

WHAT IS MINDFULNESS?

Mindfulness is a way of coming back to the present moment.

Anxiety (worry about the future) and depression (sadness about the past) take us away from the present moment.

Mindfulness helps alleviate the pain of anxiety and depression by focusing on the now.

STRESS REDUCTION *through* MINDFULNESS

KEY POINTS

Mindfulness is not magic. Do not expect miraculous results or immediate changes.

Have a sense of humor and forgive yourself.

There is no "right way" to do mindfulness. Don't get lost in the details.

If you'd like more information about stress reduction through mindfulness, talk to your provider about resources available in this office.

The exercises here were developed by Jon Kabat-Zinn, PhD, and are featured in the book "A Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Workbook," written by Bob Stahl, PhD, and Elisha Goldstein, PhD.

MINDFUL WALKING

🕒 10 Minutes

Pick a route to walk that is familiar to you.

Breathe naturally and walk at a comfortable pace keeping your back straight.

Focus on the heel of your foot as it contacts the ground and then focus on the front of your foot as it contacts the ground after the heel.

Imagine that you are walking on sand and trying not to leave footprints, stepping lightly.

Focus on your breathing without trying to change it.

Let thoughts come and go, always coming back to your steps and breathing.

MINDFUL SITTING

🕒 5 Minutes

Sit comfortably with your back straight.

Rest your hands in your lap, close your eyes, and breathe naturally.

Focus on your breathing.

As you breathe in, count "1" in your head.

As you breathe out, count "2" in your head.

As you breathe in again, count "3" in your head.

As you breathe out again, count "4" in your head.

Continue this way until you get to "10" then start back at "1" again.

When you have other thoughts don't try to stop them. Let your thoughts come and go.

Continue counting and focus on your breath.



BODY SCAN

🕒 3 Minutes

Sit comfortably, in a quiet space, breathing naturally, and focus on the sensation in your left big toe.

Relax all the muscles in your left big toe.

Move your focus and relaxation to the rest of the toes on your left foot.

Slowly move your awareness up your left foot and relax all the muscles of your left foot as you go.

Move your focus slowly up to your ankle, calf, knee, and thigh. Notice what each body part feels like and relaxing as you go.

Now, switch to the right leg and go through the same exercise.

Then focus on relaxing your stomach, chest, lower back, and upper back.

Then focus on your left fingers and relax all the way up your left arm.

Switch to your right arm.

Focus on relaxing your shoulders, neck, face, and then scalp.



HOW-TO

Have you ever taken a walk on a beautiful summer day, felt the warm sun on your face, and even for a split second found your mind blank only basking in the feeling? *That's mindfulness!*

Have you ever tasted a dessert so

sweet and good that the thoughts in your mind skidded to a halt? *That's mindfulness!*

Mindfulness training helps us extend these experiences and teaches us ways of being able to bring up these moments when we're feeling stressed. *That's mindfulness!*

Focus on relaxing your shoulders, neck, face, and then scalp.