

Practices of Mindfulness and Meditation

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Goals for Learning

- Explore the benefits of mindfulness and meditation
- Take home easy to use mindfulness and meditation practices
- Increase understanding of how the brain works

Mindfulness Practice

Set a positive intention at the beginning of your day, and focus on it throughout the day to help achieve a purpose.

- Today I will be confident. I will be confident in my work. I will be confident in my interactions with others. I am confident with who I am.
- Today I will embrace change with an open mind. I have an open mind as I communicate with others. I have an open mind in my work. I am open to new ideas. I will see things from other's perspective.
- Today I am _____. I will practice _____. I will be _____.

Mindfulness Practice

Disconnect from technology to reconnect with yourself; take time to digital detox.

- Set aside specific hours of the day when you will completely disconnect from technology- no cell phone, no computer, no ipad, no videogames
- Check emails or text messages at only set times during the day

Mindfulness Practice

Begin your day with a smile. Develop the habit of greeting the world and embracing the day with a smile on your face.

- Observe people's facial expressions. When you see someone without a smile, give them one of yours.
- Consciously begin your day with a smile. Before you get out of bed, give the world a smile.
- Smile before you begin a task
- Smile while doing a task you don't enjoy
- Notice how you feel when you smile versus when you have a sad facial expression

Mindfulness

Mindfulness is Being Present in the Moment

Mindfulness

Mindfulness is trying to get the mind to look at the mind. To try to observe how the operating system is functioning.

The Brain is the Hardware

The Mind is the software

The mind has a mind of it's own. We are on autopilot most of the time – mindfulness & meditation are tools to regroup our hard drive and give us insight into how that software is running.



Meditation

Any way in which we engage in systematically regulating our attention and energy, influencing and possibly transforming the quality of our experience.

Jon Kabat-Zin



Meditation is activity for building muscles of the mind.

Why Practice Mindfulness & Meditation

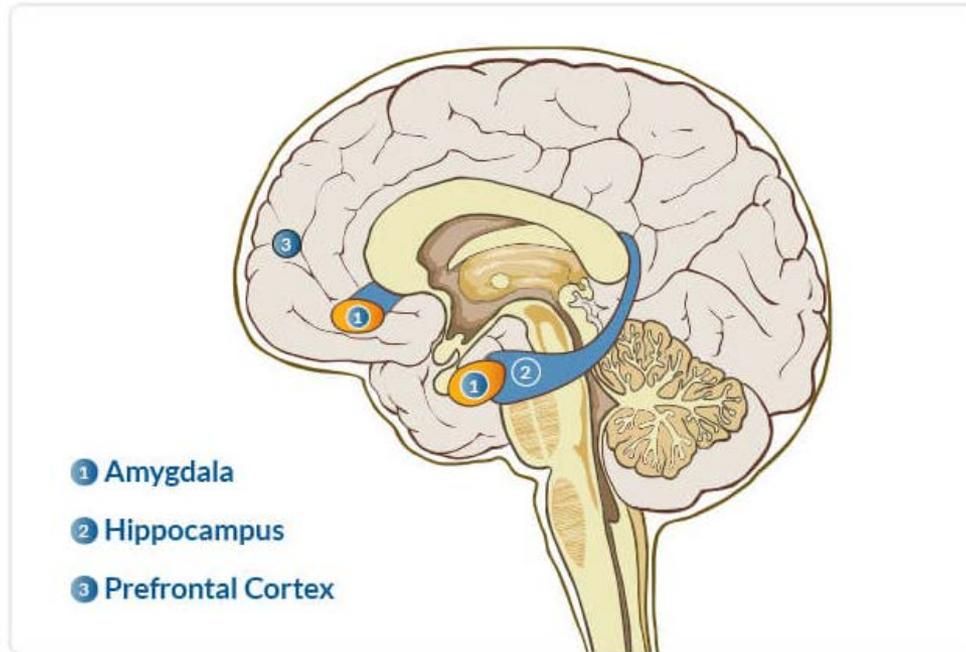
47% of the Time

People think about something other than
what they are doing and feel unhappy.
Killingsworth

Track Your Happiness App



Mindfulness and Meditation Changes the Brain



1. Amygdala

Aroused when detecting and reacting to emotions, especially difficult or strong emotions such as fear. This part of the brain is less activate and has less gray matter density following mindfulness & meditation training.

2. Hippocampus

Critical to learning and memory, and helps regulate amygdala. This part of the brain is more active and has more gray matter density following mindfulness & meditation training.

3. Prefrontal Cortex

The part of the brain most associated with maturity including regulating emotions and behaviors and making wise decisions. This part of the brain is more activated following mindfulness and meditation training

Mindfulness Practice

- Begin with small practices of mindfulness and gradually become a more mindful person
- Mindfulness can help you change your focus
- Over time, it will help distinguish reality from imagination and ignore fleeting physical sensation



Mindful Practice

Check in with your thoughts. When you think negative thoughts, you grow a negative superhighway in the brain. If you think positive thoughts, you create a positive superhighway in the brain.

