

Mindfulness

Discover the power of being fully present and aware of where you are and what you're doing, and not overreacting to or overwhelmed by what's going on around you.

We've all had those moments: I'm here, but I'm not here. In a fast-paced world with technology that allows us to be present in so many moments, it can be easy to feel mentally overloaded. But if you begin to practice mindfulness and "tune in" to where you are right now, it can benefit you.

Benefits of Living in the Moment

- **You become more aware of your thoughts.** You can step back and not take them so literally. That way, your stress response is not started in the first place.
- **You don't immediately react to a situation.** Instead, you have a moment to pause and then come up with the best solution.
- **Mindfulness switches on your "being" mode of mind, which is linked with relaxation.** Your "doing" mode of mind is linked with action and the stress response.
- **You are more aware of and sensitive to the needs of your body.** You may notice pains earlier and take action.
- You are more **aware of the emotions of others** (emotional intelligence).
- Mindfulness reduces activity in the part of your brain that switches on your stress response, so **your background level of stress is reduced.**
- **You are better able to focus.** You are more likely to get into "the zone" or "flow," the state where you feel in command of what you do and perform at your best.
- **You can switch your attitude toward the stress.** Rather than just seeing the bad parts of feeling stressed, mindfulness gives you the space to think differently about the stress itself.

Is mindfulness the same as meditation?

Practicing mindfulness is actually a form of meditation! Meditation is the practice of reaching ultimate consciousness and concentration. Mindfulness is simply the act of focusing on being in the present, something you don't have to practice for 20 minutes at a time. You can be mindful anywhere, anytime.

Give Your Mind Some Rest

Try meditating for one minute a day to give your emotions, brain, and body time to recover from stress. If you can meditate first thing in the morning, it's a great way to start the day. Visit kp.org/listen for podcasts, or try the basic minute meditation below.

