

## 4-Step Mindfulness Habit

See pages 25-28 of the book for a full explanation of this four-step process of mindfulness-habit-making.

The examples provided below will help you to identify everyday situations during which you can become actively aware – these can be as brief or as long as you wish. Note these in the spaces provided, either in advance or after the fact, then complete some short notes in the Active Awareness, Want/Need and Appreciate sections. No need to overthink this exercise, hold it lightly – a light touch is all that is needed. Noticing rather than scrutinising or treating it as a ‘project’. If you notice it has become a bit of a project, then be kind to yourself and ease back a little.

**Cue to mindfulness:** choose every day, mundane, or ordinary moments, or more creative or specific things you do. Either plan or think about these cues in advance if helpful, or just drop into the senses and the body as and when.

**Active awareness** is something you can generate, be deliberate with your focus of attention through the senses and see what arrives – what is ‘received’ from the external world through sight, sound, taste, touch, and tune into the atmosphere. Notice if you begin to analyse, judge, compare or form an opinion on what you notice, and step back to sensing – the raw qualities of what is arriving.

**Want / Need:** noticing what this active awareness might provide / has provided for you is important. Take care not to strive towards an ‘outcome’. It may be you have been feeling caught up, or tangled in thought, a bit disconnected or living in your head – the want/need being addressed may simply be a ‘waking up’ and coming back, or returning to life in those moments. Whatever you notice, it is enough.

**Appreciate** what this active awareness means to you: it might be information or insight about your mood or energy; recognise any sense of slowing down, letting go, release of tension, curiosity, aliveness, any ‘food for the soul’, connection with life, people, nature, the atmosphere around you right now. You may gather a sense of savouring some pleasantness or, as you experiment with more difficult situations, that these moments support you with gently approaching difficulties in useful ways – revealing habits of mind or negative thoughts, allowing you the opportunity to observe rather than absorb.

As you proceed through this book and your mindfulness skills begin to come online, please do experiment with ‘difficult’ situations, and use these as your cues, after all, challenges are part of life and will benefit from active awareness – we will cover this later in the book.

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## Example 1

Cue	<i>Waiting in line</i>
Active Awareness	<i>Looking around, listening out; feeling the ground beneath your feet.</i>
Want/Need	<i>To ease boredom or frustration</i>
Appreciation	<i>Noticing life, the buzz of activity, atmosphere; some space in which to breathe.</i>

## Example 2

Cue	<i>Choosing to take the stairs</i>
Active Awareness	<i>Noticing how you 'arrive' at the next floor/ destination in your head before you get there; the body in movement.</i>
Want/Need	<i>Slowing down, release tension, free exercise.</i>
Appreciation	<i>Stretching and flexing your legs, movement; coming back to now.</i>

## Example 3

Cue	<i>Waking up in the night, worried about work</i>
Active Awareness	<i>Noticing rumination, externalizing attention, redirecting attention through the senses.</i>
Want/Need	<i>Letting go, softening, rest.</i>
Appreciation	<i>Calm, ease, acceptance. Rest or sleep.</i>

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*Your Turn!*

Cue	
Active Awareness	
Want/Need	
Appreciation	
Cue	
Active Awareness	
Want/Need	
Appreciation	