

The Focused Team

Free Workplace Mindfulness Guide

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SECTION 01

Most people think stress is just part of the job. But chronic workplace stress doesn't just affect how you feel — it rewires how your brain works.

When your nervous system stays in threat mode, your prefrontal cortex — the part responsible for focus, decision-making, and emotional regulation — literally goes offline.

Missed deadlines, short tempers, poor decisions, and burnout aren't character flaws. **They're biology.**

23 min
lost every time
you switch tasks

77%
of workers have
experienced burnout

60 sec
of breathing can
reset your nervous system

Mindful Task Management

Your brain is not designed to multitask. Every time you switch tasks, you lose up to 23 minutes of focused productivity. Single-tasking isn't old-fashioned — it's neuroscience.

The Whiteboard Method

Keep a small whiteboard at your desk, cubicle wall, or office door. At the start of each day write your top 3 priorities — nothing else. This isn't a to-do list. It's a **focus anchor**. When distractions pull you away, the whiteboard pulls you back. It externalizes your intention so your brain doesn't have to hold it — freeing up mental energy for the actual work.

WHY IT WORKS: Externalizing priorities reduces cognitive load. Your brain spends energy holding open tasks — writing them down releases that mental grip and allows deeper focus on what's in front of you.

Email & Communication Boundaries

Every notification is a focus interruption. Check email at set times — not continuously. Try batching your responses at 9am, 12pm, and 4pm. Communicate this boundary to your team so it becomes a **cultural norm**, not an exception.

Quick Desk Resets

60 seconds or less — no one has to know.

The 60-Second Breath Reset

When you feel overwhelmed, stop. Inhale for 4 counts, hold for 4, exhale for 6. Repeat 3 times. This activates your parasympathetic nervous system — your body's built-in calm switch.

WHY IT WORKS: Your exhale controls your heart rate. A longer exhale than inhale signals safety to your nervous system, slowing your heart rate and quieting mental noise — in under 60 seconds.

The Five Senses Ground

Anxiety lives in the future. Grounding lives in the present. When your mind is racing, this technique forces your brain to engage your senses instead of your worries — interrupting the stress loop in under 2 minutes.

5 things you can SEE	4 things you can TOUCH
3 things you can HEAR	2 things you can SMELL
1 thing you can TASTE	

The Body Scan

Spend 2–3 minutes noticing where you're holding tension. Jaw clenched? Shoulders raised? Back tight? Consciously soften each area. Tension is stored stress — releasing it physically signals your mind to follow.

SECTION 04

Mindful Meetings & Interactions

The Minute-to-Arrive

Before diving into agenda items, invite 60 seconds of silence at the start of every meeting. This allows everyone to mentally transition from their previous task. The result? More focused, present, and productive conversations.

Active Listening

When a colleague speaks, your only job is to hear them — not prepare your response. This single habit reduces misunderstandings, builds trust, and creates a culture where people feel valued. **Teams that listen outperform teams that just talk.**

SECTION 05

Building Long-Term Habits

Willpower is a limited resource. Habits are automatic. The goal isn't to remember to be mindful — it's to build environments and routines that make mindfulness the default.

The Mindfulness App	Guided meditations and specialized focus tracks for your breaks
Calm	Body scans, sleep support, and dedicated workplace programs
Mindful.org	Research-backed best practices for integrating mindfulness at work

"When people feel good, they do excellent work."

— Kimberly Larson, Zen Boutique Life Coaching

Ready to bring mindfulness to your team?

Book Kimberly for your next conference, leadership retreat, or team training.

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