

# Book review

## Capturing Mindfulness

A guide to becoming present through photography

**Category:** Book Reviews / Self-help

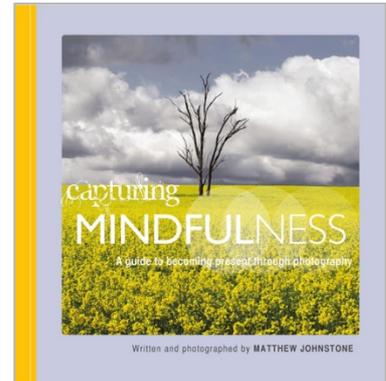
**Author:** Matthew Johnstone

**Year:** 2014

**Publisher:** Little, Brown Book Group, UK

**ISBN:** 9781472113269

**Audience:** Supporting Myself



**Summary:** A guide to consciously slowing down and truly engaging with your surroundings - with a camera

When *Capturing Mindfulness* needed reviewing I was intrigued. I have been taking the opportunity to learn about mindfulness and I am also an avid photographer. The book has sat next to me for a while and I have enjoyed flicking through looking at the pictures. However, it has taken a reminder that the book review is due to get me to read it!

The first section of the book is about becoming mindful, illustrated by some beautiful photographs. Author Matthew Johnstone, of *I had a black dog* fame, explains mindfulness "as the act of paying close attention to what we are doing, where we are and what we're thinking; all without judgement or self-criticism, all with a slow and gentle intention."

The reader is guided through the mindful process. I could not help being drawn in and start relaxing; having meditated for a number of years I found this quite easy to do.

### Choose photo shoot locations carefully

Johnstone then goes on to explain how to become present through taking photographs, bringing attention to the present moment; by using photography to look at the world as though seeing it for the first time.

I grabbed my camera and headed into the garden to take pictures of blue flowers. I noticed the bees and the tuis playing in the garden and tried to photograph them. This was frustrating so I went back to my flowers and noticed the weeds. Perhaps next time I will go to the botanic gardens or the beach; somewhere where I won't be reminded of chores to be done!

This is a beautiful book that I have enjoyed flicking through. I will definitely be trying to spend more time with my camera and focusing on the present.

**Reviewed by Michelle Hull, Mental Health Promoter with the Mental Health Foundation**

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