

PRACTICING MINDFULNESS

Objective:

To become familiar with mindfulness and to practice it on a regular basis.

Mindfulness is the practice of focusing your attention and awareness on the present. It's a simple concept, but it's not so easy to do in our fast-paced world. Mindfulness calls for you to put life's noise and demands and stressors in the background while you concentrate on the now.

Putting the brakes on the multi-tasking and overthinking, even for just a few minutes, can help you find some peace and some perspective, which can help reduce anxiety, depression, and stress.

So rather than getting caught up in a whirlwind of distractions, stop, take a breath, and be conscious of your own thoughts and feelings and surroundings without passing judgment. Just be, feel, focus.

This week, find some time to be mindful in everyday moments, like eating, walking, or being with a loved one. Be aware of your surroundings – the sounds, sights –and your feelings. Be open, and immerse yourself in appreciating and experiencing the moment you are in.

For instance, instead of just eating your lunch quickly, pause to really focus on a few bites - the taste, the texture, the scent. Or stop to appreciate the soft comfort of your pajamas and your warm bed just after you turn in for the day.

In the chart below, note the thoughts and sensations experienced when practicing mindfulness.

Eating or drinking	
Breathing	
Walking	
Going to bed	
Waking up	
Other:	
Other:	