

leave no trace.



Here is another exercise to help you bring your a more mindful experience into your daily workplace.

It can be used to complement these other [MindfulNurse](#) exercises:

[Washing your hands.](#)

[Answering the telephone.](#)

Leave no trace.

For the next week commit to 'leaving no trace' as you move through your shift. You might like to choose a one or two particular areas to focus on initially. For example:

- Your activities in your break/tea room.
- Medication round.
- Performing a procedure or dressing.
- In the medication room.
- At the patients bedside.

Once you have finished what you are doing in this area, clean away all trace of your presence there.

Rather than doing this begrudgingly or hurriedly use this situation as a prompt to settle on your breath and become mindful of your activity. [[Here are some tips on how to do that.](#)] Cultivate an attitude of 'clearing out the clutter' and settling into the quality of your work.

No trace means no trace. Take care to take care of everything that doesn't need to be there. *And...everything that does.*



Scissors, packaging, bits of stuff and rolls of tape. Items returned to their *proper* location. Surfaces cleaned. Things put back into order.

In some Japanese art the concept of leaving no trace is represented by the turtle, carefully sweeping the sand clear with its tail (or flippers) as it slowly, mindfully, moves along.

This exercise can be especially challenging when someone else has left an existing mess (although there are a few exceptions, I have found doctors to be TERRIBLE at leaving no trace). You might prefer to clean up only your own trace....or challenge yourself to clean up the entire mess.

Alternatively, you might include in your exercise cultivating some assertiveness by challenging the mess makers to tend to their *own* trace.

Sometimes your own actions will prompt others follow.

There is this cool old guy in my neighbourhood who walks his small dog every morning. He carries a small plastic shopping bag with him and as he walks along, he fills it with bits of rubbish and trash. He doesn't go out of his way to try and clean up *everything*, just the pieces that fall upon his way.

Like I said, he was cool.

.....And then just week I saw another lady walking her own dog doing the same thing.

Of course not every situation will be appropriate, or give you the time or space to leave no trace. But just for the next week commit to giving it your best shot.

Featured image via: [Jenny Downing](#)
