

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction

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Your Employee Assistance Program Provider

- Mindfulness is a learned skill where we deliberately focus and pay attention to what is happening in the present moment.



What is Mindfulness?

Between stimulus and response there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom.

Viktor Frankl

What lies behind us and what lies before us are small matters compared to what lies within us.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

What is Mindfulness?

- Mindfulness is a *learned skill* with which we cultivate awareness of the mind and body in the present moment--we LISTEN
- Mindfulness is awareness *without* critical filters or the lens of judgment –we LET BE
- Mindfulness is being in connection with things exactly as they are--we LIVE IN THE NOW





Benefits of Mindfulness

- Practicing mindfulness trains us to be aware of our habitual reactions to life and to stress
 - *Mind traps or “stories”
- Practicing mindfulness offers us the unique ability to control our minds, instead of our minds controlling us
- Practicing mindfulness helps us to get perspective on our thoughts
- Practicing mindfulness gives us more skillful ways to respond to difficulties experienced in our personal lives or on the job

Mindfulness Research

- Dr. Richie Davidson, University of Wisconsin found that people who practiced mindfulness meditation tended to experience:
 - more activity in the areas of the brain associated with feelings of calm and happiness
 - less activity in the areas of the brain associated with feelings of sadness, worry, and anxiety
 - Also, found meditation boosts the immune response

Other Researchers:

- Dr. Dan Siegel at the UCLA Mindful Awareness Research Center and author of The Mindful Brain
- Jon Kabat-Zinn, PhD., in Boston, and author of Full Catastrophe Living and Wherever you go there you are
- Mark Williams and Danny Penman, Mindfulness, Finding Peace in a Frantic World

MINDFULNESS EXERCISE



Formal vs. Informal Practice

- What is Informal Practice?
 - Anything that anchors you to the present moment
 - Bringing the Eight Attitudes of Mindfulness Into Your Life:
 - Beginner's Mind
 - Non-judgment
 - Acknowledgment
 - Non-striving
 - Equanimity
 - Letting be
 - Self-reliance
 - Self-compassion
 - Weaving Mindfulness Into Your Day

Weaving Mindfulness into Your Workday

- Take five minutes or more in the morning to be quiet and meditate, listen to the sounds of nature, gaze out the window, take quiet walk
- While traveling to work, become aware of any tension in your body. Are your hands gripping the wheel? Is your stomach tight? What are you thinking?
- Turn the radio off, listen to your own sounds.
- When you are stopped at a **RED** light or stuck in traffic practice **STOP**, notice the sky or sights



Informal Mindfulness Practice

STOP

S = Stop

T = Take a breath

O = Observe

P = Proceed

Weaving Mindfulness into Your Workday (cont'd)

- Drive in right lane, go five miles below speed limit
- While sitting at desk pay attention to your bodily sensations and breath. Consciously release tension
- Put word BREATHE on screen saver, set timer to go off at top of each hour to remind to take a stretch break or stop/shift gears for a few minutes
- Use breaks to truly relax – try a short walk instead of coffee, cigarettes or reading

Weaving Mindfulness into Your Workday (cont'd)

- Choose to eat one or two lunches per week in silence – practice mindful eating
- Try closing door, if have one, and take time to consciously relax
- Decide to stop for one to three minutes every hour during the workday. Become aware of your breathing and bodily sensations, allowing the mind to settle in as a time to regroup and recoup

Weaving Mindfulness into Your Workday (cont'd)

- At the end of the workday review your activities and congratulate yourself for all that you have accomplished. Put anything left over on a list for tomorrow.
- While traveling home be aware of your body. Are you tense? Are you rushing? Are you relaxed?
- Change out of work clothes when you get home. Take 5-10 minutes to be still if you can.

Informal Mindfulness Practice

RAIN

R = Recognize when a strong emotion is present

A = Allow or acknowledge that it's there

I = Investigate the body, emotions and thoughts

N = Non-identify with whatever is there



Formal vs. Informal Practice

- What is Formal Practice?
 - Mindful Check-In, 3 Minutes to Begin
 - Mindful Breathing
 - Walking Meditation (at least 15 minutes)
 - Body Scan
 - Sitting Meditation (30-45 minutes)
 - Mindful Yoga
 - Loving-Kindness Meditation

Loving Kindness



What did you notice?



Mind Full, or Mindful?



Frequently Asked Questions

- I can't find the time to meditate. What can I do?
- Sometimes I feel angry, anxious, sad, confused or afraid when I meditate. How do I accept or let go of my emotions?
- I take my thoughts / myself so seriously. What can I do about this?
- I have back problems and it is uncomfortable to sit for long periods of time. Do I always have to sit?

Meditation vs. Medication

- A clinical trial conducted by Cynthia Gross at University of Minnesota suggested that Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction was as effective as a popular medication in treatment of insomnia (with fewer side effects)
- Meditation led to decreased time falling asleep, and an overall recovery rate of 50% for those participating in the study

Sleep Basics

- Limit substances that interfere with proper sleep (nicotine, caffeine, alcohol)
- Adapt environment (temperature, lighting, sound) to enhance likelihood of sleep
- Engage in relaxing activities before bed, i.e. reading, writing, taking a bath, listening to soothing music
- Get up and move to another room when sleep doesn't occur within 20 minutes

More Basics

- Go to bed only when tired
- Limit activities in bed to sleep and sex
- Get out of bed at the same time every morning
- Disconnect from TV, cell phone, tablet, laptop – at least 30 minutes before going to bed



If The Basics Don't Work...

- May need to consult with our primary care physician and/or a counselor
 - If you've tried THE BASICS and they aren't effective
 - If your insomnia lasts longer than 3 weeks
 - If you experience frequent "awake" periods for 3 or more nights per week for 3 months or longer

Consult the experts/here's what works....

CBT-I

- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Insomnia (CBT-I)
 - Identify and replace thoughts/behaviors that contribute to sleeping problems
 - Focuses on the underlying causes
 - Explores establishing good sleep habits and avoiding behaviors that contribute to insomnia

CBT-I Methods

- Establishing wake/sleep routines
- Enhancing the sleep environment
- Establishing relaxation techniques
- Paradoxical intention – purposefully staying awake
- Biofeedback – learning to identify and control heart rate and muscle tension patterns

Relaxation Training

- Hypnosis can be useful for some patients.
- Guided imagery for sleep may also be helpful.
- Meditation.
 - Mindfulness practice is demonstrated to reduce stress and quiet disturbing thoughts.
 - Body scan – a form of this practice – can be especially helpful in relaxing before sleep.



University of Oregon

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Summary of Services:

- Intake / Assessment
 - Up to five (5) sessions per incident, per year
- E-Support
- Crisis Counseling
- Work / Family / Life
- Identity Theft Services
- Legal Consultations / Mediation
- Financial Coaching
- Tax Assistance
- Home Ownership Program
- Cascade Personal Advantage

Thank You for Attending!

If you have any questions or would like additional information regarding services through your Employee Assistance Program please contact us at:

Phone: 800.433.2320

Text: 503.980.1777

www.cascadecenters.com



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