

Mental Health Month Message:

Mindfulness for Mental Health and Wellness

Mindfulness

Mindfulness is a practice in daily life to help people maintain their mental health. Mindfulness is the intentional, accepting and non-judgmental focus of one's attention on the emotions, thoughts and sensations occurring in the present moment. Mindfulness is defined as moment-by-moment awareness of thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations, and surrounding environment, characterized mainly by "acceptance"—attention to thoughts and feelings without judging whether they are right or wrong. Mindfulness focuses your brain on what is being sensed at each moment, instead of on its normal rumination on the past or on the future

Mindfulness practice is being used to alleviate a variety of mental and physical conditions, including obsessive-compulsive disorder, anxiety, and in the prevention of relapse in depression and drug addiction. It has gained worldwide popularity as a distinctive method to handle emotions.

Mindfulness exercises are ways of paying attention to the present moment, using techniques like meditation, breathing, and yoga. The aim is to help people to become more aware of their thoughts, feelings, and body sensations so that instead of being overwhelmed by them, they're better able to manage them.

Practicing mindfulness can give more insight into emotions, boost attention and concentration, and improve relationships.

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Mindfulness Resources

Mental Health Foundation

<http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/help-information/mental-health-a-z/M/mindfulness/>

Free Mindfulness. www.freemindfulness.org

This website has a large selection of free downloadable mindfulness exercises.

UCLA Mindful Awareness Research Center. <http://marc.ucla.edu/body.cfm?id=22>

This website has educational resources on mindfulness including online podcasts, workshops, and community events. There is also a selection of free downloadable mindfulness exercises.

Thich Nhat Hanh video on What is Mindfulness <https://youtu.be/xD7i6VUOriI>

This short 4 minute video of Thich Nhat Hanh shows him sharing the concept and practice of mindfulness. Other videos of Thich Naht Hanh practicing mindfulness can be found on YouTube as well.

Jon Kabat-Zinn video on Mindfulness <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wPNEmxWSNyg>

You can find many videos on YouTube featuring Jon Kabat-Zinn, who developed the program Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction. He has written numerous books, some of which you may be able to access from your local public library.