

Mindfulness Tools for Self Care

with Vanessa Cowles (she/they)
Mindfulness Facilitator

Mindfulness, Wellness, Self Care...

Mindfulness:

A practice of present moment, non-judgmental awareness.

Self-Care:

Actions taken to maintain and improve health and well-being.

Wellness:

A holistic concept of overall health, including physical, emotional, intellectual, social, spiritual, and occupational dimensions.



Wellness

Key Dimensions of Wellness:

Physical Wellness:

Maintaining a healthy body through exercise, nutrition, and sleep.

Emotional Wellness:

Understanding and managing emotions, coping effectively with stress, and building strong relationships.

Intellectual Wellness:

Engaging in continuous learning, creativity, and problem-solving.

Social Wellness:

Building and maintaining healthy, supportive relationships and contributing to the community.

Spiritual Wellness:

Finding purpose and meaning in life, often through beliefs, values, and practices that provide a sense of connection and peace.

Occupational Wellness:

Finding satisfaction and enrichment in one's work, balancing work and leisure time.



Self-Care

Key Aspects of Self-Care:

Physical Self-Care:

Activities that improve physical health, such as exercise, healthy eating, and adequate sleep.

Emotional Self-Care:

Practices that help manage stress and emotional well-being, like journaling, therapy, and spending time with loved ones.

Mental Self-Care:

Engaging in activities that stimulate the mind, such as reading, learning new skills, and practicing mindfulness or meditation.

Mindfulness

Key Aspects of Mindfulness:

Present Moment Awareness:

Focusing on the here and now rather than worrying about the past or future.

Non-Judgmental Attitude:

Observing thoughts and feelings without labeling them as good or bad.

Intentional Practice:

Engaging in activities like meditation, mindful breathing, or mindful walking to cultivate mindfulness

Mindfulness In Practice

1. Breath Practice: Coherent Breathing

1. **Find a Cozy Spot:**
 - Sit or lie down somewhere comfortable where you won't be disturbed.
2. **Turn Off Distractions:**
 - Turn off the TV and put away any toys or devices.
3. **Notice Your Breathing:**
 - Pay attention to how you are breathing without changing anything at first.
4. **Hands on Tummy:**
 - Place your hands on your belly and feel it rise and fall as you breathe.
5. **Slow Down Your Breathing:**
 - Start to make your breaths longer, aiming for three seconds in and three seconds out. Do this for one minute.
6. **Breathe Even Longer:**
 - Gradually make your breaths even longer, about six seconds in and six seconds out.
7. **Practice Regularly:**
 - Keep practicing for five minutes at a time, and slowly try to increase to twenty minutes.
8. **Stay Focused:**
 - If your mind starts to wander, that's okay! Gently bring your focus back to your breathing.
9. **Write It Down:**
 - After practicing, write down how you felt and any thoughts you had in a journal.

Mindfulness In Practice

2. Body Scan Meditation:

- **Eyes Closed or Half-Closed:**
 - Close your eyes to help you focus, or if you prefer, keep them half-closed.
- **Feel Your Breath:**
 - Notice your body breathing in and out. Pay attention to where your body touches the seat or floor.
- **Take Your Time:**
 - There's no rush. Spend as much time as you need on each part of your body.
- **Choose Where to Focus:**
 - When you're ready, take a deep breath and focus on any part of your body you want to explore. You can start at your head or feet and move through your body, or pick spots at random.
- **Notice Sensations:**
 - Pay attention to any sensations, like buzzing, tingling, pressure, tightness, or temperature. If you don't feel much, that's okay too. Just notice what's there without judging it.
- **Be Curious:**
 - Be curious and open to what you feel. Explore each sensation fully, then gently move your focus to another part of your body.
- **Wandering Attention:**
 - If your mind starts to wander, that's normal! Notice it, and gently bring your focus back to your body. This helps train your mind to stay focused longer over time.
- **Practice Patience:**
 - Every time your attention drifts, kindly bring it back to your body. Keep doing this until you've explored your whole body.
- **Expand Your Focus:**
 - After exploring, take a few moments to feel your whole body breathing freely.
- **Return to the Present:**
 - Open your eyes if they were closed and move mindfully back into the present moment.

Mindfulness In Practice

3. 5, 4, 3, 2, 1

- **Start with Your Breathing:**

Begin by paying attention to your breathing. Take slow, deep, long breaths to help you feel calm.

- **Ground Yourself with These Steps:**

- **5 Things You Can See:**

Look around and name five things you can see. It could be a toy, a book, a picture on the wall, or anything else in your surroundings.

- **4 Things You Can Touch:**

Find four things you can touch. It could be your hair, a stuffed animal, a pillow, or the floor.

- **3 Things You Can Hear:**

Listen carefully and name three things you can hear. It might be birds outside, the hum of a refrigerator, or someone talking.

- **2 Things You Can Smell:**

Notice two things you can smell. Maybe it's the scent of soap, a flower, or something cooking in the kitchen. You can even take a short walk to find new smells.

- **1 Thing You Can Taste:**

Pay attention to one thing you can taste. It might be the taste of toothpaste, a snack you just had, or just your mouth itself.

