

MINDFULNESS-BASED STRESS REDUCTION ACTIVITIES WORKBOOK

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INTRODUCTION

Here at Tulane, we believe that wellness composes many different components of life. Mental and emotional wellness are two of those components that we will be focusing on as a part of this workbook.

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction is different from many other stress reduction approaches in that the emphasis is on shifting your relationship to experience itself, rather than on learning techniques. We hope that the practice of mindfulness will deepen and transform your capacity to appreciate "the full catastrophe" - the life we are given, whatever it may be - and the preciousness, richness, and poignancy of each moment of that life, however painful or mundane.

This workbook is designed to support your learning and practice of mindfulness. Mindfulness practice is a discipline which can support, comfort, and enrich life if you make it a part of your life. Home practice work-sheets are designed to enhance motivation and to help you keep track of your practice and supplemental readings in the workbook further illuminate the spirit of mindfulness. Finally, you can measure your progress by using the goals sheet at the end of the workbook.

We understand that Tulane students are busy doing many things, and with this in mind we made sure that most of the exercises take less than 15 minutes to complete. We often neglect our own personal needs, but even 15 minutes of mindfulness allows us to tap into ourselves and reconnect so that we may be our best selves.

It is best to arrange a regular time and place to practice when you will not be disturbed. You don't have to do all of the homework practices - just do whichever suit you best. Most importantly, enjoy the time you take to appreciate the beautiful struggle of life.

-Adapted from Kabat-Zinn, Jon. *Wherever You Go There You Are: Mindfulness Meditation in Everyday Life*. New York: Hyperion Books, 1994.

Formal Mindfulness Practice:

Formal Mindfulness Practice is designed to allow you to actively take time out of your day to check in on yourself. This practice is not time intensive, but it does require you to turn off your surroundings and focus inward. Pick one or two activities to do per day, if you can, and spend 10-15 minutes reflecting on all the parts of life: your happiness, sadness, successes, challenges, pain, and bliss.

- Do 5-10 minutes daily of breath awareness practice on your own.
- Keep daily records of your practice using the home practice worksheet. Include what you did in each practice session and brief comments about what you experienced.
- Be sure to complete the home practice worksheet to keep a record of the formal mindfulness practice.
- Be aware of stress reactions during the week, without trying to change them in any way.
- Notice what's happening if and when you feel "stuck" (caught up in stress reactivity and unable to free yourself).
- Each day this week, try to practice one of the seven foundations of mindfulness practice.

Informal Mindfulness Practice:

Informal Mindfulness Practice is designed to allow you to refocus during the day. They are brief activities that take only a moment to do, but give you a needed check-in when things are becoming overly stressful or mundane. Do them whenever you are able.

- Tune into your breathing 4 or 5 times during the day, and be mindful of one or two full cycles of the breath.
- Eat one meal mindfully this week.
- Choose a "routine" activity usually done on automatic pilot - brushing teeth, showering, washing the dishes, taking out the trash, etc. - and do it mindfully this week.
- Pay attention to what you put in your body; how much; where it comes from; why; reactions and effects. Not just food, but also what we take in through the eyes, ears and nose; TV, newspapers and magazines, books, music, the air we breathe, etc.
- Do a couple of Practice activities or Readings every day.

FOUNDATIONS OF MINDFULNESS PRACTICE

The practice of mindfulness is like cultivating a garden. A garden flourishes when certain conditions are present. Holding the following 7 qualities in mind, reflecting upon them, cultivating them according to our best understanding--this effort will nourish, support and strengthen our practice.

Keeping these attitudes in mind is part of the training, a way of channeling our energies in the process of healing and growth. Remember too that they are interdependent. Each influences the others; and working on one, enhances them all.

1. Non-judging

Every day we judge the things, people, and events that come into our lives. We label some as "good" because they make us feel good for some reason. Others are quickly condemned as "bad" because they make us feel bad. The rest is categorized as "neutral" because we don't think it has much relevance. These "neutral" events are kicked out of our consciousness; we hardly even recognize them. When we do, we find them boring.

When we make these quick judgments, we enter autopilot. We stop experiencing our lives fully and coast through our days. We get so caught up in the things we like and dislike, it is hard for us to find peace.

It is important to recognize this judging quality of mind when we practice mindfulness. The next time you find yourself thinking, "This is boring," "This isn't working," or "I can't do this," realize that it is your mind judging the experience. You don't have to stop the judging, but recognize it and try to turn off autopilot and experience the moment. Observe the full catastrophe of life and your reactions to it.

2. Patience

Patience is a form of wisdom. It demonstrates that we understand and accept that sometimes things must unfold in their own time. We cultivate patience towards our minds and bodies when we practice mindfulness.

We intentionally remind ourselves that there is no need to be impatient with ourselves because we find the mind judging all the time, or because we are agitated or frightened or anxious, or because we have been practicing for a while and nothing seems to be happening. We give ourselves room to have these experiences. Why? Because we are having them anyway! Why rush to a "better" one? Each moment in life is special and unique.

3. Beginner's Mind

We tend to take the ordinary for granted and fail to grasp the extraordinariness of the ordinary. The see the richness of the present moment, we need to create what has been called the "beginner's mind," a mind that is willing to see everything as if for the first time.

An open, "beginner's" mind allows us to be receptive to new possibilities and prevents us from getting stuck in the rut of our own expertise, which often thinks it knows more than it does.

The next time you see somebody on campus who is familiar to you, ask yourself if you are seeing this person with fresh eyes, as he or she really is, or if you are only seeing the reflection of your own thoughts about this person, and your feelings as well. Try it with problems as they arise. Try it the next time you are walking around campus or Audubon Park. Are you able to see the sky, the stars, the trees, the water, and the rocks as they are right now, with a clear and uncluttered mind? Or are you only seeing them through the cloudiness of your own emotions, feelings, thoughts, and opinions?

4. Trust

In practicing mindfulness, you are practicing taking responsibility for being yourself and learning to listen to and trust your own being. The more you cultivate this trust in yourself, the easier you will find it will be to trust other people more and to see their basic goodness as well. It is far better to trust your own intuition than to look outside yourself for guidance, even if you make some “mistakes” along the way.

5. Non-striving

Almost everything we do, we do for a purpose. We have somewhere to go or thing errand to run. In meditation, this can be a real hurdle. Meditation is ultimately a non-doing. There is no goal but to be who you are right now, in the moment of your meditation.

For example, if you sit down and say, “I’m going to get relaxed, or get enlightened, or become a better person,” then you have already introduced an idea into your meditation. Instead, just be with yourself. If you are in pain, feel the pain. If you are tense, feel the tension. Feel all of the criticisms, praise, joy, and sorrow and hold it in awareness. Then let it go. Continue allowing your mind to be blank, acknowledge the feelings and thoughts as they come up, and then let them go with your breath and allow your mind to return to peace.

6. Acceptance

Acceptance means seeing things as they actually are in the present. If you have a headache, accept that you have a headache. Sooner or later we have to come to terms with things as they are and accept, whether it is a diagnosis of cancer or learning of someone’s death. Often, acceptance is reached only after we have gone through emotion-filled periods of denial, pain, and anger. These stages are a natural progression of acceptance, of coming to terms with things the way they are.

Instead of avoiding truth, embrace it. Look for opportunities of growth rather than seeing only the negative and painful. Acceptance does not mean you have to like everything, or that you have to take a passive attitude toward everything and abandon your principles and values. Instead, we accept the present as it is- nothing more and nothing less. We appreciate the moment we are given and make it special and positive. The only thing we can be sure of is that this moment will change, and by focusing on being alive in the present we can practice accepting whatever it is that will emerge in the next moment.

7. Letting Be

When we start paying attention to our inner experience we rapidly discover that there are certain thoughts, feelings, and situations that the mind seems to want to hold on to. If they are pleasant, we try to prolong these thoughts or feelings or situations, stretch them out, and conjure them up over and over.

Similarly, there are many thoughts and feelings and experiences that we try to get rid of or prevent ourselves from having because they are unpleasant, painful, or frightening in one way or another and we want to protect ourselves from them.

