

# Sometimes Mindlessness Is Better Than Mindfulness

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“Be present.” This is the mantra of mindfulness meditation and a supposed key to self-awareness and acceptance. In one type of mindfulness exercise, the goal is to perform routine activities with a heightened sense of attention. “Try to take the time to experience your environment with all of your senses—touch, sound, sight, smell and taste. For example, when you eat a favorite food, take the time to smell, taste and truly enjoy it,” recommends one [Mayo Clinic article](#).

Mindfulness may indeed have psychological benefits. Earlier this year, a synthesis of randomized controlled trials revealed that mindfulness-based interventions had [small to moderate benefits](#) for a number of health outcomes, including stress, anxiety and depression. That said, the effects of mindfulness were smaller and less consistent when compared with those of other therapies, and some effects appeared to fade months after the intervention. Taken together, the results suggest that mindfulness-based interventions may be better than nothing for some outcomes but that more research is needed to compare mindfulness with other therapies.

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