to look too far ahead. The chain of destiny can only be grasped one link at a time."

1. Sit facing a ticking timepiece and breathe deeply.
2. With each and every tick, sink into deeper relaxation.
3. The ticking and your heartbeat harmonise. Your body pulses pleasantly with the sound.
4. Speed up the ticking. How does it feel? Slow down the ticking. How does it feel?
5. With each tick say NOW, NOW, NOW, NOW, NOW.
6. Kiss your reflection in the clock face and say, "I love you."
7. Sing or listen to the line "time is on my side" by the Rolling Stones.



Mindfulness from moment to moment is your bridge to bliss.

DAY 5: Act with awareness

"You have an appointment with life, and that appointment is in the present moment. If you miss the present moment, you miss your appointment with life. That is very serious" ~ Thich Nhat Hanh

You are at the entrance to enlightenment. Every moment matters as every moment will be the last time you'll experience it. Truly experience now by summoning your senses to this second. Be where you are and do what you're doing. Having a mindful, in-body experience makes your mind and actions more effective. It aligns your inner life with your outer life so you flow effortlessly.

1. Decide to do a simple action.
2. Before acting, pause with a deep breath, slipping into the silent gap between impulse and response.
3. Say to yourself, "Now."
4. Proceed to act slowly and deliberately.
5. Say what you are doing or experiencing; eg nodding, nodding.
6. Fully absorb yourself in your reality by repeating what you're feeling.

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7. Thank yourself for being mindful.

DAY 6: Feel your feelings

"Being is the great explainer."

~ Henry David Thoreau

We're always experiencing a feast of feelings. These arise uncontrollably and flavour the moment. Struggling to change them will only frustrate and drain you. When emotions arise, be aware and accept them without judgement, aversion or attachment. What you resist persists, but by saying "yes" to feelings you free them. The feeling is there whether you like it or not; embrace it as it is. Your consciousness will dissipate discomfort just as the wind disperses clouds.

1. Scan your body for any sensations.
2. Place a gentle hand over any uncomfortable area of your body.
3. Send a soft smile to the sensation like a healing stream.
4. Inhale into the sensation, feeling it fully.
5. Exhale with an *Ahhh* sound, breathing out the blockage.

6. Say to your sensation: "I'm aware of you, I accept you, I'm one with you, I love you, thank you."
7. Continue this with any areas of discomfort. Trust you've triggered a shift in your state that beckons balance.

DAY 7: Do it now

"If you want to make an easy job seem mighty hard, just keep putting off doing it." ~ Olin Miller

Sometimes it takes more energy to avoid things than to address them. What's something important you could do today that you've been avoiding? Facing it frees energy for flowing progress. Say yes to yourself and what you want to do. Mindfully manage the task with gratitude that you're giving it deserving attention.

1. Write down the action.
2. See yourself doing it smoothly.
3. Be aware of your feelings and breathe deeply.
4. Say, "I'm going to do this. It'll be great."
5. Complete the task while aware of any tension in your body.



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6. For the rest of the day, do things that come to mind immediately.
7. Reflect on your achievements and commit to continuous action.

DAY 8: Become your breath

"Feelings come and go like clouds in a windy sky. Conscious breathing is my anchor." ~ Thich Nhat Hanh

Breath is the bridge between your mind and body, anchoring awareness in life now. Steady breathing brings a calm, steady mind. Deep breathing is the best medicine for health, vitality and longevity. Take a breather today with this powerful practice. You may add a mental mantra with each inhalation and exhalation.

1. Observe your breath. Is it more through your mouth or nostrils? Which nostril? Is it stilted or smooth? Is it in your abdomen or chest? How many counts is it?
2. Clear your nostrils and sit straight or lie supine.
3. Slowly, smoothly inhale through your nose for three seconds.
4. Feel the abdomen then chest rise as air enters.
5. Hold the breath for three seconds.
6. Inhale for one more second, filling your chest.
7. Exhale slowly and smoothly out your mouth for three counts. Let go as your chest then abdomen lower like a rolling wave.

DAY 9: Sky gaze

"The sky is always there for me, while my life has been going through many, many changes. When I look up at the sky, it gives me a nice feeling, like looking at an old friend." ~ Yoko Ono

Mindlessness brings mindfulness. Enter the Zen zone of no-mind to have no concerns. Quieting chatter makes silent space for simply being. Release thoughts into the vast sky so they drift away like clouds, leaving you floating in pure presence.