In the meditation practice, we intentionally put aside the tendency to elevate some aspects of our experience and reject others. Instead, we just let our experience be what it is, and practice observing it from moment to moment. Letting go is a way of letting things be, of accepting things as they are.

Letting go is not such a foreign experience. We do it every single night when we go to sleep. We lie down on a padded surface, with the lights out, in a quiet place, and we let go of our mind and body. If you can't let go, you can't go to sleep.

Most of us have experience times when the mind just would not shut down when we got into bed. This is one of the first signs of elevated stress. At these times, we may be unable to free ourselves from certain thoughts because our involvement in them is just too powerful. If we try to force ourselves to sleep, it only makes things worse. So, if you can go to sleep, you are already an expert at letting go. Now, you just need to practice applying this skill in waking situations as well.

-Adapted from Kabat-Zinn, Jon. *Full Catastrophe Living (Revised Edition): Using the Wisdom of Your Body and Mind to Face Stress, Pain, and Illness*. New York. Bantam Books, 2013.

READINGS

Dealing with Distractions

So there you are, meditating beautifully. Your body is totally immobile, and your mind is totally still, you just glide right along following the flow of the breath, in, out, in, out...calm, serene, and concentrated. Everything is perfect. And then, all of a sudden, something totally different pops into your mind: "I sure wish I had an ice cream cone." That's a distraction; obviously that's not what you are supposed to be doing. You notice that, and you drag yourself back to the breath, back to the smooth flow, in, out, in... And then: "Did I ever pay that gas bill?" Another distraction. You notice that one and you haul yourself back to the breath. In, out, in, out, in... "That new science fiction movie is out. Maybe I can go see it Tuesday night. No, not Tuesday, got too much to do on Wednesday. Thursday's better..." Another distraction. You pull yourself out of that one, and back you go to the breath, except that you never quite get there, because before you do, that little voice in your head says, "My back is killing me." And on and on it goes, distraction after distraction, seemingly without end.

What a bother. But this is what it is all about. These distractions are actually the whole point. The key is to learn to deal with these things. Learning to notice them without being trapped in them. That's what we are here for. This mental wandering is unpleasant, to be sure. . But it is the normal mode of operation of your mind. Don't think of it as the enemy. It is just the simple reality. And if you want to change something, the first thing you have to do is to see it the way it is.

When you first sit down to concentrate on the breath, you will be struck by how incredibly busy the mind actually is. It jumps and jibbers. It veers and bucks. It chases itself around in constant circles. It chatters. It thinks. It fantasizes and daydreams. Don't be upset about that. It's natural. When your mind wanders from the subject of meditation, just observe the distraction mindfully.

When we speak of a distraction in mindfulness meditation, we are speaking of any preoccupation that pulls the attention off the breath. This brings up a new, major rule for your meditation: When any mental states arises strongly enough to distract you from the object of meditation, switch your attention to the distraction briefly. Make the distraction a temporary object of meditation. Please note the word "temporary." It's quite important.

We are not advising that you switch horses in midstream. We do not expect you to adopt a whole new object of meditation every three seconds. The breath will always remain your primary focus. You switch your attention to the distraction only long enough to notice certain specific things about it. What is it? How strong is it? And, how long does it last?

As soon as you have wordlessly answered these questions, you are through with your examination of that distraction, and you return your attention to the breath. Here again, please note the operant term, "wordlessly." These questions are not an invitation to more mental chatter...that would be moving you in the wrong direction, toward more thinking. We want you to move away from thinking, back to a direct, wordless, and non-conceptual experience of the breath. These questions are designed to free you from the distraction and give you insight into its nature, not to get you more thoroughly stuck in it. They will tune you in to what is distracting you and help you get rid of it-all in one step.

When you first begin to practice this technique, you will probably have to do it with words. You will ask your questions in words, and get answers in words. It won't be long, however, before you can dispense with the formality of words altogether. Once the mental habits are in place, you simply note the distraction, note the qualities of the distraction, and return to the breath. It's a totally non-conceptual process, and it's very quick. The distraction itself can be anything: a sound, a sensation, an emotion, a fantasy, anything at all. Whatever it is, don't try to repress it. Don't try to force it out of your mind. There's no need for that. Just observe it mindfully with bare attention. Examine the distraction wordlessly and it will pass away by itself.

Watch the sequence of events: breathing, breathing, distracting thought arises. Frustration arising over the distracting thought. You condemn yourself for being distracted. You notice the self-condemnation. You return to the breathing, breathing, breathing. It's really a very natural smooth-flowing cycle, if you do it correctly. The trick, of course, is patience. If you can learn to observe these distractions without getting involved, it's all very easy. You just glide through the distraction and your attention returns to the breath quite easily. Of course, the very same distraction may pop up a moment later. If it does, just observe that mindfully. If you are dealing with an old, established thought pattern, this can go on happening for quite a while, sometimes years. Don't get upset. This too is natural. Just observe the distraction and return to the breath. Don't fight with these distracting thoughts. Don't strain or struggle. It's a waste. Every bit of energy that you apply to that resistance goes into the thought complex and makes it all the stronger. So don't try to force such thoughts out of your mind. It's a battle you can never win. Just observe the distraction mindfully and it will eventually go away. It's very strange, but the more bare attention you pay to such disturbances, the weaker they get. Observe them long enough and often enough with bare attention and they fade away forever. Fight with them and they gain strength. Watch them with detachment and they wither.

Mindfulness is a function that disarms distraction... Weak distractions are disarmed by a single-glance. Shine the light of awareness on them and they evaporate instantly, never to return. Deep-seated, habitual thought patterns require constant mindfulness repeatedly applied over whatever time period it takes to break their hold. Distractions are really paper tigers. They have no power of their own. They need to be fed constantly, or else they die. If you refuse to feed them by your own fear, anger, and greed, they fade. The purpose of meditation is not to concentrate on the breath, without interruption, forever. That by itself would be a useless goal. The purpose of meditation is not to achieve a perfectly still and serene mind. Although a lovely state, it doesn't lead to liberation by itself. The purpose of meditation is to achieve uninterrupted mindfulness.

From [Mindfulness In Plain English](#) by Venerable HenepolaGunaratana Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1993.

The Mountain Meditation

When it comes to meditation, mountains have a lot to teach, having archetypal significance in all cultures. Mountains are sacred places. People have always sought spiritual guidance and renewal in and among them. The mountain is the symbol of the prime axis of the world (Mt. Meru), the dwelling place of the gods (Mt. Olympus), the spiritual leader encounters God and receives his (her) commandments and covenant (Mt. Sinai). Mountains are held sacred, embodying dread and harmony, harshness and majesty. Rising above all else on our planet, they beckon and overwhelm with their presence. Their nature is elemental, rock. Rock-hard. Rock-solid. Mountains are the place of visions, where one can touch the panoramic scale of the natural world and its intersection with life's fragile but tenacious rootings. Mountains have played key roles in our history and prehistory. To the traditional peoples, mountains were and still are mother, father, guardian, protector, and ally.

In meditation practice, it can be helpful sometimes to "borrow" these wonderful archetypal qualities of mountains and use them to bolster our intentionality and resolve to hold the moment with an elemental purity and simplicity. The mountain image help in the mind's eye and in the body can freshen our memory of why we are sitting in the first place, and of what it truly means, each time we take our seat, to dwell in the realm of non-doing. Mountains are quintessentially emblematic of abiding presence and stillness.

The mountain meditation can be practiced in the following way, or modified to resonate with your personal vision of the mountain and its meaning. It can be done in any posture, but I find it most powerful when I am sitting cross-legged on the floor, so that my body looks and feels most mountain like, inside and out. Being in the mountains at night or in sight of a mountain is helpful but not at all necessary. It is the inner image which is the source of power here.

Picture the most beautiful mountain you know or know of or can imagine one whose form speaks personally to you. As you focus on the image or the feeling of the mountain in your mind's eye, notice its overall shape, the lofty peak, the base rooted in the rock of the earth's crust, the steep or gently sloping sides. Note as well how massive it is, how unmoving, how beautiful whether seen from afar or up close--a beauty emanating from its unique signature of shape and form, and at the same time embodying universal qualities of "mountainness" transcending particular shape and form.

