

can offer a wider array of benefits.

Being mindful is a shift from “being our thinking”—being that blabbering voice in our heads—to being aware of our thinking. This subtle inner shift allows us to see our thinking objectively, to see our emotions objectively, and to have better awareness of what we’re doing and who we’re with.

We can make this shift to being mindful at any time. In fact, most of us are likely to do this many times every day, albeit unintentionally. But we don’t sustain mindfulness for more than a few seconds before we go right back to being our thinking again. As a result, we don’t see much benefit, just as we wouldn’t see much benefit from running for 30 seconds a few times a week.

We need to make the effort to intentionally become mindful and sustain that mindfulness for long periods of time to realise the benefits of mindfulness practice, including:

\*Increased resilience to stress

\*Improved decision making

\*Improved emotional intelligence

You might be wondering how something that sounds so simple can do so much. The reason mindfulness training has so many benefits is that it results in an optimally functioning mind. Everything we do, or fail to do, is the result of how our mind functions, and as brain research continues, scientists are discovering ways to increase its functionality.

For example you likely know at least one smart, talented person who hasn’t found success yet. This could be because that person’s mind isn’t functioning optimally. He or she might not be making very good decisions, or maybe they don’t have much self-discipline, or they aren’t very good at building and maintaining healthy relationships, or a combination of all three.

You also likely know at least one person who isn’t the most intelligent person in the room and isn’t the most talented, and yet they have a successful life. This person likely has an optimally functioning mind that allows them to make better decisions, have increased self-discipline, and develop and sustain healthy relationships.

The shift to mindfulness removes one of the greatest obstacles to an optimally functioning mind: living as though we are our thinking. When we live within our thinking, we are victims of all the thoughts that arise in our minds. If our thinking is positive, things are probably going well. If our thinking is negative, our lives will follow suit.

In any moment when we are being mindful, our mind functions optimally because we can see our thinking objectively. The reactive thoughts that arise in any given moment no longer control us. We have the ability to respond according to our values instead of reacting based on emotionally driven thoughts.

Although mindfulness training may be the most important habit we can develop for professional success, it goes beyond increased discipline at work. Mindfulness training was originally offered with the intention of helping us to be happier, more compassionate human beings, and a growing body of scientific evidence suggests that the practice can do just that.

At any moment we’re practising correctly—even if our motive is for professional gain—we experience a little more happiness and we treat people just a little bit better.

After all, the amount of money we make and things we have are meaningless if we aren’t happy.