

Summary of Mindfulness Benefits to Health from Research

- Decreases stress/cortisol levels
- Improves cognitive function
- Increases the brains ability to control emotions and decreases reactivity
- Helps us sleep better
- Increases our immune system
- Decreases risk and severity of depression & anxiety
- Decreases blood pressure, and decrease risk of stroke & heart attacks
- Increases brain neuroplasticity – the brains ability to change
- Increases brain gray matter – which is related to slowed brain aging and increased memory and concentration
- Improves relationship satisfaction, improves responses to conflict, improves empathy and acceptance of ones partner, and promotes attachment
- Reduces pain intensity and unpleasantness

Mindfulness Self-Assessment

Check Any Items That Sound Like You:

Any Unchecked Skills May Be An Area You May Want To Explore:

	I have a feeling, and I am able to recognize it right away.
	I think before I act.
	If I have an uncomfortable feeling, I can just notice it without doing anything about it.
	I can accept things as they are without wishing to change them.
	I am nonjudgmental of others and myself.
	I live in the moment, instead of dwelling on the past or wishing for the future.
	I can catch myself when I slip into autopilot.
	I tune in to my body and my senses when I eat, noting colors, aromas, and sounds.
	I try to enjoy the moment without rushing through things.
	I really listen when people are talking to me, instead of thinking about something else

(Source: Albers, S., Eat Q.)

Mindfulness Activities

The Key is to Find What You Enjoy and What Works For You

- Connect with the breath of someone else
- Connect with your own breath (4 seconds in, 6 seconds out)
- Belly breathing – 10 breaths
- Breathe in Nose, Out Pursed Lips – 10 breaths
- Alternate breathing in/out different nostrils
- Notice the rhythm of your steps when walking
- 5 Sights, 4 Sounds, 3 Touches, 2 Smells, 1 Taste
- Place your hand on chest - feel heartbeat
- Body scan
- Take pictures when on walk
- STOP – Notice movement of others/objects around you
- Notice the smiles of others, guess & feel their positive emotion
- Observe the wind – in trees, objects, clouds
- Send positive emotions from you to others
- Repeat calming words (i.e. This too will pass, or I will survive)
- Imagine thoughts floating up to the surface of water, like a bubble, & floating away
- Use an App
- Focus on an object as long as you can
- Grasp your hands, let go – notice sensation as long as you can
- Listen to music –notice sensations/feelings after
- Smell something strong (i.e. coffee) –notice feelings/inner sensations
- Every time you say “I” – touch your heart
- Watch a movie, and notice what emotions you feel
- Stare at a candle or fire
- Cloud or star watch
- Invite positive emotions you want to feel before a particular event
- Reflect on a memory with a someone, notice your emotions, and send a positive intention or emotion to them
- Loving kindness guided meditation
- Self compassion guided meditation
- Stress reducing guided meditation
- Progressive muscle relaxation
- Food: Feel gratitude towards having food today, notice senses, appreciate each item, notice feelings, shift negative thoughts to positive thoughts, & notice others enjoying food
- Work Body Check-in: Face, Neck, Shoulders, Posture, Hands
- Focus on making eye contact with others - on really seeing them
- Practice mindful listening to others – without judgment – point your heart to their heart
- Practice daily gratitude with others
- Check-in with your breath for one minute – where do you feel the breath? Lungs, tummy, nose?

Opportunities In My Day When I Will Play With Mindfulness

- Brushing My Teeth
- Driving To Work
- Grocery Shopping
- Meal Times
- Time With Kids
- Time With My Pets
- Exercising
- Going For a Walk
- Showering
- When I Wake Up
- Breaks at Work
- Doing Dishes
- Drinking Coffee
- Taking Your 1st Step Outdoors
- Waiting in Line
- Listening to Music
- Before/After New Experiences
- Holidays/Weekends
- After Your Alarm Goes Off
- Cleaning
- Laundry
- When Doing Something For Others
(I.e. Packing lunch, tidying after others)
- Playing an Instrument/Singing
- Watching a Movie/TV
- When Entering a New Room
- Getting Dressed
- Opening a Book to Read
- In Front of the Fire
- Stretching
- Getting Into Bed
- Checking When Others are Sleeping
- Before Texting, Emailing or Calling
Someone
- Before Meeting Someone