Perhaps your mountain has snow at the top and trees on the lower slopes. Perhaps it has one prominent peak, perhaps a series of peaks or a high plateau. However it appears, just sit and breathe with the image of this mountain, observing it, noting its qualities. When you feel ready, see if you can bring the mountain into your own body so that your body sitting here and the mountain of the mind's eye become one. Your head becomes the lofty peak; your shoulders and arms the sides of the mountain; your buttocks and legs the solid base rooted to your cushion on the floor or to your chair. Experience in your body the sense of uplift, the axial, elevated quality of the mountain deep in your own spine. Invite yourself to become a breathing mountain, unwavering in your stillness, completely what you are--beyond words and thought, a centered, rooted, and unmoving presence.

Now, as well you know, throughout the day as the sun travels the sky, the mountain just sits. Light and shadow and colors are changing virtually moment to moment in the mountain's

adamantine stillness. Even the untrained eye can see changes by the hour. These evoke those masterpieces of Claude Monet, who had the genius to set up many easels and paint the life of his inanimate subjects hour by hour, moving from canvas to canvas as the play of light, shadow, and color transformed cathedral, river, or mountain, and thereby wake up the viewer's eye. As the light changes, as night follows day and day night, the mountain just sits, simply being itself. It remains still as the seasons flow into one another and as the weather changes moment by moment and day by day. Calmness abiding all change.

In summer, there is no snow on the mountain, except perhaps for the very top or in crags shielded from direct sunlight. In the fall, the mountain may display a coat of brilliant fire colors; in winter, a blanket of snow and ice. In any season, it may at times find itself enshrouded in clouds or fog, or pelted by freezing rain. The tourists who come to visit may be disappointed if they can't see the mountain clearly, but it's all the same to the mountain—seen or unseen, in sun or clouds, broiling or frigid, it just sits, being itself. At times visited by violent storms, buffeted by snow and rain and winds of unthinkable magnitude, through it all the mountain sits. Spring comes; the birds sing in the trees once again, leaves return to the trees, flowers bloom in the high meadows and on the slopes, streams overflow with waters of melting snow. Through it all, the mountain continues to sit, unmoved by the weather, by what happens on the surface, by the world of appearances.

As we sit holding this image in our mind, we can embody the same unwavering stillness and rootedness in the face of everything that changes in our own lives over seconds, hours, and years. In our lives and in our meditation practice, we experience constantly the changing nature of mind and body and of the outer world. We experience periods of light and dark, vivid color and drab dullness. We experience storms of varying intensity and violence, in the outer world and in our own lives and minds. Buffeted by high winds, by cold and rain, we endure periods of darkness and pain as well as savoring moments of joy and uplift. Even our appearance changes constantly, just like the mountain's experiencing weather and a weathering of its own.

By becoming the mountain in our meditation, we can link up with its strength and stability: and adopt them for our own. We can use its energies to support our efforts to encounter each moment with mindfulness, equanimity, and clarity. It may help us to see that our thoughts and feelings, our preoccupation's, our emotional storms and crises, even the things that happen to us are much like the weather on the mountain. We tend to take it personally, but its strongest characteristic is impersonal. The weather of our own lives is not to be ignored or denied. It is to be encountered, honored, felt, known for what it is, and help in high awareness since it can kill us. In holding it in this way, we come to know a deeper silence and stillness and wisdom than we may have thought possible, right within the storms. Mountains have this to teach us, and more, if we can come to listen.

Yet, when all is said and done, the mountain meditation is only a device, a finger pointing us toward somewhere. We still have to look, then go. While the mountain image can help us become more stable, human beings are far more interesting and complex than mountains. We are breathing, moving, dancing mountains. We can be simultaneously hard like rock, firm, unmoving, and at the same time soft and gentle and flowing. We have a vast range of potential at our disposal. We can see and feel. We can know and understand. We can learn; we can grow; we can heal; especially if we learn to listen to the inner harmony of things and hold the central mountain axis through thick and thin.

Kabat-Zinn, Jon. Wherever You Go There You Are: Mindfulness Meditation in Everyday Life. New York: Hyperion Books, 1994

Mindfulness in the Workplace

By Saki F. Santorelli

I have had the good fortune of working with and training several hundred patients/participants per year in the use of mindfulness meditation. In the context of preventive and behavioral medicine, mindfulness practice is a vehicle for stress reduction that assists people in learning to replenish their internal resources and increase psychosocial hardiness. In addition, many participants report positive changes in their sense of self, including a deepened sense of self-esteem, an increased ability to care for themselves and understand their fellow human beings, and for some, a finer appreciation for the preciousness of everyday life.

In addition to the ongoing clinical work, I act as a consultant and staff development trainer. These programs are tailored to individual, corporate, and institutional needs with an underlying emphasis on the cultivation and implementation of mindfulness and mastery in the workplace. Out of one such program evolved; "21 Ways to Reduce Stress During the Workday."

During a training program for secretarial staff, I was struck by their struggle to ground and integrate the stability and connectedness they sometimes felt during the sitting meditation practice into their "non-sitting" time. In response to their need, "21 Ways" came into print. I proceeded by simply asking myself "How do I attempt to handle ongoing stress while at work?" --actually from the time I awaken in the morning until I return home at the end of the workday. In what ways do I attempt to infuse mindfulness into the fabric of my everyday life? What helps me to awaken when I become intoxicated by the sheer momentum and urgency of living?

In all honesty, the awareness cultivated through meditation training has been my saving grace. Mindfulness harnesses our capacity to be aware of what is going on in our bodies, minds and hearts in the world-and the workplace. One thing we discover as we pay closer attention to what is going on in and around us is that stressors, the continual and constantly changing flow of events, are ever-present and tend to draw us away from the awareness of our true self. Meditation is the practice of returning to our true self. What the secretaries were struggling with is the gap between that awareness (sometimes) realized while sitting, and the dissonance experienced in their workday environment and their "workday mind." What they wanted was a vehicle for integrating "formal practice" into everyday life.

Although this need for integration is familiar to all of us, notions about how to do this remain largely conceptual unless we find concrete ways of practicing that transform theory into living reality. This is exactly what the participants wanted. They got enthusiastic about this as it provided them something solid to work with while attempting to be mindful in everyday situations-particularly while on the job.

Since then, I've shared these with many workshop participants and continue to receive phone calls and letters from people who have either added to the list or posted them, as convenient reminders, in strategic locations such as office doorways, restroom mirrors, dashboards or lunch-rooms. I've been gladdened to hear from them and am happy that, by its very nature, the list is incomplete and therefore full of possibility.

Each of the "21 Ways" can be seen as preventive--a kind of pre-stress immunity factor or as recuperative--a means of recovering balance following a difficult experience. In addition, they are tools for modifying our reactions in the midst of adversity. As you begin to work with these, you'll notice that this includes pre, during and post work suggestions. Incorporating this

awareness into your life will necessitate a skillful effort that includes commitment, patience and consistence. It may be helpful to think of yourself as entering a training program, a training that is primarily self-educative and necessitates a willingness to view yourself as a learner, a beginner. Please allow yourself the room to experiment without self-criticism. Treat yourself kindly and enjoy the journey.

At the heart of workday practice is the intention to be aware of and connected with whatever is happening inside and around us (mindfulness) as well as the determination to initiate change when appropriate (mastery). A wonderful example of this process is revealed in the following story told to me some years ago by a physician friend.

"Little Green Dots"

My friend told me that as his practice grew busier and more demanding, he began to have minor, transient symptoms that included increased neck and shoulder tension, fatigue, and irritability. Initially, the symptoms were benign, disappearing after a good night's rest or a relaxing weekend. But as his medical practice continued to grow, the symptoms became persistent and much to his own chagrin, he noticed he was becoming "a chronic clock-watcher."

One day, while attending to his normal clinical duties, he had a revelation. He walked over to his secretary's supply cabinet and pulled out a package of "little green dots" used for color coding the files. He placed one on his watch and decided that since he couldn't stop watching the clock, he'd use the dot as a visual cue that served as a reminder to center himself by taking one conscious breath and dropping his shoulders.

