

Mindfulness over Mindfulness

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Mindfulness – The challenge of being in the moment

I just came back from a winter walk in 13 degrees and lovely sunshine. For the first time there was that smell in the air, of dry soil and a hint of fresh flowers. If it was only spring already, I thought to myself, imagining all the lovely things we could do then.



That reminded me of another walk through Greystones town at the beginning of December. The Christmas lights had just come on, but I didn't fully embrace the sparkle they brought to the dark season as I was already anticipating how dull the town would look again in January after they have been taken down.

Playing with my 8-months old son, my mind sometimes wanders off. Once he will be able to walk, we can run around in the garden. Or I think of all the board games I will introduce him to when he is old enough.

Mind-numbing



There is nothing wrong with watching TV shows during my many repetitive tasks I have as a [stay-at-home mom](#). I am too tired to read at night time in bed, so I watch another low-impact TV show to drift off to. What else could I be doing during a 10 minute break, but to scroll through other people's lives on my phone?

For the longest time mind numbing felt good to me. I liked having my mind occupied at all times, not being able to ponder or rest. Only very slowly did I notice a social and even physical impact triggered by my habits. I felt irritable and disconcerted by topics people shared online, or the tone prevalent in threads, as well as poorly researched and fake news. On family walks my mind was occupied, taking pictures for my social media or thinking about what to post next.



Whilst I was aware of my unhealthy behaviour, I found it extremely hard to let go of living in this parallel world. But I soon came to realise that I wanted to be back in the real, present one with all my senses again.

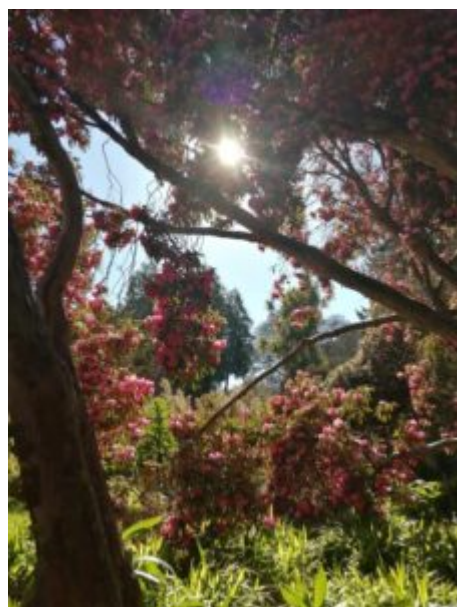
New Mindset

I first posted this article in January 2018. Eventually I got rid of social media and became an active part of family time again. Rather than following like a shadow, capturing images for future use and a pseudo reality, I enjoy the real thing.

I got back to reading at night time but had to work on focussing my attention to words on the page over some trivia web or TV content. During household chores I watch documentaries which I really enjoy and that are inspiring for my writing.

At times I still reach for my phone, longing for a senseless news feed scroll and get a pang of disappointment when I notice the apps aren't there. It is more like a physical automatism instead of something I really *want* to do. So I remind myself why I deleted them and to not fall back into old habits.

The Art of Mindfulness



When I heard of Mindfulness Courses for the first time, I wondered why you needed someone to teach you how to be in the moment. But with all the input and distraction available, and almost unavoidable these days, mindfulness has become an art. The fear of missing out, or not being informed at all times, has become a big part of our daily lives.

From a young age we teach our children that they constantly should be doing something – learning another skill, doing another sport, joining another club. Hardly ever do we let them just be. Since when do we think it is healthy having kids

on a schedule, rushing from one activity to the next? Often we overcompensate for our own busy lives and end up in a vicious cycle of mind-fullness instead of mindfulness.

Having experienced how hard it is to be in the moment when it should be the easiest thing in the world, I want it to be natural for our kids. We intend to keep them away from video games and social media as long as possible since I feel they are big contributors to, if not reasons for, mind-fullness and absent-mindedness. Luckily the town of [Greystones is a pioneer in phone free primary schools](#) to prevent an addiction whose impact we probably haven't fully grasped yet.