

Mindfulness Resource Package

WHAT IS MINDFULNESS?

Mindfulness is purposefully paying attention to the present moment, free of judgemental thoughts of oneself or surroundings.

Key Components of Mindfulness

Key components of practicing mindfulness that Kabat-Zinn and others identify:

- Pay close attention to your breathing, especially when you are feeling intense emotions.
- Notice—really notice—what you are sensing in a given moment, the sights, sounds, and smells that ordinarily slip by without reaching your conscious awareness.
- Recognize that your thoughts and emotions are fleeting and do not define you, an insight that can free you from negative thought patterns.
- Tune into your body’s physical sensations, from the water hitting your skin in the shower to the way your body rests in your chair.
- Find “micro-moments” of mindfulness throughout the day to reset your focus and sense of purpose.

Benefits of Mindfulness

- 🌸 Positive effects on mental health issues, decrease depressive symptoms, help patients understand negative thoughts, prevent rumination, increase awareness of mental health issue, reframe negative thoughts, increase compassion, increased feelings of life purpose, reduce relapse, increase happiness, and detect mood changes (Maxwell & Duff, 2016; Coholic, et al., 2018).



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A GUIDE TO PRACTICING MINDFULNESS BREATHING

Abdominal Breathing

The first breathing skill is called natural or abdominal breathing. It helps you to take in enough oxygen and controls the release of carbon dioxide, so you are less vulnerable to anxiety symptoms. This is a good way to breathe all day long, and is very simple. Abdominal breathing is the opposite of that which happens during anxious moments. Instead of breathing rapidly and shallowly into the upper lungs, which expands only the upper chest, you breathe gently into the lower lungs, expanding the abdomen.

How to do it:

1. Gently and slowly inhale through your nose, filling your lower lungs so that your abdomen moves out, allowing air to fill your lower lungs, and then move into your upper lungs.
2. Exhale easily. First try it with one hand on your stomach. As you inhale gently, your hand should rise. Continue this gentle breathing pattern while feeling relaxed filling the lower lungs.

Calming Breath

The second technique is deep diaphragmatic breathing and can be used when you are feeling anxious or panicky. It is a powerful way to control hyperventilation, slow rapid heartbeat and promote physical comfort. For this reason, we call it the calming breath. Practice this calming breath at least ten times a day for several weeks. Practice at first when fairly calm, then when you become more familiar and comfortable use it when tense or anxious.

How to do it:

1. Take a long, slow breath in through your nose, first filling your lower lungs so that your abdomen moves out, and then fill your upper lungs.
2. Hold your breath to the slow count of “three”.
3. Exhale slowly through your mouth, while you relax the muscles in your face, jaw, shoulders & stomach.

Calming Counts

The third technique is called calming counts and takes longer to complete (about 90 seconds rather than 30 seconds). It helps you to concentrate on counting instead of fearful thoughts, so you are less focused on those thoughts and can gain more control of them. Also, calming counts, like other breathing techniques, helps you lower your anxious response and gain a feeling of relaxation.

How to do it:

1. Take a long, deep breath, with eyes closed, and slowly exhale silently saying the word “relax”.
2. Take ten slow, easy breaths, counting down each time you exhale, beginning with “ten”.
3. Notice any tension in your body, and imagine those tensions loosening.
4. When you reach “one”, open your eyes again.

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RESOURCES

Apps for Smart Devices

Free to download!

 In sight timer- Over 25,000 guided meditations, free talks, podcasts , music

 <https://apps.apple.com/au/app/reachout-worrytime/id964311176>

 https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.worrytree.worrytree&hl=en_CA

 Smiling mind- The app features hundreds of meditations, enough to keep you engaged without overwhelming you with choice. They are organized into structured programs like Mindful Foundations (42 sessions), Sleep (6 sessions), Relationships (13 sessions), and Workplace (41 sessions), but you have the flexibility to choose where to start and to easily jump between programs. Most meditations are in the 5-15 minute range, with a few practices up to 45 minutes for advanced meditators.

 Stop. Breathe think - A section called Learn to Meditate explains what mindfulness is and why it's beneficial, including some of the neuroscience and physiology behind it. Each day when you open the app, you're asked "How are you?" and invited to check in with yourself—to rate your mind and body on a scale of "rough" to "great," and note up to five emotions you're feeling. Then, Stop, Breathe & Think will recommend meditations, mindful walks, even acupuncture videos tailored to how you feel.

 UCLA Mindful -Developed by the Mindful Awareness Research Center at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), the app features about a dozen meditations of different types in English and Spanish. You can learn to focus on your breath, your body, or sounds; work with difficult emotions; and cultivate loving-kindness in sessions ranging from 3 to 19 minutes long.

 The Mindfulness App: meditation for everyone, free

 Buddhify: modern mindfulness for busy lives, \$6.99

 Simply Being: guided meditation for relaxation, \$2.79

 Headspace: guided meditation and mindfulness, free

 Breathe2Relax: diaphragmatic breathing for stress management, free

 Universal Breathing Pranayama: diaphragmatic breathing for stress management, *most popular breathing app in the world, free

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RESOURCES

Free Online Mindfulness Tools

-  www.freemindfulness.org/home - collection of mindfulness meditations, resources, apps, information
-  <https://www.tarabrach.com/guided-meditations/> - guided meditation, talks, resources
-  [YouTube](#) - great for guided meditations related to sleep and anxiety. You can watch or listen to on your home computer.

Books

Amazon is great way to order!

-  **Meditation Is Not What You Think**: Mindfulness and Why It Is So Important
By Jon Kabat-Zinn
-  **Resilience**: Powerful Practices for Bouncing Back from Disappointment, Difficulty, and Even Disaster
By Linda Graham
-  **The Mindful Day**: Practical Ways to Find Focus, Calm, and Joy from Morning to Evening
By Laurie J. Cameron
-  **Declutter Your Mind: How to Stop Worrying, Relieve Anxiety, and Eliminate Negative Thinking**
By SJ Scott and Barrie Davenport

Other Resources

TED Talks

-  7 of the most inspirational mindfulness TED Talks (copy and paste links in your browser)
<https://positivepsychology.com/mindfulness-ted-talks/>