The next day he placed a dot on the wall clock, for he realized, "If I'm not looking at the one on my wrist, I'm looking at the one on the wall." He continued this practice and by the end of the week had placed a green dot on each exam room door. A few weeks after initiating this workday practice, he said that, much to his own surprise, he had stopped, breathed, and relaxed 100 times in a single day. This simple, persistent decision to be mindful had been transformative. He felt much better, and most importantly, patients told him that he was "much more like himself." For him, that was icing on the cake.

The story is simple and direct. Using what is constantly around us as a reminder of our innate capacity to be calm and centered is essential if we wish to thrive in the midst of our cultural busyness. Years ago, while working with harried receptionists, I suggested that they use the first ring of the telephone as a reminder to breathe and relax. For many, this became a powerful agent of change. People they had spoken with on the phone for years didn't recognize their voices; they spoke more slowly and their voices settled into the lower ranges. The telephone no longer elicited a Pavlovian reaction. They had learned to respond rather than react.

21 Ways to Reduce Stress During the Workday

By Saki F. Santorelli

1. Take a few minutes in the morning to be quiet and meditate--sit or lie down and be with yourself...gazing out the window, listen to the sounds of nature or take a slow, quiet walk.
2. While your car is warming up, take a minute to quietly pay attention to your breathing.
3. While driving, become aware of body tension, e.g. hands wrapped tightly around the steering wheel, shoulders raised, stomach tight, etc. Consciously work at releasing, dissolving that tension. Does being tense help you to drive better? What does it feel like to relax and drive?
4. Decide not to play the radio and be with yourself.
5. Stay in the right lane and go 55 miles per hour.
6. Pay attention to your breathing or to the sky, trees, etc., when stopped at a red light or a toll plaza.
7. After parking your car at your workplace, take a moment to orient yourself to your workday.
8. While sitting at your desk, keyboard, etc., monitor bodily sensations and tension levels, and consciously attempt to relax and let go of excess tension.
9. Use your breaks to truly relax rather than simply "pause". For example, instead of having coffee and a cigarette, take a 2 - 5 minute walk, or sit at your desk and recoup.
10. At lunch, changing your environment can be helpful.
11. Or try closing the door (if you have one) and take some time to consciously relax.
12. Decide to "stop" for 1-3 minutes every hour during the workday. Become aware of your breathing and bodily sensations. Use it as a time to regroup and recoup.
13. Use the everyday cues in your environment as reminders to "center" yourself, e.g. the telephone ringing, turning on the computer, etc. Remember the "Little Green Dots."
14. Take some time at lunch or break to share with close associates. Choose topics not necessarily work-related.
15. Choose to eat one or two lunches per week in silence. Use it as a time to eat slowly and be with yourself.
16. At the end of the workday, retrace your activities of the day, acknowledging and congratulating yourself for what you've accomplished and make a list for tomorrow.
17. Pay attention to the short walk to your car, consciously breathing. Notice the feelings in your body, try to accept them rather than resist them. Listen to the sounds outside the office. Can you walk without feeling rushed?
18. While your car is warming up, sit quietly, and consciously make the transition from work to home. Take a moment to simply be; enjoy it for a moment. Like most of us, you're heading into your next full-time job: home.
19. While driving, notice if you're rushing. What does this feel like? What could you do about it? Remember, you've got more control than you can imagine.
20. When you pull into the driveway or park your car, take a minute to come back to the present. Orient yourself to being with your family or household members.
21. Change out of work clothes when you get home; it helps you to make a smoother transition into your next "role." You can spare the five minutes to do this. Say hello to each of the family members; center yourself at home. If possible, make the time to take 5 - 10 minutes to be quiet and still.

"What Do I Resist?"

Resistance, in the context of mindfulness practice, is a wakeup call. In bringing awareness to those aspects of our daily life that we habitually resist, we begin the work of transforming them.

So now take a couple of moments to consider your own habitual resistances. Is there some situation, or task, some person, or event you commonly find yourself faced with, but which you really don't like? It can be as mundane as taking out the trash... The main things we're looking for is that quality of aversion, of "don't like", and the repetition, that is, it's something that you find yourself faced with again and again.

Now take a few moments and let's consider it mindfully. Begin with the body. As you hold the image of your resistance, explore the feeling in the body. Try to describe it to yourself as precisely as possible (heaviness, shallow breathing, contraction...)

Next, consider any collateral effects in the mind: negative thoughts, imaginings, fears: watch these and the train of emotions that arise as you explore this resistance.

What is your usual reaction? (Do it grudgingly, try to distract myself, shut down as I do it.) . .

Now as you hold your awareness within this personal resistance, see if you can allow that awareness to equalize your aversion, or soften the resistance. Don't strain, but just enter into whatever it is you find yourself resisting in this moment. If judgments or additional resistances come up, notice them. If nothing shifts or changes that's all right too. Just notice whatever happens.

Finally, before abandoning this exploration, mentally bow to whatever resistance you've been exploring. Return to the breath.

A Guided Loving Kindness Meditation

(To be read slowly to a friend or silently to oneself.)

Sitting comfortably, allow the attention to come, gradually to the breath.

The breath coming and going all by itself deep within the body.

Take a few moments to allow the attention to gather within the even rhythm of the breath.

Turning, gently within begin to direct, toward yourself, care for your own wellbeing.

Begin to look on yourself as though you are your only child. Have mercy on you.

Silently in the heart say, "May I be free from suffering. May I be at peace."

Just feel the breath breathing into the heart space as we relate to ourselves with kindness and care.

Allow the heart, silently, to whisper the words of mercy that heal, that open.

"May I be free from suffering. May I be at peace."

Allow yourself to be healed.

Whispering to yourself, send wishes for your own well-being:

"May I be free from suffering. May I be at peace."

Repeat, gently with each in-breath, "May I be free from suffering."

With the following out-breath, "May I be at peace."

Repeat these words slowly and, gently with each in-breath, with each out-breath. Not as a prayer but as the extending of a loving care to yourself.

Notice whatever limits this love, this mercy, this willingness to be whole, to be healed.

"May I be free from suffering. May I be at peace."

Let the breath continue naturally, as mercy for yourself, your only child, for this being within.

Though at first these may only feel like words echoing from the mind, gently continue. There can be no force here. Force closes the heart. Let the heart receive the mind in a new tenderness and mercy.

"May I be free from suffering. May I be at peace."

Each breath deepening the nurturing warmth of relating to oneself with loving kindness and compassion. Each exhalation deepening in peace, expanding into the spaciousness of being, developing the deep patience that does not wait for things to be otherwise but relates with loving kindness to things as they are.

"May I be free from suffering. May I be at peace."

Allow the healing in with each breath. Allow your true spacious nature.

Continue for a few breaths more this drawing in, opening to, loving kindness. Relating to yourself with great tenderness, sending well-being into your mind and body, embrace yourself with these gentle words of healing.

Now gently bring to mind someone for whom you have a feeling of warmth and kindness.

Perhaps a loved one or teacher or friend.

Picture this loved one in your heart. With each in-breath whisper to him or her, "May you be free from suffering. May you be at peace."

With each breath draw that loved one into your heart, "May you be free from suffering."

With each out-breath filling them with your loving kindness, "May you be at peace."

Continue to breathe the loved one into your heart whispering silently to yourself, to them, "May you be free from suffering. May you be at peace."

Continue the gentle breath of connection, the gentle wish for their happiness and wholeness.

Let the breath be breathed naturally, softly, lovingly into the heart, coordinated with your words, with your concentrated feelings of loving kindness and care.

"May you be free from suffering. May you be at peace."

Send them your love, your compassion, your care.

Breathing them in and through your heart.

"May you be free from suffering. May you know your deepest joy, your greatest peace."

And as you sense them in your heart, sense this whole world that wishes so to be healed, to know its true nature, to be at peace.

Note to yourself, "Just as I wish to be happy so do all sentient beings."

And in your heart with each in-breath, with each out-breath, whisper, "May all beings be free of suffering. May all beings be at peace."

