

Mindfulness & Meditation

How changing your focus can improve your well-being

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Agenda

- What is mindfulness?
 - Defined
 - The benefits
- Everyday Mindfulness
 - Meditation
 - Movement
 - Eating
 - Listening
- Guided Meditation
- Q&A



What is Mindfulness?

- The awareness that emerges through paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, non-judgmentally to the unfolding experience moment to moment
- The quality of state of being conscious or aware



Let's Try It!



Why is Mindfulness so Popular?

147

150

295



Why is Mindfulness so Popular?

147 = average # of emails

150 = average times we check our
phone

295 = average number of decisions

Source: The Happiness Equation – Neil Pasricha

Why is Mindfulness so Popular?

- Technology-driven world & 24 hour news cycle
- Multi-tasking & decision fatigue
- Escalating stress
- Lack of focus on the mind-body connection
- Increasing incidence of mental health problems, expanding addictions
- Less time spent in nature

Mindfulness Works!

- Reduced rumination
- Reduced stress and anxiety
- Improved immune function
- Boosts memory and focus
- Reduced emotional reactivity
- Improved cognitive flexibility
- Improved satisfaction in relationships
- Increased compassion and empathy
- Increased productivity
- Ability to turn off our autopilot tendencies
- It can be done by anyone, anytime, anywhere

Everyday Mindfulness



Mindfulness in Practice

- Humans are problem-oriented
- We spend most of our time:
 - In the future, worrying about the possibilities
 - In the past, dwelling and regretting past situations
- We spend our time:
 - Working on challenging tasks (Head)
 - Dealing with emotional situations (Heart)
- Mindfulness helps us to balance past and present, head and heart and embrace the present moment



Mindfulness in Practice

- A growth process
- No pass/fail
- No judgment
- Guidance can be helpful
- Find what works for you
- Every little bit counts - just focus on incorporating this way of thinking into your daily life!



Breathing & Meditation

- At the root of mindfulness is meditation
- Sitting quietly, cross-legged on a cushion or chair with a straight spine and eyes closed
- Attention is placed on the movement of the abdomen when breathing in and out
- If attention strays, accept it, non-judgmentally and return focus to breathing
- Start with 10 minutes per day and build up



Types of Meditation

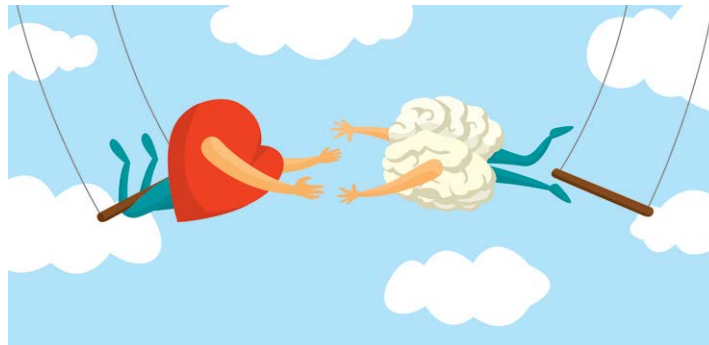
- Expanding of awareness meditations
 - Mindfulness of breath, body, sound, thoughts or feelings
 - Open awareness
- Body scan meditation
- Movement meditation
- Guided meditation
- Meditation with music



Let's Try It!

Strategies: Mind-Body Connection

- Awareness can help us to target recurring issues:
 - Aches and pains
 - Nagging thoughts and concerns
 - Good ideas
 - Sources of stress
- **Homework – take a moment a few times daily to perform a mind-body check**



Strategies: Mindful Listening

“Most people do not listen with the intent to understand.
They listen with the intent to reply”

~Stephen Covey



Strategies: Mindful Technology Use

- Noticing patterns and dependency
- Noticing effects on our health; stress, sleep, depression, etc.
- Mono-tasking vs. Multi-tasking
 - At work & play
 - Texting and
- Avoiding “inflammatory” technologies
 - Comments sections, keeping up with the Joneses, etc.
- **Homework: Consider a digital detox; taking a break daily, cutting off use before bed, or maybe a longer break?**



Strategies: Mindful Eating

- Eating habits awareness
 - Mealtime rituals
 - Chewing our food
 - How food impacts our bodies
- Quality vs. Quantity
- Connect to your food, to others and to your mind and body
- **Homework: slow down and savour**



To Recap

- Become mindful of your thoughts, words and actions as well as your body
- Start small
- Remember the definition:
 - Mindfulness is a **practice**
 - Mindfulness is non-judgmental (of others *and* yourself)
 - Mindfulness is about spending more time in the moment
- Find what works for you – we are all so different!
- Notice the changes over time
- Keep Learning!

Resources

Writers/Experts

- Jon Kabat-Zinn
- Thich Nhat Hanh
- Pema Chodron
- Dan Harris
- And so many more!

Apps

- Headspace
- Calm
- Stop, Breathe, Think,
- Insight Timer

Let's Meditate



Questions?



Thank you!