



## Being present



Being present and connecting with the moment can give you freedom and flexibility to pursue the things you value the most. Notice what is happening and acknowledge that it is happening. For example, notice you are having a thought (*'I can't do this', 'I'm not clever enough'*). Allow yourself time to look at the thought and accept it for just that, a thought a word. Once you have taken a step back from the thought you can allow yourself the space to respond in a way that you really want to (i.e. by doing something that's important to you or takes you towards something that you value).

Having an anxious thought does not mean that you have 'anxiety' it means you are experiencing a symptom of anxiety. Equally feeling stressed and out of control does not mean that you are 'stress' it means you are experiencing a symptom of stress.

*"conscious awareness of your experience in the present moment enables you to perceive accurately what's happening"* (Russ Harris 2007).

Through this contact you can make an informed decision regarding whether to continue acting in a specific way (habitual response) or to change this behavioural response.

We often spend a lot of time ruminating about things or the past or worrying about the things of the future. When we do this we lose contact with all that the present moment offers us. Mindfulness aims to equip you with the skill to orient your attention back to the present moment when it is being pulled around by unwanted thoughts and feelings. It asks you to simply notice thoughts as they pop up, rather than be absorbed by them, so that you are then in a better position to choose values consistent action.

- Raisin exercise <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z2Eo56BLMjM>
- Guided mindfulness exercise: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dEzbdLn2bJc>

You might like to try this exercise once a day for 3-5 minutes.