

Mindfulness Meditation

Mindfulness, which is also known as insight meditation, can help you learn to live *in the moment* and let go of distraction. Mindfulness practice can be a helpful way to relax.

The following guidelines are suggested practice of mindfulness meditation:

1. Sit on a straight back chair or cross-legged on the floor. Focus on an aspect of your breathing, such as the sensations of air flowing into your nostrils and out of your mouth, or your belly rising and falling as you inhale and exhale. Once you've narrowed your concentration in this way, begin to widen your focus. Become aware of sounds, sensations, and your ideas. Embrace and consider each without judgment. If your mind starts to race, focus on an aspect of your breathing.
2. Choose a mental device to help you focus. Silently repeat a word, sound, prayer or phrase (such as "one," "peace," "Ohm," or "breathing in calm"). You may close your eyes if you like or focus your gaze on an object.
3. Adopt a passive attitude. Disregard distracting thoughts or concerns about how well you're doing. Any time you attention drifts, simply say, "Oh well" to yourself and return to silently repeating your focus word or phrase.
4. Now slowly relax your muscles, moving your attention gradually from your face to your feet. Breathe easily and naturally while using your focal device for 10 to 20 minutes. After you finish, sit quietly for a minute or so with your eyes closed. After you open your eyes, wait another minute before standing up.
5. Try to practice this meditation daily for 10 to 20 minutes or longer. Preferably at a specific time each day.

Mindfulness on the go

A less formal approach to mindfulness can also encourage you to stay in the present and truly participate in your life. You can choose any task or moment to practice informal mindfulness. Whether you are eating, showering, walking, touching a partner, or playing with a child or grandchild, attending to these three points will help.

1. Stay with breath focus and return to it periodically, staying aware of each inhalation and exhalation.
2. Proceed with the task or pleasure at hand slowly and with full deliberation.
3. Engage your five senses fully so that you savor every sensation.