

mindful

# weekly wake up



## Dear Mindful Readers,

As I write to you from my kitchen table, my internet browser has 20 tabs open. Why? you may ask (or maybe you understand the feeling all too clearly). Well, on some level I can't decide which tab is most important right now. There are two email inboxes (both pinging with new emails faster than I can keep up), a Google Analytics dashboard trying to tell me which topics most interest readers these days, articles unpacking the new lockdown restrictions announced in Quebec, Canada, where most of my family lives, and articles about my neighbors in the United States. It's a lot.

I let each running tab hum in the background as I shuffle through the day, continually making decisions about which one needs my attention most.

From time to time, I'll stare at the tiny tabs at the top of my laptop screen and wonder how many more metaphorical tabs I'm running in my mind. It's usually an overwhelming thought, but I'll try to take a breath and kindly remind myself to focus on one thing at a time.

Here are three ways to give yourself space and take back your attention:

**1. Ask yourself: What's taking up my attention right now?**

"The attention system is like a flashlight," writes neuroscientist Amishi Jha. "It allows us to select and direct our brain's computational resources." Yet, our attention gets sabotaged in so many ways, especially during periods of high stress. Jha [explains 10 ways our brains are wired to react to stress](#), and how mindfulness can help us keep our focus.

**2. Allow your body and brain to calm down.** When something happens to throw us into a state of anxiety or even panic, it's hard to come back to this moment. As meditation teacher Bob Stahl writes, it's important to remember that "you have other choices, and there are tools that can help you cope with the impulse to escape." Try [this 4-step S.T.O.P. practice to calm both your body and mind](#).

**3. Listen to your body's "Rest!" signals.** Trying to be vigilant with your attention 100% of the day, every day, is a recipe for attention burnout. "Thriving in our life and work requires activity coupled with regular periods of rest and renewal," writes mindful leadership expert Rich Fernandez. He offers [these 5 simple tips for slowing down and appreciating your experience](#)).

Warmly,

Kylee Ross  
*Associate editor, Mindful*