Let your loving kindness reach out to all beings as it did to your loved one, sensing all beings in need of healing, in need of the peace of their true nature.

"May all beings be at peace. May they be free of suffering."

"May all sentient beings, to the most recently born, be free of fear, free of pain. May all beings heal into their true nature. May all beings know the absolute joy of absolute being. "

"May all beings everywhere be at peace. May all beings be free of suffering."

The whole planet like a bubble floating in the ocean of your heart.

Each breath drawing in the love that heals the world that deepens the peace we all seek.

Each breath feeding the world with the mercy and compassion, the warmth and patience that quiets the mind and opens the heart.

"May all beings be free from suffering. May all beings be at peace."

Let the breath come softly. Let the breath go gently. Wishes of well-being and mercy, of care and loving kindness, extended to this world we all share.

"May all beings be free of suffering. May all beings dwell in the heart of healing. May all beings be at peace."

--Stephen Levine Guided Meditations

Spiritual Meditation

Spirituality is your connection with a power greater than yourself. Though spirituality is the living, breathing heart of every religion, you can certainly be spiritual without being religious. No matter how you connect with it, the spiritual dimension is what energizes and “inspires” your life and gives it meaning. The spiritual is not separate from but is intrinsic to who we are. There is a distinction between spirituality and religion. Religion is the name that we give to the ways we organize our spiritual practices and our beliefs about the spiritual. This is why we use the term “organized religion. When religion is alive and vital its “spirit” or “spirituality” enlivens it.

This is an important distinction to make....that one can be religious in a very dogmatic way and not be spiritual, and of course one can be religious and spiritual, and one can also be spiritual without belonging to a particular religion.

Spirituality is intimately connected with healing in most religious traditions. It is understood that the spirit is the giver of and that it renews life. Spirituality and the spirit are not separate from the rest of our lives, it's not simply something we do or experience in a church or a mosque or a synagogue, or during a particular kind of ritual, every aspect of our life can be spiritual. And, every aspect of our work is spiritual....how we are with ourselves and others, and with nature.

Throughout the world, spirituality is intimately connected with breathing and healing. In many languages, the word for spirit is the same as the word for breath, reflecting the insight that the breath is the link between the physical and the spiritual realms. For example, in French, the word for breath and spirit is “esprit”, in Hebrew “ruach”, in Greek “pneuma”, in Sanskrit “prana”, in Chinese “qi.” In all these traditions it is understood that there is a fundamental connection between spirit, breath and physical functioning and physical illness. On a very basic physical biological basis, breath and the oxygen that travels with it are what give us life. Breath also opens the door to the spirit. According to many healing traditions, when we breathe in an easy and relaxed way, we create the balance that promotes healing.

From the Western scientific perspective we know that breathing deeply and slowly balances sympathetic nervous system excitation with the relaxation response of the parasympathetic system, calming down the “fight or flight” response.

In traditional Chinese and Ayurvedic medicine, breathing is said to be the vehicle for bringing energy into our bodies and for balancing the body. In both of these traditions breath is used together with imagery to create a state of balance in the body, in the mind and in the spirit.

In recent years, Western science has begun to investigate the connection between spirituality and healing. Studies have shown that people who have faith in any religion, or participate regularly in any spiritual practice, tend to be healthier than those who don't. The effectiveness of placebos, “sugar pills”, that people think are real medicine that will help them, reveals the healing power of hope. Numerous studies have demonstrated the healing power of love. And, some studies have suggested there is a healing power in prayer.

Tonglen Meditation

The spiritual dimension helps us recognize our spiritual connection to others as well as a force greater than ourselves. Some of the world's great traditions including Christianity and Buddhism regard love and compassion as central to their doctrine and practice. In experiencing the compassion of Christ or the Buddha we are inspired to be with and to act toward others in a similar way.

Tonglen is an ancient Tibetan technique which mobilizes the power of love for another and uses it to contribute to the other's healing as well as your own. Through the use of simple imagery and deep relaxed breathing, the practice allows you to experience, and bring healing to your connection with others, anytime you like. When you pray for the healing of others you're directing your energy exclusively to others and removing yourself from the equation. By contrast, Tonglen practice recognizes the mutuality of the process. Tonglen suggests that when you intend the healing of others, you can also heal yourself. Tonglen reminds, and helps show us that we are more alike than different from those we intend to help and heal, that our healing and theirs are inextricably connected.

This technique can be taught to people with serious chronic illnesses, to those who have been traumatized by war, and to medical students, to help them develop compassion not only for others, but for themselves as well. The practice can reveal and help heal our own vulnerability.

Script for the Meditation

Sit comfortably, relax, and allow your breathing to deepen. Now imagine someone you would like to help or heal (someone close to you or someone you don't know so well). Imagine yourself sitting next to this person as he or she lies in front of you on a couch or bed. Breathing deeply and relaxing, invite compassionate spiritual figures from your own religious tradition, such as saints, angels, or deities, into the room with you. You can also invite living human beings you've met, heard, or read about who exemplify compassion. Experience them surrounding you and your friend with the light of love and healing. Enjoy their presence. Feel them around you.

Now focus your attention back on your friend. Become aware of his/her physical, emotional, and/or spiritual suffering, imagine all the hurt and all the pain and all the anger, all the distress, physical, emotional, spiritual, social, economic, whatever it may be that is in this person and imagine this distress as dark sooty smoke..... visualize it as inky dark smoke. Notice every place where it's located in his/her body, perhaps the belly, fingers, hands, head, even around the body.

As you breathe in, inhale this dark smoke, understanding that inhaling the hurt and suffering of another can help you heal as well. Imagine it is caustic, that it is something scratchy and cleansing that will clean a dark place in your own heart, cleaning your own hurts and angers and resentment and envy and jealousy.

You might imagine a dark, inky, smoky ball in your own chest, representing all your own pain and suffering. As you breathe in the thick dark smoke of the other, it begins to wear away the dark ball in your own chest. In the process you may become aware of some of your own

hurt and pain, the anger and resentment that are being rubbed away and some of the ways in which you are actually similar to the person you are trying to help.

As your darkness is rubbed away, you may become aware of the light present within your own chest, the light in your heart. When this light of compassion and love grows stronger and brighter, send it back to your friend, letting it stream out from your chest to his/her body. Let it fill all the places where before there was darkness, hurt, suffering and pain. At the same time, let the light the compassionate beings that surround you fill our friend and perhaps the whole room, with light.

Enjoy the healing that has come and will continue to come. You may want to write about your experience.

The Lake Meditation

The mountain image is only one of many that you may find supports your practice and makes it more vivid and elemental. Images of trees, rivers, clouds, sky can be useful allies as well. The image itself is not fundamental, but it can deepen and expand your view of practice.

Some people find the image of a lake particularly helpful. Because a lake is an expanse of water, the image lends itself to the lying down posture, although it can be practiced sitting up as well. We know that the water principle is every bit as elemental as rock, and that its nature is stronger than rock in the sense that water wears down rock. Water also has the enchanting quality of receptivity. It parts to allow anything in, and then resumes itself. If you hit a mountain or a rock with a hammer, in spite of its hardness, or actually because of it, the rock chips, fragments, breaks apart. But if you hit the ocean or a pond with a hammer, all you get is a rusty hammer. A key virtue of water power reveals itself in this.

To practice using the lake image in your meditation, picture in your mind's eye a lake, a body of water held in a receptive basin by the earth itself. Note in the mind's eye and in your own heart that water likes to pool in low places. It seeks its own level, asks to be contained. The lake you invoke may be deep or shallow, blue or green, muddy or clear. With no wind, the surface of the lake is flat. Mirrorlike, it reflects trees, rocks, sky, and clouds, holds everything in itself momentarily. Wind stirs up waves on the lake, from ripples to chop. Clear reflections disappear. But sunlight may still sparkle in the ripples and dance on the waves in a play of shimmering diamonds. When night comes, it's the moon's turn to dance on the lake, or if the surface is still, to be reflected in it .along with the outline of trees and shadows. In winter, the lake may freeze over; yet teem with movement and life below.

