

Mindfulness Meditation

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What is Mindfulness Meditation?

Mindfulness is a type of meditation that essentially involves focusing on your mind on the present. To be mindful is to be aware of your actions in the present, without judging yourself.

Research suggests that mindfulness meditation may improve mood, decrease stress, and boost immune function.

How to Try Mindfulness Meditation

1. Find a quiet and comfortable place. Sit in a chair or on the floor with your head, neck and back straight but not stiff.
2. Try to put aside all thoughts of the past and the future and stay in the present.
3. Become aware of your breathing, focusing on the sensation of air moving in and out of your body as you breathe. Feel the air enter your nostrils and leave your mouth. Pay attention to the way each breath changes and is different.
4. Watch every thought come and go, whether it be a worry, fear, anxiety or hope. When thoughts come up in your mind, do not follow them, but simply note them, remain calm and use your breathing as an anchor.
5. If you find yourself getting carried away in your thoughts, observe where your mind went off to, without judging, and bring it back to the present. Remember not to be hard on yourself if this happens.
6. As the time comes to a close, sit for a minute or two, becoming aware of where you are. Get up gradually.

Sources:

Kabat-Zinn J. Mindfulness Meditation: Health benefits of an ancient Buddhist practice. Mind/Body Medicine, eds. Goleman D, Gurin J. New York 1993. Consumer Reports Books, 259-275.

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