

Meditation
&
Mindfulness

3 Center Check-In

➤ Body/Breath

➤ Feelings

➤ Thoughts

Story Time

- A kindergarten teacher once asked her students, “what is the purpose of the body?” A little boy raised his hand and said, “to carry the head around.” This demonstrates how disconnected from our bodies we’ve become and as teachers, we have a responsibility to help ourselves and our children include all parts of ourselves in our awareness.



What meditation is NOT

Meditation is NOT an experience where you cease to have thoughts, bodily sensations, or hear sounds. Many beginners say these distractions demonstrate that they lack the skills to practice meditation. Your ability to notice thoughts, sounds, emotions and/or sensations and then return to the practice is a moment of mindfulness!

Practicing meditation is not an attempt to stop thinking or having thoughts. Instead, it's a practice of developing a new relationship to your thoughts. When you are practicing and you notice a distraction arising, you simply return to the focus of the practice in a kind, compassionate and discerning way.



What is Meditation?

Meditation is:

Awareness that emerges
through paying attention on purpose,
in the present moment
& non-judgmentally
to things as they are
rather than as we want them to be.

~ John Kabat-Zin

What are the benefits of meditation?

Symptom Reduction

- Decreased anxiety, stress, rumination, depression, & pain & illness related stress
- Improved sleep
- Increased empathy & compassion

Biological Markers

- Decreased cellular aging, inflammation & stress hormones such as cortisol
- Improved immunity

Neuroplasticity (changes in brain structure)

- Increased gray matter density or actual number of brain cells
- Greater cell volumes in brain areas responsible for emotional regulation
- Improvements in brain areas associated with self-regulation

- Improved relationship skills & leadership skills
- Improved emotional intelligence
- Improved listening skills
- Increased resilience
- Improved creativity & strategic thinking
- Increased productivity
- Improved focus & memory of tasks performed
- Improved ability to remain focused on a single task

When is your life taking place?

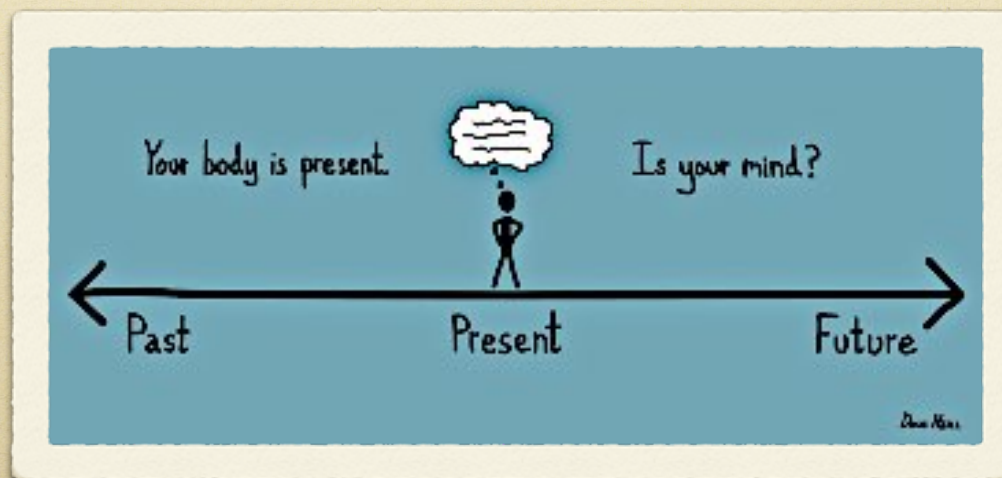
Right here,
Right now!

Most people spend the majority of their time ruminating in the past or planning for the future.

As a result, we end up missing out on the moment that is right here...

We end up missing out on being present for our lives.

Mindfulness helps us live more fully in the present moment.



The 5 Hindrances

1) Wanting

2) Aversion

3) Lethargy

4) Restlessness

5) Doubt

4 Pillars of Mindfulness

- Mindfulness of Breath & Body
- Mindfulness of Feelings
- Mindfulness of Thoughts
- Mindfulness of Living

Mindfulness
in
Daily Living



STOP
THINK
OBERVE
PROCEED

Children's Mindfulness Exercises

- Standing: Inhale, count to 4 raising hands to shoulder height. Exhale, count to 4 lowering the hands.
- Reclining: Place a small stuffed animal on the abdomen and watch breath rise and fall.



Self-Compassion



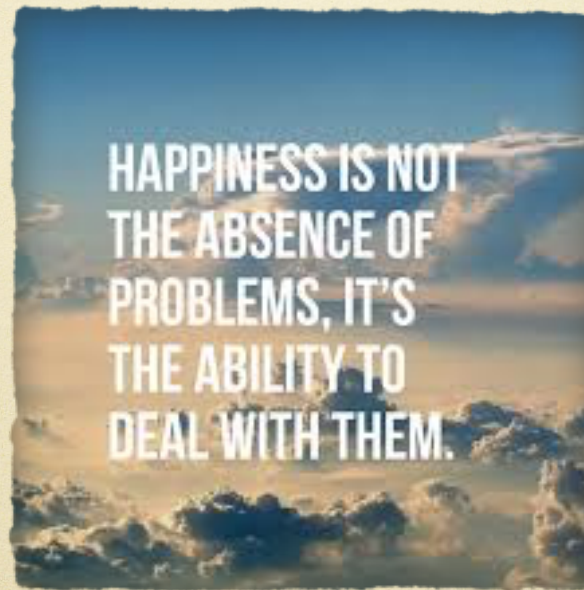
Compassion is the ability to remain connected to love, even in the face of suffering.

Self Compassion is the cultivation of inner friendliness.

Benefits

- Increased resiliency
- Less fear of failure
- Increased immunity
- Increased connection to others
- Improved healthy habits like diet & exercise

Equanimity & Happiness



EQUANIMITY — — — —> PRESENCE — — — —> HAPPINESS

- **Equanimity:** is to “see with the eyes of a sage.”
- **Negativity Bias:** The negativity bias, also known as the negativity effect, refers to the notion that, even when of equal intensity, things of a more negative nature (e.g. unpleasant thoughts, emotions, or social interactions; harmful/traumatic events) have a greater effect on one's psychological state and processes than do neutral or positive things. In other words, something very positive will generally have less of an impact on a person's behavior and cognition than something equally emotional but negative.
- **Happiness:** arises when we build a new relationship to life. What allows us to be happy is a quality of presence

Loving-Kindness



In the practice of Loving-Kindness, we send sentiments or phrases to a loved one, ourselves, a neutral person, a *slightly* challenging person & finally to all beings everywhere.

May I be safe

May I be happy

May I be healthy

May I live with ease

Benefits

- Increased positive emotions
- Increased social support
- Increased purposeful living
- Decreased symptoms of illness
- Increased life satisfaction
- Reduced symptoms of depression

**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 E. Frankl

Inner Dimension TV

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- **Postnatal 20min Practice:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DfwyHj4OAR8&t=4s>
- **Prenatal (first trimester):** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oHLLQH8_i6U
- **Prenatal (second trimester):** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a9_vuzUHVxw
- **Prenatal (third trimester):** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WDvpj5HydDs&t=1s>