- Take time to think about what you are thinking about. Use Mantell's method of exploring your thoughts.
 - ✓ There is an event, situation, person
 - ✓ There is a thought about the event, situation, person
 - ✓ The thought creates a feeling
 - ✓ There is a reaction
- The beginning of a thought from an event, situation, person
 - ✓ What am I thinking about it (and why?)
 - ✓ What is my reaction because of that thought?
- Sit quietly, and watch your thoughts. Begin to sort through your thoughts, separating the positive ones from the negative ones. As you embrace the positive thoughts, you train your brain to look for the positive, to find the good.

The Link is What You THINK

Michael Mantell

TTrue Is what you are thinking true?

HHealthy Is it healthy for you to think this way?

Inspired Does what you are thinking inspire you?

Necessary Is it necessary to think about this?

Kind Are you being kind to yourself with this thinking?

Mindfulness Practice

When you find yourself in a negative emotional state, ask yourself: “How much of this is happening on the outside, and how much is happening in my mind?”

- When you experience a strong negative emotion like worry, write it down and look at the experience. Write down why it worries you. Write down what the worst thing that can happen, and the best thing that can happen. Write down what you can and can't control. This practice will help to get the worry out of the rumination wheel in your mind.
- When you experience a negative emotion like sadness, ask yourself what thoughts are creating the sadness. Make a conscious decision to embrace the thought if it is good for you and get rid of it if it is bad for you. Remember: things only affect us if we think about them.

Mindfulness Practice

Listen for understanding, which is one of the most valuable gifts you can give to others. Seek to explore the meaning of what you are hearing.

Be present. If your mind starts to wander or formulate a response, bring focus back to the speaker. Don't worry about how you will respond, just listen. Focus on key points and clarify those points by restating them to the speaker. Watch the person's body language. Observe the facial expressions and postures. Tune into the speaker's inflection. Put yourself in the other's shoes. See things from the speaker's perspective. Be present, if your mind wanders, make eye contact and bring thoughts back to the speaker's words.

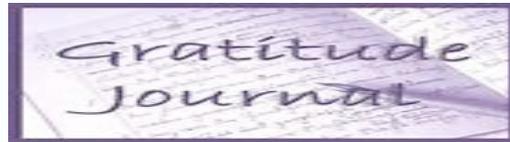
Mindfulness Practice

Calm your cravings. Next time you have a craving, bring your mind to the breath.

- When experiencing a craving, think about where it is coming from. Take long deep breaths and bring your thoughts back to your breath. Allow your mind to come back the craving and where you experience it. Bring your mind back to the breath until the craving passes.
- Be mindful of food cravings and time of day. Blood sugar may be low. 2:00 PM- 3:00 PM is a common time of the day when cravings occur. Pay attention to when those times happen for you and have an orange, apple, celery, carrots, or other fruit or vegetable handy.
- If you experience a food craving take a long drink of water and move for 3 minutes. Do you still feel the craving?

Practice The Attitude of Gratitude

Researchers trained people to focus on things they are grateful for over a three-week period of time.



Research outcomes indicated measurable changes in levels of happiness, optimism, and social connectedness.



The people in the study also reported getting better sleep.



Mindfulness Practice

Cultivate gratitude by focusing on things you are thankful for in your life.

- Note in your journal to three things you are grateful for every night before bed.
- Read your grateful journal out loud before going to sleep.
- Search online for gratitude quotes, and create a thought of the day list; read and say one quote to begin and end your day.
- Write down things you are grateful for and create a gratitude wall.

Mindfulness Practice

Interact with others in a positive way to boost mood and boost brain connections.



Mindful Moment



High 5 Right – You

High 5 Left – Are

High 10 – Amazing

Shake Hands – Yes You Are



Option One – Find 5

Option 2 – In a Circle, Facing a Partner-Travel In Circle

Mindfulness Practice

When a negative thought arises, match 1 with a positive one.

Negative Thumb – Positive Fingers

Happy Facts

- For a happy life, the ideal ratio of positive and negative emotions is approximately 3:1 (3 positives for every negative)

Fredrickson, B.L. (2009). Positivity. New York, NY: Random House.

Mindfulness Practice

Use mindfulness to reduce worry; being present can help you enjoy the good in life.

- When a worrisome thought comes to mind, observe it. Try to see it from an outsider's perspective. Avoid reacting or judging the worry; just observe it.
- Worry is most often focused on the future. When a worried thought comes to mind, bring the mind to the present by following the breath. Guide the thoughts back to the inhalation and the exhalation.
- When a worry comes to mind, write it down. Acknowledge the worry, and then let it go.

Meditation

- Releases happy chemicals-serotonin, dopamine, and endorphins
- Increases gray matter in the hippocampus and cingulate cortex
- Improves ability to focus as meditation increases control of attention
- Changes activity in key pain processing regions of brain – in one study meditators reduced pain by 40%
- Improves digestion – stress triggers fight or flight response shutting down digestion. When relaxed the body reboots the parasympathetic nervous system getting digestion flowing.