When you have established a picture of the lake in your mind's eye, allow yourself to become one with the lake as you lie down on you back or sit in meditation, so that your energies are held by your awareness and by your openness and compassion for yourself in the same way as the lake's waters are held by the receptive and accepting basin of the earth herself. Breathing with the lake image moment by moment, feeling its body as your body, allow your mind and your heart to be open and receptive, to reflect whatever comes near. Experience the moments of complete stillness when both reflection and water are completely clear, and other moments when the surface is disturbed, choppy, stirred up, reflections and depth lost for a time. Through it all, as you dwell in meditation, simply noting the play of the various energies of your own mind and heart, the fleeting thoughts and feelings, impulses and reactions which come and go as ripples and waves, noting their effects just as you observe the various changing energies at play on the lake: the wind, the waves, the light and shadow and reflections, the colors, the smells.

Do your thought and feelings disturb the surface? Is that okay with you? Can you see a rippled or wavy surface as an intimate, essential aspect of being a lake, of having a surface? Can you identify not only with the surface but with the entire body of the water, so that you become the stillness below the surface as well, which at most experiences only gentle undulations, even when the surface is whipped to frothing?

In the same way, in your meditation practice and in your daily life, can you identify not only with the content of your thoughts and feelings but also with the vast unwavering reservoir of awareness itself residing below the surface of the mind? In the lake meditation, we sit with the intention to hold in awareness and acceptance all the qualities of mind and body, just as the

lake sits held, cradled, contained by the earth, reflecting sun, moon, stars, trees, rocks, clouds, sky, birds, light, caressed by the air and wind, which bring out and highlight its sparkle, its vitality, its essence.

Kabat-Zinn, Jon. Wherever You Go There You Are: Mindfulness Meditation in Everyday Life. NewYork: Hyperion Books, 199458

Forgiveness Meditation

There are four steps in this meditation, which is also a kind of guided imagery. You can do it insilence or listen to a gentle melody while you do it.

Sit comfortably. Close your eyes. Breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth, allowing your belly to be soft. Breathing slowly and deeply, feeling yourself present, here and now, in your chair, relaxing with each breath into your chair. Breathing in and breathing out.

Allow an image to come of someone toward whom you have anger or resentment. Let yourself see that person, now, as if she were sitting across from you in a chair. Choose whomever you like. It doesn't have to be the person who has hurt you the most, just someone toward whom you hold resentment.

Look at that person and say to her: "I forgive you. For whatever you may have done to harm me, intentional or unintentional, I forgive you." Soften toward that person. Imagine her coming into your heart just for now. Breathe in. Hold her there, in your heart, for a moment, breathing in and breathing out, staying present with her, relaxing, feeling forgiveness for her, breathing. Allow yourself to be there for a minute or two more. Now let her go, saying, "I forgive you." Be aware of yourself again, breathing in through your nose and out through your mouth, allowing your belly to be soft, breathing slowly and deeply, feeling yourself present, here and now, in your chair, relaxing into your chair with each breath, breathing in and out.

Now, imagine someone whom you have harmed in some way. Imagine him as if he were sitting in a chair across from you. Choose whomever you like. It doesn't have to be the person whom you have most harmed. Just someone whom you have hurt whose name or image comes to you now.

Look at that person and say to him, "Forgive me, for whatever I may have done to harm you, intentionally or unintentionally, forgive me." Open your heart to this person and imagine him opening his heart to you. Breathing in, and breathing out, imagining your hearts melting together. Hold him in your mind and your heart for a few moments, breathing in and breathing out, staying soft, relaxing, feeling forgiveness flowing from him toward you, feeling your hearts melting together. Breathe for a few minutes more. Now, let him go, thanking him for the forgiveness that he's offering you, allowing yourself to feel the forgiveness flowing from him to you, the connection between the two of you.

Breathing slowly and deeply, feeling yourself present here and now, relaxing into your chair with each breath, breathing in and out.

Now, allow the image of yourself to come to you. Imagine that you're sitting in a chair across from yourself. Look at yourself and say to yourself, "I forgive you for whatever you feel you've done to hurt yourself; for however you've let yourself down, I forgive you." Feel the sensation of opening your heart to yourself, feeling the connection between you and the image of yourself sitting in a chair across from you, the connection being your hearts. Allow the sensation of opening and softening to spread from you to your image, from your image back to you, uniting you. Breathe in and out, staying soft, relaxing, feeling forgiveness, for a few moments more.

Now, allow the feeling of forgiveness to spread from you, from your heart, to all those on the planet who are in need of forgiveness. Allow this feeling to grow and expand, breathing

in, breathing out, relaxing. Saying to yourself and to everyone on the planet who needs forgiveness, "I forgive you." Breathing in, breathing out, relaxing for a few minutes. Now let that image fade.

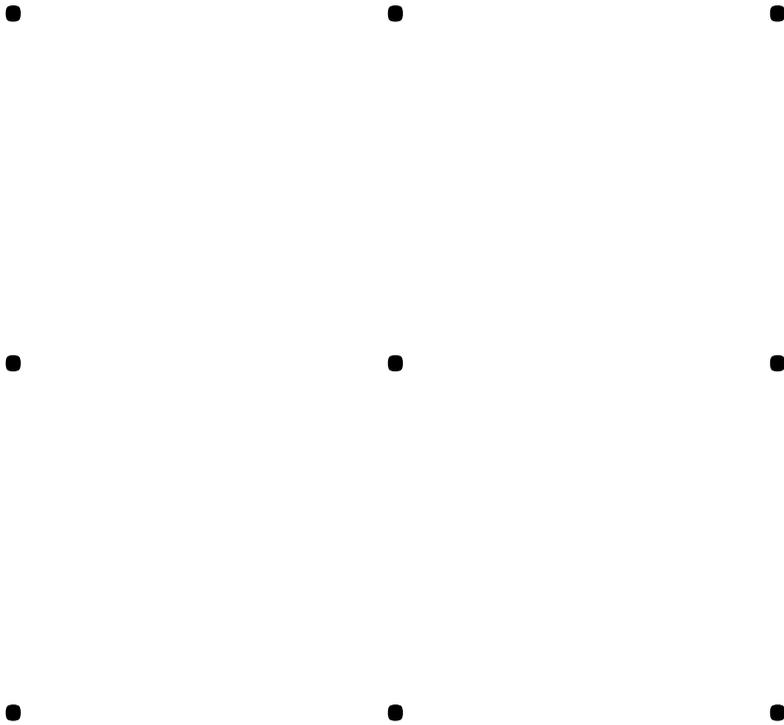
Feel yourself now, sitting in your chair, your back against the back of the chair, your seat on the seat of the chair, your feet on the floor, breathing deeply, relaxing.

When you're ready, open your eyes and bring your attention back into the room. Now, if you feel like it, write about your experience.

Adapted from Stephen Levine, (1987). *Healing into Life and Death*. Anchor Press.

EXERCISES

The Nine Dots Exercise



Above is an arrangement of nine dots.

Connect all the dots by making four straight lines without lifting your pencil and without retracing along any line.

The solution can be found on the last page of the workbook.

Mindful Walking

Plan for a specific period of time, usually 15-40 minutes. Dress comfortably. Leave all unnecessary baggage at home or in your office. Go outdoors and begin to walk slowly noticing your thoughts, feelings and sensations as they come. As you notice them say them to yourself.

For example:

“left foot touching earth”

“sunlight on grass”

“wondering what’s for dinner”

“Paper.... I need to write”

“Feeling silly,” etc.

Continue in silence, walking slowly until time ends.

Adapted from Kornfield, J. (1993). *A Path with Heart: A Guide Through the Perils and Promises of Spiritual Life*. New York: Bantam Books, 66-67.

Mindful Eating

Eating has a profound effect on your health. Every time you put food into your mouth, you have an opportunity to either enhance or diminish your life. Making good food choices is perhaps the single most important way you can care for your body.

Many people have chronic health problems to which diet can contribute such as: obesity, diabetes, heart disease, cancer, anxiety and depression. Diets high in sugar, refined carbohydrates and high fructose corn syrup can lead to chronic high blood sugar or high insulin which increases the risk of developing diabetes. Diets high in saturated fats may increase the risk of developing cardiovascular disease.

