Setting Intention

Setting intention is a basic step in any practice. Intention is the goal you wish to achieve from an action. It is your directed attention. In mindfulness, intention refers to what you are choosing to pay attention to. Your intention might be to pay attention to your breath. It might be to pay attention to the task at hand or to your surroundings. Being mindful involves bringing your attention back to your intention over and over again. This tool explains the process of setting intention at the beginning of mindfulness practice.

To set your intention,

- Decide on your intention. Identify your intention at the beginning of every mindfulness practice whether formal or not. For example, if you intend to meditate on awareness of breath, then set your intention to focus your attention on your breath.
- Keep awareness of your intention present in mind. Remind yourself as soon as you become aware of a thought, feeling, or distraction that your intention is to focus on your breath, and shift your attention back to your breath.
- Check in periodically to ensure your thoughts, words, and actions remain consistent with your intention.
- Do this over and over during the entire Awareness of Breath or any mindfulness practice.