

PRACTICING MINDFULNESS

Feeling overwhelmed and stressed is a common reaction to life events. Several studies show that mindfulness increases positive emotions while reducing negative emotions and stress. Some research even shows that it can help boost immune function.

Simple ways to practice mindfulness:

- › When you get up in the morning, *bring your attention to your breathing*. Instead of letting your mind spin off into yesterday or today, take mindful breaths. Focus on your breathing, and sense the effects of breathing throughout your body.
- › In the shower, *notice how the water feels on your body*.
- › Really focus and listen when someone is talking to you. Pay careful attention to what they are saying and focus on absorbing and understanding them before you think about your own thoughts, responses, or criticism.
- › When you are walking, focus on your body as you take each step, the feelings of your feet touching and leaving the ground. This is called “walking meditation.”
- › When you arrive at your destination, *take a few moments to orient yourself*; breathe consciously and calmly, and relax your body.
- › When sitting at your desk or keyboard, *become aware of the subtle signs of physical tension* and take a break to stretch or walk around.
- › Use the repetitive events of the day—the ringing telephone, a knock on the door, getting food—as *cues for a mini-relaxation*.
- › As you go to sleep, *let go of today and tomorrow*, and take some slow, mindful breaths.

“ DO NOT DWELL ON THE PAST.
DO NOT DREAM ON THE FUTURE.
CONCENTRATE THE MIND ON THE
PRESENT MOMENT. ”

— The Buddha