1. Lie in a comfortable, quiet place where you see nothing but sky.
2. Sink deep into the Earth.
3. Relax your muscles with each breath out.
4. Blur your focus and stare into the sky.
5. Inhale the sky, exhale the sky. Feel its breeze through you.
6. Say to yourself sky, sky, sky.
7. Close your eyes and see the sky in your mind's eye.

DAY 10: Hold your attention

"If you want to make the world a better place, take a look at yourself and make the change." ~ Michael Jackson

Be present with yourself by truly seeing yourself. Simply BE by stopping and staring into your face. Let inner commentary come and go without attachment. Entering heightened awareness, really relish your own undivided attention. Facing yourself harnesses your focus to face life.

1. Look at yourself in a mirror.
2. Glance at your whole reflection.
3. Now focus on your left eye, right eye, then the space between your eyes.
4. Relax all your facial muscles and breathe away any bodily tension.
5. Allow your posture to adjust if desired, then be still.
6. Observe the play of light on your face.
7. Inhale "I", exhale "AM" for 10 breaths.

DAY 11: Become pleasure

"Heaven is now. There is no other time." ~ Helen Schucman

Living in the present you experience pleasure with your full presence. You step into a state of "in-joyment" that comes with complete awareness. Seize every moment as a special occasion that will never recur. Enjoy experiences completely by diving into them with total commitment and concentration. Let sensual awareness bathe every atom in joyful juices. Notice yourself noticing sensations and smile.

1. Select a drink or food that you like.
2. See its shape, colour, texture and movement.
3. Smell its distinct aroma.
4. Feel its qualities with your fingers and lips.
5. Take a bite or sip. Observe its taste on every area of your tongue.
6. Chew or swill it, listening to the sound as it moves about your mouth.
7. Feel it travel down your throat and settle in your tummy. Thank it for imparting pleasure and becoming part of you.

DAY 12: Presence to people

"The miracle of love comes to you in the presence of the uninterrupted moment. If you are mentally somewhere else, you miss real life." ~ Byron Katie

Enrich relationships by appreciating another with your undivided attention. Show someone how special they are by showing up for them. Relate to them with the respect you'd extend to your esteemed teacher. They may be distracted and scattered but you can pull them into your presence. Become a bridge to their being via your infectious awareness. Just as people felt peaceful for miles around the Buddha, your serenity will spread.

1. Meet someone in person. Give them your full attention without diversions. Focus on their form, mannerisms, smell, sound and touch.
2. With a gentle smile, inhale love and exhale white light around them.
3. Sensing your sensations and thoughts, let them go.
4. Carefully listen to them and their underlying emotion. Speak less and listen more.
5. Repeat their words mentally.
6. Say their name often and notice their responses.
7. Deeply connect by looking into their eyes, breathing with them and gently mirroring their mannerisms. Visualise heart lights meeting in the middle and encircling you both.



Do you treat time as a friend or a foe? Release time tyranny by trusting that timing is perfect.



DAY 13: Only living thing to create every living thing

"Everything is an emanation of our beliefs."
~ Dr Rama Prasad

Your mind manifests your reality. When you're mindful you consciously co-create what you want. This powerful practice will put you in the driver's seat of your life journey rather than being a passive passenger. It silences external distractions as you become the sole scriptwriter of your life movie.

1. Lie or sit in a comfortable place with your eyes closed.
2. Listen to the sounds around and be aware of your breathing.
3. Imagine you're the only thing on Earth. Everything else is stark desert.
4. Your mission is to recreate your reality.
5. With a mental paintbrush, produce your ideal world. Include yourself, environment, people, possessions.
6. Make it as minimal or detailed as you like as long as it feels real to you.
7. Open your eyes and absorb all the beauty around you.

DAY 14: Music of the moment

"Lightly dance on the edges of Time like dew on the tip of a leaf."
~ Rabindranath Tagore

Turn down thoughts by turning up your physical antennae. Dance like a child so your body will feel free and flexible. Let life play your body until every cell sings.

1. Take a minute when you're alone and won't be disturbed.
2. Put on inspiring music and gently close your eyes.
3. To the rhythm, slowly rotate your ankles, knees, hips, shoulders, wrists and head.
4. Sway and swirl to the timeless tune of your inner rhythm.
5. Release inhibitions with sensual steps, stroking your body as the music moves you.

