

## STOP before you start

The STOP technique is a really great way to bring mindfulness into your life. By creating moments to STOP each day, we're taking a step back and can access a broader perspective rather than getting swept away. Choose an activity you already do every day, such as taking a shower or making a coffee, and practice the STOP technique immediately beforehand. Literally, STOP before you start!

**T**  
**TUNE**  
into your breathing. Notice the movement of your chest and belly as you breathe in and out. If you like, take a few long, slow breaths in through your nose and out through your mouth.

**O**  
**OBSERVE**  
your experience exactly as it is. Notice what thoughts, feelings and physical sensations are present. Can you label them? Can you pinpoint where in your body you feel these things?

**S**  
**STOP**  
what you're doing and put things down for a moment.

**P**  
**PROCEED**  
with something that will help you right now. Is it taking a break? Calling a mate? Or going for a bike ride?

Try it at least once each day over the coming week and see where the best opportunities are for you in your day to just STOP!

## WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE PRESENT - DOG MIND VS. LION MIND

If you were to wave a bone in front of a dog and a lion and then throw it — how might they each react? A dog will automatically chase the bone without any thought. A lion, however, will pause, consider its options and choose its response.

Imagining the lion sitting poised, present and non-reactive, reminds us of the state of mind we're trying to cultivate when we practice mindfulness. Lion Mind is about being aware and observing with curiosity, so that we can choose how we want to respond rather than reacting automatically in ways that may not always be so helpful.

## HOW LION MIND CAN HELP YOU

Think of a time where there's been a challenging situation with a friend, or a concept that was difficult to wrap your head around whilst studying... your Dog Mind might have reacted automatically telling you it was too hard, that you couldn't do it. Lion Mind helps us face the 'bones' that get thrown our way, such as worries, negative thoughts and uncomfortable feelings. It helps us to take a step back and see the bigger picture. Regularly practicing Lion Mind also helps us be more creative, learn and focus better, think more clearly, better regulate our emotions, sleep better and support our relationships.

### TRY IT

The STOP technique is a quick and easy way to cultivate mindfulness — getting into our Lion Mind. Try it at least once each day over the coming week. Choose an activity you already do every day, such as taking a shower or making a coffee, and practice the STOP technique immediately beforehand. Literally, STOP before you start!

### REFLECT

- How did you find practising STOP? What did you notice?
- What do you notice when you're in Lion Mind?
- What do you notice when you're in Dog Mind?

## WANT MORE? CHECK THESE OUT!

Shauna Shapiro Ted Talk — The Power Of Mindfulness  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=leblJdB2-Vo>

Chris Willard Ted Talk — Growing Up Stressed or Growing up Mindful  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=znlsoaM\\_ALQ&t=1044s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=znlsoaM_ALQ&t=1044s)

Happify Animation — Why Mindfulness is a Superpower  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w6T02g5hnT4>

Happify Animation — A Beginner's Guide to Meditation  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o-kMJBWk9EO>

## CHECK OUT THE FEELING IT SERIES HERE!



Web app link:  
<https://app.smilingmind.com.au/programs/78>

Smiling Mind app location:  
All programs > Youth > Feeling It

## WHERE TO FIND SUPPORT

### Immediate danger

If you're in a life-threatening situation and need immediate help call 000

### Want to talk to someone?

Your school

- Reach out to a teacher or wellbeing coordinator at your school

### During business hours

If you're having difficulty coping during business hours you can also contact:

- Headspace <https://headspace.org.au>
- A local GP to arrange an appointment with them that day

### Available 24 hours every day

If you're in crisis or are having difficulty coping call one of the following services, both of which are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week:

- Lifeline 13 11 14
- Kids Helpline 1800 551 800