Be nice to yourself - Ten Tips to Foster Self-Compassion through Mindfulness

Cracking the whip doesn't really help you get more done, it just wears you down, leading to burnout, irritability and less productivity. Try adding these mindfulness tips into your day for a few days. Notice if you feel kinder toward yourself and those you come in contact with.

1. **Start your day with 5 minutes of quiet** - waking up mindfully can help you set the tone for the day. Taking time to eat a small nutritious meal will send a message to your body that you have it within your reach to take care of your basic needs. Reading even the shortest of inspirational passage can help you feel centered for at least the first part of your day.
2. **Take three deep breaths** - before you leave your car or the bus to start your workday take three deep breaths. Planning brief pauses throughout the day will keep stress hormones from activating. Remember that stress hormones are not kind to the body! **Focusing on the exhale** will help activate the rest and digest response. (see mindful hub for more instruction.)
3. **What is going right?** - take a moment to think about one or two recent accomplishments before tackling your daily to-do list These can be really small; getting to work on time, keeping your desk neat, helping an elderly relative.
4. **Drink water -** a very small kindness toward the self but so important. Staying hydrated will help all your bodily systems run more smoothy. We can feel tired, cranky and stressed, just because we forget to take time for basic needs like drinking enough water.
5. **Take frequent stretch breaks** - whether you spend the bulk of your day sitting or running around, taking time out for few quick stretches will send a message to your body and mind that you are safe and well. (see mindful hub for quick yoga routines)
6. **Try to under-schedule yourself** - Instead of packing as much as you can into every day, try a few days of under-scheduling. Do only what is absolutely necessary one day a week. Does this sound too challenging? Alternatively, **make sure you add in one activity a day that is purely joyful for you.** Notice how you feel at the end of the day.
7. **Look people in the eye** - slow down, and be in the present moment with as many conversations as you can today. Notice how this calms the nervous system and makes conversations more meaningful and enjoyable.
8. **Play -** get in touch with your silly inner-child. Squish some clay, draw a funny picture, ride a bike.
9. **Move slowly toward the end of the day** - Try cutting your pace in half after five. Sending the signal to your body that it's time to think about getting some rest.
10. **What went right?** - Before closing your eyes, note three small things that you are grateful for. These items can be as small as a warm breeze, remembering a friendly encounter, or a cozy bed.

To get started with a mindfulness practice, visit mindfulhub.com.

We wish you 20 minutes of mindfulness every day!