Meditation Options

Think of these strategies as a variety of outfits in a dressing room – you can try them out to see if one fits for you to wear it out in the world.

1. Phone Apps – Calm, Ananda Kids, Insight Timer, Breethe, Yoga Nidra
2. Meditation Cards
3. Moving Mindful Meditation
4. Conscious Mindful Breathing
5. Mantra Meditation

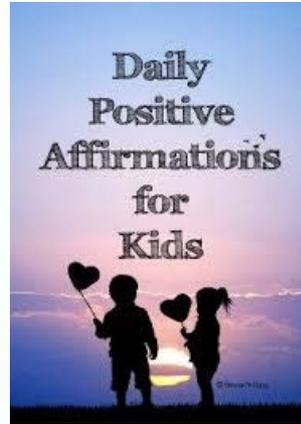
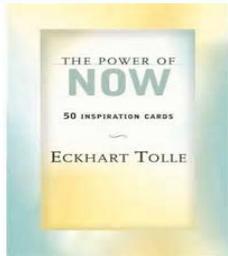
Meditation Options

1. Free Phone Apps



Meditation Options

2. Meditation Cards



Meditation Options

3. Moving Mindful Meditation (Walking, Yoga, Tai Chi)

Walking Meditation: Senses Walk – Tune into the the things you see, hear, feel. Shift your awareness as you walk. If thoughts from the past or future enter your mind shift your awareness back to something you see, hear, or feel.



Practice Butterfly Wings

- Bilateral Stimulation
- Sound soothes the brain
- Gentle tapping relaxes the body



Meditation Options

4. Conscious Mindful Breathing



- With each breath say breathe in with the inhalation and breathe out on exhalation.
- Focus on the breath, watch the breath as it enters and leaves your body. If the mind starts to wander, bring it back to the breath.

Benefits of Mindful Breathing for Meditation

- Calm the body by slowing heart rate
- Lowering blood pressure
- Sharpening focus
- Supports strong functioning in the higher brain
- Lessens anxiety by overriding the “fight, flight, or freeze” response
- Gives control to conscious thought
- The brain is primed to think first and then plan a response enabling mindful behavior

Mindful Breathing

- Alternate Nostril
- Horse Lips
- 1:2 Ratio
- Equal Ratio

Heart Warmer Equal Ratio Breathing

Cross Legs at Your Ankles
Cross Hands at Your Heart
Close Your Eyes



Take Slow Deep Breaths In & Out of the Nose
(Count 5 Inhaling, Count 5 Exhaling)
Allow the Breathing to Slow Your Heart
And Calm Your Mind

Mindful Practice

Calming the heart with deep breathing will help take the body out of fight, flight, or freeze response. Fight, flight or freeze response hurts the brain and the body.



5. Mantra Meditation

A mantra is a word or phrase that is repeated over and over again during meditation.

“OM”

Sanskrit Mantras

Or

Positive Phrases

Meditation Practice



Close Your Eyes

Be Silent

Breathe Deeply In and Out of Your Nose

Sometimes We Have A Bad Thought or Feeling

Mantra: Let it Go

Every Time You Exhale Say

Let it Go



Meditation reduces stress and helps to calm the body and brain.



Moving Meditation with Affirmation

Arms Reach Up To the Sun Looking Up to the Sky

Arms Reach Out Wide to the Side

Arms Cross The Body Hugging Self

*I am
thankful.*



Moving Meditation with Affirmation

Choosing positive emotions is good for your brain and your body.

I am
thankful.



Mindfulness Practice

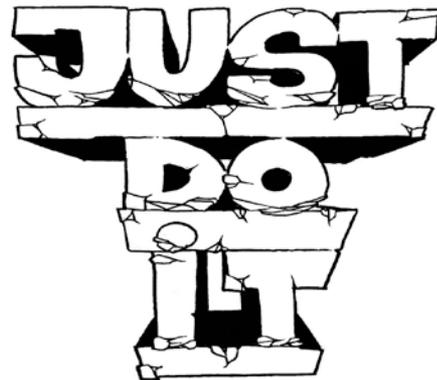
It's Important to Believe That You Can

Don't Just Know It – Do It!

It's Not What You Know,

It's What You Do With What You Know

That Makes a Difference



Mindful Thinking

- I Believe I Can, I Believe I Can; When I Believe I Can, Then I Likely Can
- If I Say I Can't, If I Think I Can't; If I Believe I Can't, Then I Likely Can't
- So I Say I Can, So I Think I Can; So I Believe I Can, So I Likely Can 😊

Goals for Learning

- Benefits of mindfulness and meditation
- Pick & choose mindfulness and meditation practices that work for you or your clients
- The brain can change the brain

Your Time, Energy,
& Participation is Appreciated!

Thank you!

