

MINDFULNESS PROGRAM



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Session 1

Mindfulness is non-judgemental awareness of the present moment.

Meditation is a formal practice of focused attention that can be used to cultivate mindfulness.

Attitudes of Mindfulness:

Non-Judgement
Patience
Beginner's Mind
Trust in Self
Non-Striving
Acceptance
Non-Attachment
Gratitude
Generosity

Session 2

A discussion on **stress** and its impacts on thoughts, behaviour & body responses. **Mind-body connection** describes how our thoughts influence our behaviour & how we feel in our body.

Session 3

Grounding techniques help remind us that we are safe and allow our bodies to efficiently regulate our emotions by using the body (not the mind) to calm us down from a state of **hyperarousal**.

Grounding: the ability to return to the present moment and sustaining attention on what you are currently doing or another point of focus.

Hyperarousal: when the sympathetic nervous system is activated & our nervous system perceives a threat.

Session 4

Gratitude: expressing appreciation for what one has or what others do for you.

BENEFITS OF GRATITUDE PRACTICE:

- Feel more positive emotions
- Resistance to stress
- Greater self-worth
- Better sleep
- Stronger immune system
- Less bothered by aches & pains
- Lower blood pressure
- More motivation to exercise & take care of self
- Feeling more helpful, generous, & compassionate with others
- Feeling less lonely
- Being more outgoing
- More forgiving of others

Session 5

Self-Compassion: the practice of loving kindness & engaging in the act of friendliness towards yourself & others.

- 1. Ask yourself: what would I say to a friend or loved one in this situation?** Use those words to rephrase what you are saying.
- 2. Pay attention to the tone of your critical voice and try to soften the tone.** How would I like to talk to myself?
- 3. Ask yourself: Is my inner critic providing useful feedback?** How can I use the inner critic's feedback in a more motivating & constructive way? Take a learning stance & ask what you can learn from the feedback

Session 6: Four Pillars of Health

Awareness & Meta-Awareness

knowing what our minds are doing.

Connection

connecting to the present moment with all of our senses.

Insight

gaining insight into the stories we tell ourselves including negative self-beliefs.

Purpose

a sense of being in control of our lives & participating in activities that align with our sense of purpose.

MINDFULNESS EXERCISES

Notice Five Things

1. Pause for a moment.
2. Look around and notice 5 things you can see.
3. Listen carefully and notice 5 things you can hear.
4. Notice 5 things you can feel in contact with your body.
5. Practice noticing all of the above at the same time.

Body Awareness Grounding

1. Take 5 deep breaths
2. Plant both feet on the ground. Wiggle your toes and notice the ground beneath them.
3. Stomp your feet! Notice the sensations you feel as you stomp.
4. Make fists with your hands, then release them. Repeat this 10 times.
5. Press your palms together for 15 seconds.
6. Rub your palms together. Notice how it feels and sounds.
7. Raise your hands up to the sky and stretch for 5 seconds.
8. Bring your arms down to relax at your sides. Take 5 more deep breaths. Notice how you feel.

Safe Place Imagery

1. Sit in a comfortable position and close your eyes or soften your gaze.
2. Imagine a place where you feel calm, peaceful, and safe.
3. Focus on the colours in your safe place.
4. Notice the sounds that are around you.
5. Think about any smells you notice there.
6. Focus on any skin sensations such as the air on your skin or anything you can touch.
7. While you are in your safe place, you may choose to give it a name or a phrase that you can use to bring that image back to mind any time you need to.
8. You can choose to linger in your safe place for as long as you'd like. Enjoy the peacefulness and serenity. When you are ready, open your eyes and bring your awareness back to the present.

MINDFULNESS EXERCISES

Meditation for Motivation

1. Find a comfortable position.
2. Let your shoulders relax and open up your heart space.
3. If you are seated, lengthen your spine.
4. Let your hands rest comfortably. Soften your gaze.
5. Focus on your breath moving through your nose, into your mouth, into your lungs, and back out. Focus on this for several breaths.
6. Bring your goal to mind. Visualize yourself achieving this goal: Think about what it would feel like. What would you look like achieving this goal? What would be happening around you if you achieved this goal? Vividly imagine your success.
7. If your mind brings up obstacles or objections to reaching your goal, take note of them. Accept the obstacles that are in your way. Acknowledge them and then visualize taking positive steps to overcome those obstacles.
8. Continue this meditation for several minutes.
9. When you open your eyes, do one thing that will move you closer to success.

Half-Smile

Engage in a half-smile. Imagine your jaw softening & a relaxed feeling spreading across your face, your head, & down your shoulders. Notice the subtle changes in your thoughts & emotions as you smile.

Questions or Concerns?

Do not hesitate to connect with us regarding our services.

Loving Kindness Meditation

Take a moment to reflect on a challenge you are facing in your life.

Imagine someone else facing a similar challenge.

Can you evoke a sense of compassion or kindness toward this person?

Notice how this feeling of compassion feels in your body.

Wish them well.

Try to extend that same loving kindness toward yourself.

Wish yourself well.