

MINDFULNESS

Mindfulness is the ability to be fully present in the moment.

Under stress, you might find your thoughts racing in cycles you can't escape. You might feel restless and anxious, unable to concentrate. It is important you can shift out of this aroused state to a relaxed state where your mind and body are at rest. Practicing mindfulness can provide that shift.

Why is mindfulness important?

- To be able to function in your everyday life, it is important that your body is not in a state of constant stress as this can lead to insomnia, reduced pain tolerance, anxiety and depression.
- By focusing on the present moment, you can restore your body to a calm state. This means our heartrate, breathing rate, blood pressure and muscle tension can be lowered.
- Mindfulness practices allow people to be intentionally aware of their own automatic reactions and to become more attuned to others' needs and emotions.

What are some ways I can practice mindfulness?

GUIDED MEDITATION

- You can use meditation music on your phone or YouTube guided meditations

BREATHING EXERCISES

- Tune into your breathing by sitting or lying still – focus on your breath and practice bringing your attention back to your breathing each time your thoughts distract you

YOGA

- Tune into your body through movement

KEEP A GRATITUDE JOURNAL – SET INTENTIONS FOR DAY

- Write down up to 5 things you feel grateful for



Just 1 minute of meditation a day has been proven to create a calmer state of mind and reduce stress.



According to a 2011 study published in the Journal of Neuroscience, just 4 days of mindfulness meditation cuts pain perception in half

When can I practice mindfulness?

Some great times include

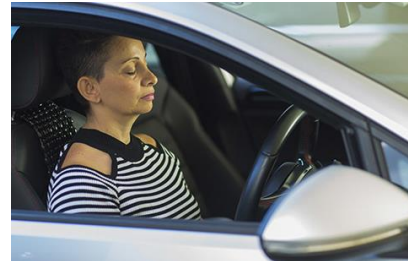
- Morning – this will set you up for the rest of the day
- At work to reset – just do one thing at a time so you can focus your full attention on the task at hand. This can include when writing reports, eating lunch, doing stretches at your desk.
- Night – clearing your mind before bedtime will improve your quality of sleep



Where can I practice mindfulness?

Some great places include:

- Your car in the morning before or after work
- Your home
- Outside in nature e.g. on the beach, by the river



How can I practice mindfulness?

WHEN EATING

- Pay attention to colours, shapes and smells
- Bring your awareness to the sensation of chewing and the flavours, textures and temperature in your mouth

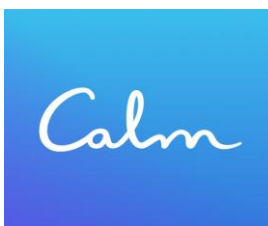
IN CONVERSATION

- Bring your attention to the whole person speaking
- Notice the sound and rhythm of their voice and their facial expressions
- Notice when your mind drifts off into thinking and gently bring your attention back to the person talking

WHEN DRIVING

- Tune in to your body – notice your hands on the wheel, feel your posture
- Turn off the radio and notice the sounds around you e.g. birds, cars, children, traffic lights

Some great apps you can download for mindfulness:





Printable Bookmark

5-4-3-2-1

5 LOOK

Look for 5 things you can see

Say them out loud

4 FEEL

Pay attention to your body

Say 4 things you feel

3 LISTEN

Listen for 3 sounds

Notice the sounds and listen

2 SMELL

Say two things you can smell

1 TASTE

Say one thing you can taste