Inadequate intake of calcium and other nutrients can suppress bone formation and increase the risk for osteoporosis. Processed foods, animal fats, sugar, white flour and pasta all increase inflammation in the body which leads to a variety of chronic illnesses.

We have already seen that stress affects other systems in the body and it also has an impact on eating and nutrition. For example, stress inhibits digestion and absorption and may lead to deficiencies.

Because stress causes an increased metabolic rate, there must be a corresponding increase in the intake of essential nutrients to prevent deficiencies.

In order to counter the effects of stress and create a lifestyle that does not contribute to chronic disease, it is important to eat nutritious foods and drink 7-8 glasses of pure water daily. Nutritious foods are whole foods, that is, foods that have been minimally processed and are full of vitamins and minerals. Some examples of whole foods are: fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, beans, nuts, seeds, unprocessed fish, chicken & other meats.

Processed foods are always deficient in essential nutrients and are also full of unwanted chemicals. You could say that processed foods have had the good things taken out of them only to be replaced with bad things we don't want!

In our mind-body skills groups, we consider nutrition and eating as one area in which we can benefit by becoming aware...of our patterns, our feelings, our thoughts...about food. Once you realize where you are with regard to your eating, you can set a new direction and make new choices in what and how you eat. Even small changes can have profound effects. As you increase your awareness, your food choices will change more and more easily.

Because each of us is biochemically unique and no one diet is right for everyone, we need to discover which foods give us energy and which foods seem to cause problems. Experimentation is a very good way to start figuring this out.

Mindful Eating Exercise

Mindful Meditative Eating means giving your full attention to your experience of food. No TV, reading, driving, arguing or walking down the street. Mindful eating is a reward in itself because for those few minutes you're living your life fully. It can also provide you with important information about which foods make you feel energetic and happy and which make you feel tired, anxious, depressed or uncomfortable.

People eat for many different reasons. Though most animals eat when they're hungry and stop when they're full, human beings often eat to fulfill emotional needs and don't stop when their physical hunger is satisfied.

This exercise involves eating slowly and meditatively. It is to help you become more fully aware of how, why and what you are choosing to eat and of what food actually smells and taste like. This knowledge about yourself, along with an understanding of some basic nutritional principles, gives you the tools to make food central to nourishing yourself and your family with delicious, healthful, satisfying meals.

Practicing meditative eating may change what and how you eat. For example: You may find that your taste buds change and you develop a new appreciation of healthful foods.

You may find that junk food actually doesn't taste that good and that chemicals just can't compare with nature.

You may find yourself feeling satisfied with smaller portions at meals because you notice when you feel full and stop eating.

You may find that you crave a big bowl of vegetables sautéed in olive oil and garlic rather than a plate full of French fries.

Script for Eating Food Mindfully

Normally, most of us eat automatically or mechanically. Now, we are going to experiment with eating differently, paying full attention in a non-judgmental, open way, and staying in the present moment as much as possible.

Take one of these objects, only one, and see if you can entertain the notion that you are seeing and sensing this object for the very first time. What does it look like? What shape is it? What colors? How does it reflect light? Next, maybe investigate more closely how it feels. What is its temperature? Its surface texture? Its density? Perhaps you might also bring it up to your

nose. Do you smell anything? Are you salivating? How do you feel about putting this food into your body right now? How does your body feel anticipating eating in this moment?

Now we are going to receive this food into our body. Be aware of your arm moving to your mouth. How is the grape taken into the mouth? Experience the food in your mouth. Chew slowly and focus your full attention on the food's taste and texture. Be aware of any desire you have to rush through this grape so that you can have another. Be aware of the intention to swallow before you actually swallow. Notice how far into your body you can still feel the grape. (What a difference hot chili peppers would make!)

Know that your body is now exactly one grape heavier....

- What was your experience like eating the grape mindfully?
- Were there particular thoughts, feelings or sensations during this meditation that surprised you?
- Did you have any memories come up?
- Does this bring up any memories of past teachings about food or your experience as a child with your family?

Suggestions

In creating a new relationship with food it is important to not only rely on your common sense but to remember a few basic principles of good nutrition such as the following:

- Eat real food: food that has to be refrigerated and that you have to prepare.
- Eat more whole plant foods: fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains like brown rice, nuts and seeds.
- Eat more fish and chicken and less red meat.
- Eat a rainbow diet: a wide variety of fruits and vegetables of different colors.
- Avoid processed foods which contain unhealthy additives.
- Notice when you are full.
- Be aware of how food makes you feel, physically and emotionally.
- Try eating a variety of foods meditatively, including your favorite snacks, as well as those foods you don't often eat. Follow the same basic steps as you did with the grape.
- Eat an entire meal meditatively. Write down your observations every time you do this exercise. The more often you eat meditatively, the more you'll learn about your relationship to food.
- Each time you're about to eat something, notice if you're really hungry. If not, ask yourself: "Why am I eating this food?" Is it out of boredom? Loneliness? Anxiety? Just notice your answers.
- Pick a food experiment to do meditatively for 7 days. Choose from the list of experiments and notice the effects of specific foods on your energy and mood. Because each of us is biochemically unique and no one diet is right for everyone, we need to discover which foods give us energy and which foods seem to cause problems. Experimentation is a very good way to start figuring this out. You may want to begin by making a list of all of your symptoms. Then pick an experiment that appeals to you and try it for two to three weeks. Sometimes you will notice that you feel better within days. Sometimes it takes several weeks.

A Letter to Myself

Take out a piece of notebook paper. Write a letter to your future self. When you are done with the letter, put it away in a drawer or cabinet so you forget about it for at least six months. Put it in a place that you will need to clean once you move out of your current living space, but you don't plan on cleaning it any time soon.

Who are you today? What makes you happy? What are your goals? What makes you hurt? What makes you sad? What are some things you are struggling with?

Write your letter to your future self addressing some of these questions. Six months or twelve months from now, who will you be? What will be your goals? What will you have accomplished? Where will you be focusing your limited energy? What makes you happy? Who makes you happy? What are things that used to stress you out, but no longer?

Write to yourself all of the wonderful things that are in your life. Remind your future self all of the beautiful things in your life. All of the hobbies that make you happy, your friends and family you can turn to, your pets, nature, and whatever else that is good in your life. Write this so that six months from now you do not forget to reflect on the special things in your life.

Now, hide the letter in a safe place.

The Fear of Failure

We are all afraid of failure. Sometimes, we allow the fear to creep up inside of us and take control of our lives, and instead of taking chances, we resign to living a safe life. But it is important to feel these negative motions. We need to know ourselves and not ignore ourselves. In this exercise, we will begin to address this fear of failure. The purpose of this exercise is to make us uncomfortable. Embrace all of the negative feelings. Be vulnerable. Only once we feel our emotions can we begin to understand what is holding us back. From there, we can reach out and begin to achieve our goals. We begin to think about the happiness we feel when we achieve our goals rather than the fear of failing.

What goal have you been putting aside? What goal do you wish to accomplish, but you continue to ignore it and leave it for tomorrow? Is it learning to play an instrument? Is it switching majors? Is it learning a new language? Is it focusing on your wellness in the form of exercise and nutrition? Is it making new friends or joining an organization?

What are the requirements for reaching that goal? What do you need to do physically, emotionally, socially, intellectually to achieve your goal?

What negative emotions do you feel when thinking about this goal? What thoughts pass through your mind when you think about the requirements needed to achieve your goal?

Goal:

Requirements:

Negative feelings and emotions:

Now that you have become vulnerable with yourself, do you feel more capable of pursuing your goal? Does it seem more manageable to achieve? Allow yourself to be vulnerable when you feel negative feelings about goals you haven't yet achieved. Become in tune with yourself so that you can work to achieve all the goals you desire, and so you can let go of goals that were put onto you from friends and family that aren't a priority for you.

AWARENESS OF PLEASANT EVENTS CALENDAR

Instructions: Be aware of one pleasant event or occurrence each day *while* it is happening.
Record your experience below.