6. Let yourself go and go with the flow, loose and surrendered.
7. After dancing, be still and sense the awakened energy echoing in you.

DAY 15: Write your way here

"I do what I do, and I do it well, and focus and take it one moment at a time."
~ Jim Caviezel

The yogic practice of one-pointed concentration or *ekagrata* is the key to attaining anything. Enter a state of flow by surrendering to a single activity. Monotasking is the antidote to multitasking. Concentrate on one thing and your consciousness will merge with it. Use your name to centre yourself.

1. Get something to write with and some blank paper.
2. See and feel your hand holding the pen or pencil. Stroke the paper.
3. Write your name slowly on the paper, staying focused on the tip of the pen.
4. Be aware as your strokes ascend, descend, curl, cross and dot.
5. Slowly trace over your name five times, repeating each letter's sound, relaxing your body and breathing.
6. Put down the pen and slowly trace your name with your eyes once, aware of every mark.
7. Close your eyes and say your name three times while writing it on your mental screen.

DAY 16: 1-minute moan, 5-minute "mmm"

"When an inner situation is not made conscious, it appears outside as fate."
~ Carl Jung

Resisting reality is insanity. Accepting life enables you to appreciate its value. Express and examine your rejection of now. Your thoughts now filter your past and feed your future. Purge poisonous perceptions to let in life-nurturing nectar.

1. Sit quietly and sense any stress in your body.

2. What emotion is your body expressing?
3. Write it down.
4. Reframe it with a positive phrase. For example, with "agitation" answer "call to action".
5. Touching the tense area, say the emotion once and respond to it five times.
6. Feel your physical state shift.
7. Whenever stress arises, address it with an empowering reply.

DAY 17: Less is more

"He or she who knows that enough is enough will always have enough." ~ Lao Tzu

Simplify your surroundings to create space suited to your current state. Today, give a room a one-minute makeover. Clearing possessions processes the past and releases the false security of objects. Shift stuff to allow fresh energy into your life, just as empty hands can receive more than full hands. Welcome more abundance while acknowledging you're enriched by experiences above all.

1. Select a space you spend a lot of time in and open any windows or doors.
2. Get a big bag or bin.
3. Pick up each item and ask, "Is it useful? Does it make me feel good? Does it reflect me now?" If the answer is no each time, place it in the bag to throw, give, sell or relocate.
4. Clean the surface it occupied.
5. As you place the bag in another room say, "I thank you and let you go with love."
6. Sit in your chosen room and smile, surveying the change.
7. Close your eyes, seeing a healing halo around your body, room, building, town, country, planet. Repeat three times, "Peaceful place."

DAY 18: Enough is enough

"You alone are enough; you have nothing to prove to anybody."
~ Maya Angelou

Stress comes when you feel you have to be something better than you are. When happiness hangs on endless achievement, contentment eludes us on an unattainable horizon. Love your life and yourself now by accepting all you are, all you do and all you have. Perceive all as perfect in the present because it's all you need. Make your blessings bigger by magnifying them with mindfulness. This is also a powerful exercise to do about someone else to appreciate them more.

1. Sit down with something to write on.
2. Imagine you died yesterday and you're writing your obituary.
3. Note your name and five of your positive qualities; eg "Sarah was a thoughtful, smart, funny, courageous and caring woman."
4. Write your name and three things you're good at.
5. Write one thing you've achieved that you're proud of.
6. Write down three things you're grateful for.
7. Read this through. Smile and say, "I am enough." Then inhale "thank" and exhale "you."

DAY 19: Get back to where you belong

"When you are everywhere, you are nowhere. When you are somewhere, you are everywhere." ~ Rumi
It's necessary to time-travel sometimes. Society has a schedule we follow to fit in. Rehashing the past and foretelling the future have benefits. But it's best when we stay simultaneously connected to the present. Tricky tests come when people try to pull us out of the present with questions like, "What did you do yesterday?" or "What are your plans next month?" Without preaching presence, your awareness will effortlessly affect them, just as the company of a child or animal brings us into being.

1. Recall an emotional event in the past.
2. Observe your breathing and bodily sensations. Say, "I accept. That was then; this is now."
3. Ponder a future event.
4. Observe your breathing and bodily sensations. Say, "I surrender. What will be, will be."
5. When asked about the past or future, observe your breath, body and surroundings.
6. Notice how you feel. Say something authentically positive about the present, eg compliment, express gratitude or appreciate the environment.
7. Be still and silent for three breathes, inhaling "yes" and exhaling "yes".

