

5 MINDFULLY CREATE YOUR DAY

WE ALL KNOW that our thoughts affect our feelings. Tumbling out of bed on the alarm, rushing into work without pausing for breakfast, launching yourself straight into tasks without prioritising can leave you feeling mangled before you have even got to lunchtime. Instead, each morning when you wake up, lie still for a few moments, maybe using the breathing space to ground you in the moment. Actively visualise the day you desire and the qualities

you wish to bring to it, such as serenity, energy, love or patience.

Developing the skill of mindfulness enhances our engagement with all aspects of our lives. It creates freedom to describe ourselves without judgement and, in so doing, we can tell a different story about ourselves, one that is compassionate, authentic and present to the most important time in our life, which is, and always will be, this very moment.

RESOURCES

- **FULL CATASTROPHE LIVING** by Jon Kabat-Zinn (£20, Piatkus), an accessible introduction to living mindfully.
- **THE ONE MOMENT MASTER** by Martin Boroson (£6.99, Rider & Co), a useful guide to mastering moment-to-moment living.
- **www.drcecilia.dfelice.com**



'I can step back from stress'

By Kathy Andrews

I'd been on anti-depressants for nine years or so and, after nosediving, I'd increased my medication. I had tried CBT and had been seeing a nutritional therapist, but I wanted to find a bigger arsenal to fight depression. When I got onto a mindfulness course, I approached it as another piece that might help. Mindfulness is easy to practise, as you just follow the tapes. The hard thing is learning to do nothing but pay attention. You start recognising your internal dialogue, which is mostly negative, and becoming aware of what's going on in your thoughts.

After several months, I'm on my lowest dose of medication ever. When I feel down, instead of feeling scared by 'warning signs', I can step back and observe my feelings. I can say, 'this is what's going on', and, even if I don't like it, I can step back and pay attention to the feeling. It stops me going into panic mode, it's very calming.