	What was the experience?	Were you aware of the pleasant feelings <i>while</i> the event was happening?	How did your body feel, in detail, during this experience?	What moods, feelings, and thoughts accompanied this event?	What thoughts are in your mind right now, as you write this down?
Sunday					
Monday					
Tuesday					
Wednesday					
Thursday					
Friday					
Saturday					

AWARENESS OF UNPLEASANT EVENTS CALENDAR

Instructions: Be aware of one unpleasant event or occurrence each day *while* it is happening. Record your experience below.

	What was the experience?	Were you aware of the unpleasant feelings <i>while</i> the event was happening?	How did your body feel, in detail, during this experience?	What moods, feelings, and thoughts accompanied this event?	What thoughts are in your mind right now, as you write this down?
Sunday					
Monday					
Tuesday					
Wednesday					
Thursday					
Friday					
Saturday					

Practice

1. Try to be mindful for one minute every hour.
2. Touch base w/ your breathing throughout the day wherever you are, as often as you can.
3. For one week, be aware of one pleasant event per day while it is happening. Record these, as well as your thoughts, feelings, and bodily sensations, in a calendar and look for patterns.
4. During another week do the same for one unpleasant or stressful event per day while it is happening. Again, record your bodily sensations, thoughts, feelings, and reactions/responses. Look for underlying patterns.
5. Bring awareness to one difficult communication per day during another week, and record what happened, what you wanted from the communication, what the other person wanted, and what actually transpired in a similar calendar. Look for patterns over the week. Does this exercise tell you anything about your own mental states and their consequences as you communicate with others?
6. Bring awareness to the connections between physical symptoms of distress that you might be having, such as headaches, increased pain, palpitations, rapid breathing, muscle tension, and preceding mental states and their origins. Keep a calendar of these for one full week.
7. Be mindful of your needs for formal meditation, relaxation, exercise, a healthy diet, enough sleep, intimacy and affiliation, and humor, and honor them. These needs are the mainstays of your health. If adequately attended to on a regular basis, they will provide a strong foundation for health, increase your resilience to stress and lend greater satisfaction and coherence to your life.
8. After a particularly stressful day or event, make sure that you take steps to decompress and restore balance that very day if at all possible. In particular, meditation, cardiovascular exercise, sharing time with friends, and getting enough sleep will help in the recovery process.

Home Mindfulness Practice Worksheet

<u>DAY</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>LENGTH</u>	<u>ACTIVITY</u>	<u>COMMENTS</u>
Sunday				
Monday				
Tuesday				
Wednesday				
Thursday				
Friday				
Saturday				

Home Mindfulness Practice Worksheet

<u>DAY</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>LENGTH</u>	<u>ACTIVITY</u>	<u>COMMENTS</u>
Sunday				
Monday				
Tuesday				
Wednesday				
Thursday				
Friday				
Saturday				

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Home Mindfulness Practice Worksheet

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Friday				
Saturday				

TULANE UNIVERSITY MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

TULANE UNIVERSITY CRISIS RESPONSE

If you know of a student in crisis, in distress, or needs immediate help, please direct them to these resources.

Campus and Public Safety

For 24 hour a day crisis response call:

- Uptown Campus dial **865.5911**
- Downtown Campus dial **865.5555**
- Off Campus please dial **911**

Counseling and Physiological Services (CAPS)

Services offered include: individual and group counseling; psychiatric assessment; medication management; and referrals. Services are confidential and free of charge. Students seeking help should call CAPS at **504-314-2277** or go directly to the office on the Academic Quad in the Science and Engineering Lab Complex, building #14. Business hours are Monday-Friday, 8:30am-5:00pm.

Student Resources and Support Services (SRSS)

The Office of Student Resources & Support Services assists students with identifying and connecting to a variety of resources. If you wish to bring a student of concern to the university's awareness you can call the on-call phone number at **504-920-9900** or complete a [Tulane University Campus Reporting Form](#). It is helpful to complete a form if you:

- witness a classmate in distress who could use further support
- notice a classmate is showing warning signs of suicide

Student Health Services

Services offered include primary medical care, wellness promotion, and pharmacy and laboratory services to all registered students. You may call the Uptown Health Center at **504-865-5255** or the Downtown Health Center at **504-988-6929**. If the health centers are closed, call the After-Hours Nurse Advice at **1-855-487-0290**. The nurse may give medical advice over the phone, or send you to a hospital's emergency room.

ON CAMPUS SUPPORT:

If you know students who are looking for support on campus, you can refer them to some of these departments.

[The Division of Student Affairs](#)

The Division of Student Affairs involves many departments, programs, and services that support student success in a variety of ways. Visit their website (<https://tulane.edu/studentaffairs/>) to view a comprehensive list of departments on campus that could provide support for students.

[The Goldman Office of Disability Services \(ODS\)](#)

The Goldman Office of Disability Services (ODS) is committed to providing equal access and a friendly environment for all who study and work at Tulane University. Students and employees with psychological, medical/physical, and learning/developmental disabilities are served. Call **504-862-8433** to discuss accommodations or visit the website (<http://tulane.edu/studentaffairs/disability/index.cfm>).

[theWELL](#)

The Center for Wellness and Health Promotion (theWELL) provides comprehensive health promotion services to our diverse student body through innovative programs and events. Help us build a safer community by encouraging friends and classmates to take the Kognito gatekeeper training through our website, by attending an in-person gatekeeper training, or by attending a *One Wave* Bystander Intervention workshop. More information about each of these services can be found at wellness.tulane.edu.

[THE O](#)

The [Office of Multicultural Affairs \(OMA\)](#) and the [Office for Gender and Sexual Diversity \(OGSD\)](#), known together as **THE O**, serves as the hub of diverse cultural, social, and intellectual life at Tulane University. It is our mission to foster an open and vibrant learning environment that welcomes, respects, and appreciates the histories, traditions, and cultures of traditionally underrepresented student populations. As such, they seek to foster an academic community characterized by a multiplicity of viewpoints, experiences, and cultures. They also address issues of bias, discrimination, and harassment—all of which negatively affect the health and well-being of students and learning communities.

[Campus Recreation](#)

The Department of Campus Recreation encourages personal growth by providing recreational and wellness opportunities to the Tulane community. Check their website (<http://www.reilycenter.com/>) for detailed class schedules and hours.

OFF CAMPUS COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

If you know students looking for supportive resources outside Tulane University, direct them to this option in the community.

The Trinity Counseling Center (<http://trinitycounselingnola.org/>) serves the New Orleans community by providing affordable counseling services to individuals, couples, families, and children. Fees are based on income. The Counseling Center is located at 2108 Coliseum. Call **504-522-7557** for an appointment or for more information.

GOALS

Legend:

Bronze Star- Good job! Keep working on your mindfulness practices.

Silver Star- Great Job! Mindfulness is becoming a part of your daily life.

Gold Star- Wonderful! You are truly living mindfully. Keep living and learning in each moment.

Daily Goals:

Practice 5 minutes of mindfulness- **Bronze Star!**

Practice 15 minutes of mindfulness- **Silver Star!**

Practice 30+ minutes of mindfulness- **Gold Star!**

Weekly Goals:

Complete 1-2 activities- **Bronze Star!**

Complete 3-4 activities- **Silver Star!**

Complete 5+ activities- **Gold Star!**

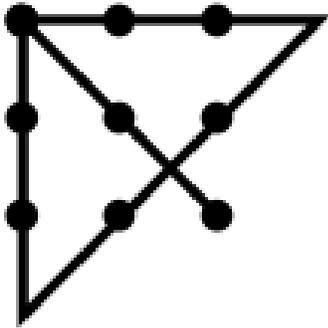
Monthly Goals:

Complete 6+ activities- **Bronze Star!**

Complete 14+ activities- **Silver Star!**

Complete 20+ activities- **Gold Star!**

Nine Dots Exercise Solution:



This puzzle is the source of the catchphrase “think outside the box”. In order to solve this puzzle, we must change our perspective. Congratulations if you were able to solve this puzzle without needing hints! It is a great reminder that when we get stuck and are unable to find the answer to a puzzle in our own lives, sometimes all we need is to shift how we view things.