



MINDFULNESS

Mindfulness is: "Paying attention, in a particular way; on purpose, in the present moment, without judgement." - Jon Kabat-Zinn

Benefits of Mindfulness practice include:

- **Decreased Stress & Improved Resilience**
- **Emotion Regulation and Coping**
- **Boosts Mood**
- **Sharpens Mental Clarity, Focus & Memory**
- **Improves Connection to Yourself, Others & the World**
- **Improves General Health, Blood Pressure & Heart Rate**

Mindfulness works by maintaining our connection to the present moment, enhancing our willingness to experience whatever exists within 'the now'. Thoughts, sensations & feelings are observed simply as they are, and urges to 'hold on', change, or react to inner experiences are resisted, instead we simply allow them to be. Over time, we become more at peace with ourselves, our minds, and our interactions with the world around us.

Start by spending 3-5 minutes each day finding a comfortable, non-distracting place to close your eyes and bring your attention inward. Focus on the physical sensation of breathing (Chest rising and falling, lungs expanding, etc). Each time your mind wanders, calmly and non-judgementally redirect yourself back to the breath. Over time, you can grow your practice with a wide variety of Mindfulness Meditations.



Ways to Practice

Try boxed breathing for 3-5 minutes. Inhale for 4 counts, hold for 4 counts, exhale for 4 counts, hold for 4 counts. Google "Calm breathing Bubble" for a visual cue with this activity.

Practice a 'Doing Mindfulness' - choose an activity like going for a walk, eating, or showering, or listening to a song, and focus your mind on simply engaging with that activity and nothing else. Use all of your 5 senses to experience that activity.

Check out Mindfulness Apps like Calm, Headspace, and Smiling Mind. These apps host a variety of Guided Meditations as well as calming sounds.

Take 3 minutes in your current surroundings and notice 5 things you see, 4 things you hear, 3 things you feel, 2 things you smell and 1 thing you taste.

Try 5 finger breathing. Get your breath into a rhythm, close your eyes and use one of your index fingers to slowly trace each of your fingers starting with your thumb. Inhale and trace up, exhale and trace down on each finger. Notice what it feels like. Switch hands. Repeat.

Take a piece of chocolate or a raisin and intentionally eat it very slowly. Notice the texture, taste, smell, and how it changes.

Pick up an object, hold it in your hand and stare at it, noticing all the details and textures, how it feels. Move it around, change the position and explore how it changes in the light, position etc.