DAY 20: Present posture

"There is more wisdom in your body than in your deepest philosophy." ~ Friedrich Nietzsche

How's your posture right now? If you're slouching or stressing this affects your energy and emotions. Postural awareness aligns you in the time-space continuum. Take a minute to improve your posture and you'll feel more confident and comfortable in the moment. With practice you'll rewire your brain for better biodynamics and instil new postural patterns.

1. With a soft smile, scan your body for sensations.
2. Is your head jutting forward, your shoulders up, your chest collapsed or your hips uneven? Do you feel balanced and stable? Any pain, twisting or tension?

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Thinking you know it all blocks you from knowing more. A curious, childlike outlook opens you to a wonderful world that's never monotonous or mundane.



3. Breathe into tension and let it go.
4. Roll your shoulders forward, up, back and down.
5. Sense a helium balloon is attached to your crown. As your head drifts up, the back of your neck lengthens. Your chin tucks back with your ears above your shoulders.
6. Breathe deep into your belly and up to raise your chest. Let your hips and knees soften. Spread your feet and toes flat on the floor.
7. Instil a strong stance by trying two power poses. First the "Victory" pose with feet together, arms straight up in a V-shape and your chin tilted upward. Then "Superhero" pose with both feet spread apart and hands on hips.

DAY 21: Delay response in difficulty

"Between stimulus and response there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom."
~ Viktor Frankl

When faced with challenges it's often counterproductive to fly into a flight, fright or fight response. Pausing and centring ourselves allows us to make conscious choices, which lead to optimal outcomes. Before reacting, stop and anchor yourself in your body's aliveness. Observe your emotions without acting on them. This dissolves your inner psycho-drama and allows effective, unemotional solutions to stream from your well of awareness. Increasing the impulse and response gap may make yourself or others uncomfortable with the silence. However, the consciousness created benefits all as it shines light on all situations.

1. Sit in a quiet place and take three slow, deep breaths.
2. Recall a time when somebody said or

- did something to upset you. Repeat anything you remember being said.
3. Feel the sensations in your body. Feel where they flow.
4. Recall how you responded.
5. Inhale for five, feeling your body, hold your breath for five and breathe out the emotion through your mouth.
6. Smile to the situation, including all involved. See or say how you would respond now from this serene state.
7. Practise this today. Whenever emotions arise, be still and silent. Inhale for five, hold your breath for five and exhale the emotion through your mouth. Count to 10 and ask yourself if this event really matters. Only respond when you feel calm and compassionate.

DAY 22: Minute by minute

"It's not the planning nor the hoping that creates problems for us but our attachment to those plans and hopes. Let go of attachment and appreciate the present."
~ Mata Amritanandamayi

Know how to make the Divine laugh? Share your plans! Accepting you can only control the known now and not the unknown future relieves tension. Today, many suffer from stuffed schedules and FOMO (fear of missing out). This is fed by social media, ADD and addiction to the new. Instead of skimming the surface, dive the depths of now by fully experiencing what is around and inside you. Resign as stressed CEO of control to become calm manager of the moment. Be patient in the present rather than mentally rushing forward. Have faith that all that flows from your present awareness waters a fruitful future. Everything unfolds in the right time, place and way.

1. Sit and look through your calendar or "to do" list briefly then put it away.
2. What feelings are aroused in you?

3. Look at today's day, date and time.
4. Repeat it three times like it's exceptionally special and significant, each time sinking deeper and deeper into relaxation.
5. Smile to the time and thank it for a wonderful time; time well spent.
6. Say to yourself, "I'm in the perfect place at the perfect time."
7. Close your eyes and enjoy merging with the moment.

DAY 23: Spread smiles

"We shall never know all the good that a simple smile can do." ~ Mother Teresa

Are you mindful of the impact you have on others? Interactions may not make immediate impressions but they influence others eventually. Observe your effect on others with a smile trial. A smile speaks straight to the heart and creates a connection. Researchers found that receiving a smile could be more pleasurable than chocolate, sex, cigarettes or money. Smiling signals happy healing hormones and balances blood pressure. Just as others respond to your loving smile, your cells soak up smiling rays, creating new cells from the inner love affair.

