

THE MINDFUL KIND



JARKA

KUNOVA

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Welcome to The Mindful Kind Interview Series!

I've decided that it's time to throw convention out the window and get a whole lot more excited about mindfulness! We know that being mindful can bring richness, meaning and calm into our lives and can also offer amazing benefits, from better sleep to lower stress. However, I believe that our mindfulness journeys can also be refreshing, fun and inspiring! Discover which animal best represents mindfulness, what the strangest mindful practices are and how to use interesting mindfulness tools.

You'll find out all of this and much, much more, as this interview series comes to life!

Jarka is an absolutely wonderful and inspiring life and business coach and I'm thrilled to be sharing her insights into mindfulness! This is a really special interview because Jarka shows just how important a mindfulness practice can be for an extroverted person. As an introvert, much of my practice stems from quieting my mind and slowing racing thoughts, whereas Jarka explains how mindfulness has helped her become a better listener. Mindfulness is an amazing practice for both introverts and extroverts and offers different (and wonderful!) benefits for each individual.

What is your favourite mindfulness practice?

I am a big fan of mindfulness and it's now part of my every day life. My favourite mindfulness practice is mindful listening.

I used to be a very bad listener. I am an extrovert by nature and I love talking so listening has never really been my strong suit. That is, until I started meditating and getting more centred within myself.

I since discovered that mindful listening is actually a lot of fun and it facilitates the capacity of deeper connection with people. It's been a great asset of mine for coaching but also when I meet people for the first time.

What's the first emotion you think of when you hear the word "mindful?"

Considerate. Whenever I deal with mindful people I feel they are a lot more considerate than the less mindful 'folk'. It's more about compassion rather than the ego.

When did you start practising mindfulness?

It's only really been a year since I discovered meditation, which is how my mindfulness practice started. I have since read a lot of books on mindfulness, attended the Mindful Leadership Forum by the Wake Up project and participated in the online mindfulness summit in October organised by Melli O'Brien. Like with any practice, the more you do it, the better you become at it, which in the case of mindfulness means developing a deeper more meaningful practice every day as a way of deepening the connection to yourself.

What is your favourite mindfulness tool and how do you use it?

I have a couple of them, actually. I love crystals. I have a number of them around my house and also wear them as jewellery. I recently bought this beautiful amethyst ring in Byron Bay that I wear every day. It grounds my energy and reminds me to breathe through difficult situations.

And then one of my favourite rituals is using an essential oil mist every morning. A very talented friend of mine, Karen Pethard started her own range of beautiful mists called Combardis. Each of them has a set of affirmations that I read out loud each morning after I mist my personal space. It really sets my day up for an intention filled mindful day.

Why do you keep practising mindfulness?

It calms me and helps me manage my stress levels a lot better than I used to before. I am also a lot more 'alert' and by being more present in each moment I'm getting more enjoyment out of each day. The power of being in the moment takes away the need for worry or longing.

Have you experienced any benefits as a result of your mindfulness practice?

I noticed that my focus is a lot sharper and as a result of that I am more creative and productive. If it weren't for mindfulness this year, I don't think I would've been able to sustain my energy levels to work full time, study part time, build my business, keep writing and take on coaching clients. It is a non-negotiable in my every days and it taught me to be resilient.

What is your best tip for introducing a mindfulness practice for a beginner?

Find something that can become part of a ritual every day. This could be a gratitude journal at the end of day, doing meditation first thing in the morning or as simple as taking a conscious break every day for some deep breathing.

Would you recommend mindfulness to a friend?

Absolutely. As a matter of fact, all my coaching sessions are underpinned by mindfulness, starting with mindful goal setting. I have recommended meditation apps to friends who struggled with their sleep or stress levels and I also frequently blog about this topic trying to educate people about the benefits.

Do you use a mindfulness app? If so, what is it and what do you like about it?

When I started my meditation practice I relied on my trusty friend, the app called Buddhify. I like how you can choose the length of your guided meditation. There is also a degree of humour that the facilitator applies in some of the sessions. It's an app with a difference.

Mindful colouring is a huge trend at the moment! What are your thoughts about it?

I think it's brilliant! I've got a few adult colouring books myself and find the process of colouring very relaxing, de-stressing and the activity reminds me of my childhood. It helps me to get out of my head and tune into my body, breathing and feelings. I highly recommend it to those who haven't yet had a go.

Jarka Kunova is a transformational life and business coach, writer and speaker. Her mission is to help people overcome limiting beliefs and to weave more kindness, mindfulness and wholeheartedness into businesses and careers alike. In her recent eBook 'Limitless: Introduction to mindset mastery +creating a purposeful life', Jarka encourages people to create sustainable change in their lives.

Known for her capacity to inspire, encourage and deeply connect, Jarka takes people and businesses to the core of their purpose and supports them with the formulation of meaningful strategies.