

Mindfulness Exercises



Mindfulness means living in the present moment and being intentionally more focused on what is happening in your surroundings – without judgement. Mindfulness encourages slowing down and letting negative thoughts pass before responding to situations. When you give yourself time to pause, you likely will notice a sense of calm and a greater awareness of your emotions. Mindfulness as a tool is beneficial for overall wellness and can be utilized at any time with noticeable results. Like anything new, it takes practice to become efficient at using mindfulness in times of need.

Mindfulness Exercise # 5: Observing Your Thoughts

Many stressed and busy people find it difficult to stop focusing on the rapid stream of thoughts running through their mind and feel themselves being carried away by the content or the emotional charge tied to them. This can make the practice of meditation and the concept of letting your thoughts flow through you seem impossible or even likely to increase your level of stress. If this sounds like you, the mindfulness exercise of *observing your thoughts* might be for you. Remind yourself that thoughts are not facts. In this exercise, instead of working against the voice in your head, sit back and “observe” your thoughts, rather than allowing yourself to become involved in them. Allow your thoughts to float like clouds in the sky or even leaves on a stream. As you observe them passing by, you might find your mind quieting, and the thoughts becoming less stressful or impactful on your present self. If this visualization exercise is not for you, try writing your thoughts down - this journaling alternative still provides a way of “observing” your thoughts. To make this exercise meaningful you must remember that thoughts are not all bad or all good, negative or positive; they just are what they are – the thought you are having at this very moment.