1. Recall a person, place or incident that makes you smile; eg, a baby's face, nature scene, funny situation.
2. Relax your face. Let a subtle Mona Lisa smile spread from your eyes to your lips.
3. Stream this smile through your whole body to dissolve stress.
4. Without expectations, softly smile to the next person you meet.
5. Sense the shift in you both. observing inner dialogue or sensations.
6. Smile to yourself for remembering to smile.
7. Practise smiling during difficult situations such as exercise, traffic jams, long queues and annoyances.

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DAY 24: Peek-a-boo present

"The moment you keep all your senses open, you experience the whole creation as vibrant, lively consciousness — not dead objects around you; you are already united with the entire creation. Union has happened." ~ Sri Sri Ravi Shankar

Sometimes we're stuck in thinking rather than feeling the moment. Escape the capsule of the mind and awaken the world of the senses. This immediately switches you from a cerebral to a sensual experience.

1. Close your eyes and rub your eyelids with your fingers, aware of the visions.
2. Open your eyes wide and say, "I see," looking at whatever is in front of you.
3. Massage your nostrils closed.
4. Open your nostrils and take a deep inhalation saying, "I smell." What do you smell?
5. Close your eyes and block your ears with your fingers and sink into the silence.
6. Unblock your ears and say, "I hear."
7. Close your mouth for three breaths then open it wide while inhaling. Exhale loudly, "Ahhhhh, I am."

DAY 25: Fresh focus

"The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes, but in having new eyes." ~ Marcel Proust

Familiarity stops you from fully focusing. Thinking you know it all blocks you from knowing more. Routine travel, automatic actions, close company and everyday surroundings stop grabbing your attention as you take them for granted. Surpass this mindless state by seeing the specialness with a "beginner's mind". Fresh eyes infuse life with endless appreciation and connection, revealing deeper dimensions to everything encountered. A curious, childlike outlook opens you to a wonderful world that's never monotonous or mundane.

1. Think of something or someone you see regularly: an object, room, route or person.
2. Experience that person, place or thing and be aware of your preconceptions; eg, they have dark hair, the footpath is straight, the room has curtains.
3. Breathe deeply three times, absorbing the object of your contemplation.
4. Do they really match your preconceived ideas?
5. Notice three new things about the person, place or object.
6. Say one complimentary comment.
7. Instil your connection by inhaling "love" and exhaling "love".

DAY 26: Observe opposites

"Our mind is capable of passing beyond the dividing line we have drawn for it. Beyond the pairs of opposites of which the world consists, other, new insights begin."
~ Hermann Hesse

Awakening your senses through exposure to extremes excites an adrenalin rush. This uncovers aliveness that's often cloaked in numbness due to boredom, sadness or stress. Explore polarities today. Feel how they alter your



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state. Then rest your mind on the bridge that arches between them both. The middle path of non-dualism. A peaceful place of acceptance beyond aversion and attachment.

1. Prepare to wash your hands or body.
2. Ask your skin, "Are you ready to feel the water?"
3. Run your skin under room-temperature water for 20 seconds. See it, smell it, hear it, taste it, feel every sensation penetrating your body.
4. Ask your skin, "Are you ready to feel the heat?"
5. Run your skin under water as hot as you can tolerate for 20 seconds. See it, smell it, hear it, taste it, feel every sensation penetrating your body.
6. Ask your skin, "Are you ready to feel the cold?"
7. Run your skin under water as cold as you can tolerate for 20 seconds. See it, smell it, hear it, taste it, feel every sensation soaking into your body; your cells swelling and pulsing with vitality.

DAY 27: Life cycle

"Look deep into nature, and then you will understand everything better."

~ Albert Einstein

Deep communion with nature connects you with your nature. The same energising elements stream through the soil, sea, sky and you. You're an instrument in the universal orchestra. Nature's glories will unfold when you give her your complete company. Draw the qualities into you: the vast sea, the open sky, the strong mountains. Listen attentively and nature will whisper wisdom to you; welcome her and she will comfort you. Let yourself sing to nature's tune today during a wonderful walk.

1. Preferably with bare feet, go for a slow walk by the water.
2. Looking down while feeling the earth, say "soil", or "sand" if you are on the beach.
3. Look to the side to see water and say "sea".
4. Look up and say "sky".
5. Look to the other side and say "mountains".
6. Look at your body and say "me".
7. For a minute while walking, recite this smooth cyclical chant "sand/soil, sea, sky, mountains, me".

