



MINDFULNESS PRACTICE

Quick Start Guide

Mindfulness is paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally. (Jon Kabat-Zinn)

Mindfulness is the awareness that arises out of intentionally paying attention in an open, kind, and discerning way. (Shauna Shapiro & Linda Carlson)

Benefits of mindfulness practice:

- More resilience under stress
- Reduced anxiety and rumination
- Tools for being with chronic pain
- Better memory and attention
- Reduction of compulsive behaviors
- Enhanced emotional intelligence & compassion
- Being more open, engaged, and flexible.

THREE PROBLEMS WITH THINKING

- Time travel
lost in the past and the future
- Flattening
settling for the idea, missing the richness
- Reification
believing that our thoughts are real.



“Between stimulus and response there is a space. In that space lies our freedom and power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and freedom.”

- Victor Frankl

THREE KEYS TO MINDFULNESS: WILLINGNESS, CURIOSITY, KINDNESS

Mindfulness in relating to stress:

Becoming more aware of feelings in the body, seeing thoughts and emotions as just thoughts and emotions, and being less caught in “the story,” helps us be less reactive, more curious, and open to multiple points of view. Stress happens. Upset happens. But we humans tend to keep ourselves upset by repeating the story of what happened.

- What am I adding? Suffering = Pain X Resistance
- The Buddha’s story of the “Second Dart”



Compassion is our natural ability to stay present in the face of suffering and be willing to help. **Mindfulness** helps us be more aware of our own feelings and the feelings of others. Mindfulness and compassion work together and both can be strengthened **with practice**. Helping is truly compassionate when we have a felt sense of our suffering and the suffering of others. True compassion feels good and is more sustainable.



“If you want others to be happy, practice compassion. If you want to be happy, practice compassion.” - H.H. the Dalai Lama

FORMAL PRACTICE RECOMMENDATIONS:

Awareness of Breathing:

Sit in an upright, comfortable posture. Find the breath in the body, wherever you feel it most easily. Attend to the sensations of breathing. When the mind wanders (and it will!), gently bring it back to the breathing.



Awareness of Thinking (labeling):

Start with Awareness of Breathing. Once settled, let the attention linger a little on where the mind goes. Apply a simple label like “planning” or “worry” or “memory”. Return to the breathing.

Body Scan

Seated, standing, or lying down. Feel the whole body and scan from toes to head, noticing sensations. Using a recording helps. Increases body awareness and can be deeply settling.

Loving-Kindness

Start with Awareness of Breathing. Then gently offer phrases to cultivate a kind, accepting attitude towards ourselves: “May I be happy; May I be healthy; May I find ease and joy.” You could visualize others and offer the same wishes. Accept and be curious about how it feels.

Mindful Movement

Practice noticing bodily sensations with:

- Mindful Walking
- Stretching mindfully
- Simple yoga routines
- Tai Chi, Qi Gong, etc.
(no need to be an expert!)



For free practice recordings go to [RESOURCES](#) section on our website.

INFORMAL PRACTICE RECOMMENDATIONS:

Study the “hurry habit” and the urge to multi-task: What’s preventing you from giving yourself time to breathe and focus on one thing at a time today?

- Two Feet and a Breath
- STOP—Stop, Take a Breath, Observe, Proceed
- Eat a mindful meal at least once this week
- Walk a little slower - feel the feeling of walking
- Get up and stretch slowly & with awareness

Just thinking about it doesn’t do a lot – TRY SOMETHING!

