

## Are You A Multi-tasker Or A Mindful-tasker\*?

### Is this you?



- You're good at spinning lots of plates at the same time.
- You're great at starting one task, then before that one's done you start another, whilst at the same time have a conversation with someone (either phone, email, in person - or all 3!)
- You're also thinking about what else you need to do.

### Or is this you?

- You can focus on one task at a time, choosing to bring all your attention to that task/meeting/event.
- Rather than racing, your mind is often calm, yet suitably alert.
- You listen actively, you're fully present in each moment, and you can deal promptly with distracting thoughts by letting them go, trusting that you will be able to deal with them later.



There's nothing wrong with being able to multi-task. It definitely has its place in the full-on and fast-paced world of teaching. **But what are the costs of having this mindset all the time?** When your mind's in several places at once you can miss vital bits of information or messages, you may misunderstand what people say, and you can also be left feeling dissatisfied and unfulfilled by the events of your day.

**By adopting more mindful practices** and becoming a 'Mindful-tasker', (a phrase I've coined!) you're more able to maximise those moments when you *really* need to be paying attention.



### Try this exercise ... 'The Mindful Minute'

You'll need a 1 minute timer and somewhere without distraction for just over a minute.

1. Make sure you're standing or sitting comfortably in a relaxed, upright position. Feet need to be flat on the floor, with your hands relaxed in your lap, and your shoulders and jaw relaxed.
2. Close your eyes, or relax your gaze downwards, and focus your attention on your breath.
3. Start the timer and allow yourself to breathe normally, counting each **out** breath. Don't force the breath, just breathe normally. If you get any distracting thoughts, just let them go. With practice, distracting thoughts will happen less!

### When to use ...

- At the start of your day to get you focused
- At the end of the day to relax you
- To prepare for a potentially stressful or difficult situation, or an important meeting/conversation

**Mindfulness** is a hot topic at the moment. It's not a new-fangled idea; it's from traditional Buddhist practices, which encourage paying attention and being present in the moment. Mindfulness has many benefits, including calming the mind, time to really appreciate things, and overall physical & mental wellbeing when practised regularly.

### So are you a Multi-tasker or a Mindful-tasker?

**There's a place for both. You choose which one to use and when!**