DAY 28: Ride your ripple

"Deep within us is the never silent sound of our own vibrations, which we may ignore but is the musical core within us all."

~ Yehudi Menuhin

Do you ever want to press pause on life? Being bombarded by sensory stimulation can desensitise an overloaded brain and body. Align your senses again by tuning your inner modem. Quiet outer distractions and contact your core through sound, touch and taste. An ancient method to still and centre yourself now is called *bhrahmari* or "humming bee breath".

1. Sit somewhere quiet and private.
2. Block your ears with your thumbs and your eyes with your fingers.
3. See the black screen behind your eyes, feel your fingers on your face.
4. Close your mouth; taste your saliva.
5. Inhale with a slight snore and exhale with a prolonged mmmm sound.
6. Repeat this three times.
7. Rest your hands down and breathe three times sensing the silent vibration buzzing through your body on each exhalation.

DAY 29: Meet your needs

"Your friend is your needs answered."

~ Khalil Gibran

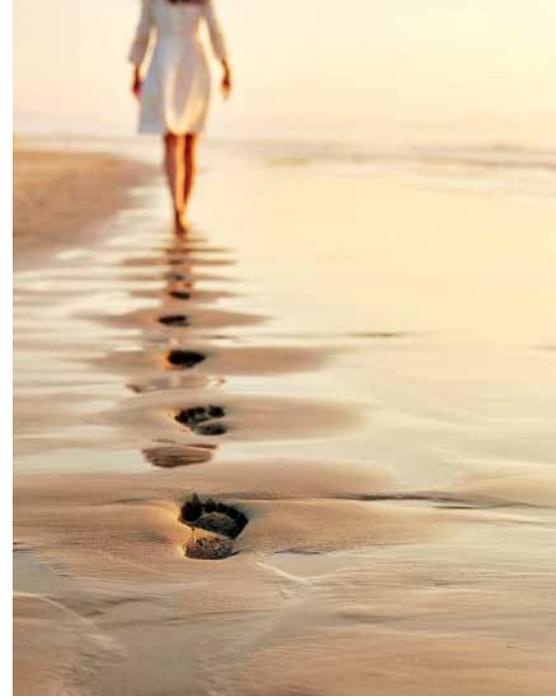
What do you want now? What will bring you balance? Show up for yourself. Nurture yourself by tending to your needs. This isn't selfish; it's self-preservation, essential to survive and thrive. Tending to your emotional and physical needs makes you more able to meet others' needs.

1. Close your eyes and scan yourself for the most prominent sensation.
2. Be aware of what the feeling is telling you.
3. Say to the area, "I'm here to help and heal you."
4. Ask yourself, "What do you need?" Wait for the answer.
5. Whatever your mind/body requests, reply with, "I understand and will attend to you."
6. Now respond to the need immediately.
7. Sense the satisfaction of caring for yourself and continue to do so.

DAY 30: Heart hymn

"There is no instinct like the heart ..."

~ Lord Byron



1. Find an open flower or a depiction of a blooming flower. This represents all beauty and blessings.
2. Inhale it through your nose and absorb it through your eyes for three breaths.
3. Close your eyes and see the flower in your chest centre.
4. Smile gently and breathe deeply into the flower as it blossoms.
5. See sunlight enter your chest, feeding the flower.
6. Feel the flower's warm essence suffuse all your cells and seep out your pores.
7. Exude this essence to all of those around you, enveloping them in a benevolent bubble.

Now, never ending

There is no beginning or end: only now. There's no doing or destination: you're already there. There is no closure or conclusion: it's ongoing. Continuous credits roll while your life claps on in appreciation. Everything is always perfect and complete in the present.

A cartoon in *The New Yorker* shows two monks meditating. The younger one looks to the older one for answers, who says, "Nothing happens next. This is it." That's right — this is the moment. *Carpe diem*. Seize the day. There's no need to wait for *it*; this *is* it! This is always *it*. This is the *it* you co-created and orchestrated. This is the *it* to enjoy. This is the *it* teaching you everything. Embrace *it*. Become *it*. Love *it*. As *it* loves you. 🍷

Caroline Robertson is a naturopath, teacher and mother of a little goddess. She aims to see the sacred in every moment and invites you to join her on this unfolding journey. For consultations, meditations and retreats, visit carolinerobertson.com.au.