



Mindfulness Meditation



With Mindfulness Meditation, you learn how to calm your mind, focus on the present moment and become more aware of what is going on around you and inside of yourself. Our minds can become very busy with worry, fear, overwhelm and this can lead to a stressful response in our body. Once we become increasingly calm, using this type of meditation, we can function in a more natural way and perhaps experience less discomfort or struggle.

Here are a few tips to get you started with a basic practice:

1. Environment. Try and find a space in which you will not be disturbed for a period of time. A quiet, calming space can be wonderful even if its just a corner of a room, your car or a space outdoors.
2. Notice your physical posture. Be sure you are comfortable. Maintain a “strong back, soft front”. Pay attention to how your arms and legs feel. You may opt to sit, lie down or stand - all of which are okay. Some people even engage in a “walking meditation” if you find yourself wanting to be inside or outside moving around.

3. Start with your breath. First, become aware of your breath. Feel the breath coming in and out. Let your belly expand as you breathe in. It can be helpful to count your breaths in and out to help slow your breathing and pace. Generally it is helpful to breath slower on the exhale than the inhale. But don't get too caught up in this. Just notice your breath and work to get your breathing into your belly and at a slow pace.

4. Notice your thoughts, sensations, perceptions. Watch as they come and go. Observe your thoughts and sensations as if you were an outside observer. Watch the thoughts come and go without engaging in more thoughts about your thoughts. Notice them and let them move through your awareness.

5. Let your thoughts float away. Try not to ignore them, judge them, or stop them, but each time a thought comes up just let it go as if it could just float away like a helium balloon.

6. Be kind. As you watch your thoughts and let them go be in the space of a kindness and compassion toward yourself.

7. Enjoy the calm. You may find yourself experiencing moments of calm. Enjoy these. Use your attention to center in these moments.

8. Time. Try and do this 2 times a day for 10-20 minutes. It might feel like a lot at first but keep working toward it. Maybe you start out with 5 minutes and work your way up to 15. That is fine too. Whatever you can do is okay.

Helpful Resources to take your practice further:

1. Stress Less, Accomplish More: Meditation for Extraordinary Performance. Emily Fletcher. (zivameditation.com)
2. Guided Meditation: Six Essential Practices To Cultivate Love, Awareness & Wisdom. Jack Kornfield (jackkornfield.com)
3. Mindfulness Meditation. Tara Brach (tarabrach.com)
4. How to Meditate: A Practical Guide to Making Friends With Your Mind. Pema Chodron
5. Wherever You Go, There You Are: Mindfulness Meditation in Everyday Life. Jon Kabat-Zinn
6. Breathing: The Master Key to Self-Healing. Dr. Andrew Weil (drweil.com)

Helpful Applications:

Headspace

Buddhify

Calm

Insight Timer