



Brief Mindfulness Interventions for General Practitioners (GPs)

Effective brief interventions in general practice or family medicine are like gold. So it may be a pleasant surprise to discover that there are number of effective mindfulness based brief interventions. These interventions are more effective when practised by medical practitioners who have their own regular mindfulness practice. However, these two interventions can be instigated by any empathic practitioner.

Two mindfulness interventions that can be instigated by any empathic practitioner:

1. The just worrying technique -10 minutes

One technique that can be taught by practitioners who don't practice regular mindfulness is the [just worrying technique](#). Worrying is a common problem that presents to general practitioners and it can increase a patient's pain and suffering significantly. The just worrying technique takes five or 10 minutes to teach properly. Not only does it decrease the patients worrying and anxiety, it also makes the rest of the doctor's job much easier as the patient will be able to listen more effectively and is less likely to be seeking reassurance over and over. This technique is explained in detail at [here](#).



2. The Pleasant Moments Calendar – 5 minutes

Another useful intervention utilises the resource, [the Pleasant Moments Calendar](#). Patients who are anxious or depressed have often forgotten how to count their blessings. Those patients with lower levels of these conditions find the pleasant moments calendar very helpful. The explanation that goes with this calendar takes about three minutes:

At the end of each day, just spend 5 minutes to remember and jot down 3 pleasant moments you can remember from that day. For example, you might recall a heartfelt thank you from a co-worker, a quiet moment drinking tea, or a child's infectious laughter. When you notice these moments, breathe them in and mindfully notice the sensations in your body during the pleasant moment. You can do the same when you recall the pleasant moment as you write it down later in the day. As your awareness improves you might even notice your day being full of pleasant moments- moments that previously went under the radar. The effect of this can be wonderful just on its own,

In a 2005 study Martin Seligman (Seligman, Steen et al. 2005) invited participants to join in a Three Good Things exercise. After doing this for a week the participants reported feeling happier and less depressed than when they started. In fact, they maintained their happiness boost six months later, illustrating how impactful it can be to focus on the good things in life.