

## WHAT IS MINDFULNESS:

Mindfulness is the simple, yet powerful ability of the mind to attend more fully to present moment experience. One of the most widely used definitions of Mindfulness is from Jon Kabat-Zinn, Ph.D, the founder of Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction at the UMass Medical Center:

“Mindfulness is paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, non-judgmentally.”

Or more simply put, “knowing what you are doing while you are doing it.”

Cultivating mindfulness results in many benefits for mental and physical health, well-being, and happiness.

By practicing Mindfulness, both formally, in longer-format practices such as sitting and movement meditation and informally, in 2-3 minute increments throughout our day, we begin to see things as they are; not necessarily as we'd like them to be. When this simple but startling realization happens we begin to meet the moments in our life with more mental strength and resiliency. We can come to the stress of our personal and professional lives with more skill, empathy, and balance and find that over time we are able to manage the stress of our lives more easily and recover the inherent joy of simply being alive. Sometimes we say Mindfulness practice takes us off “auto-pilot” and into the driver’s seat of our lives. By stopping and slowing down with these practices, we begin to see how our mind really is, how much chatter is actually going on in the background and how this chatter can sometimes distort our thinking and actions. By fully focusing on the here and now, we begin to increase the time we actually spend in the present when our lives are actually taking place—the only time we really have to learn, to act, to connect, to grow, to heal and to love.

These practices have been around for a long time and the convergence of many factors has brought them into the main stream arena of health and well-being. One of these factors is neuroscience and our ability to literally see how our brains can change by bringing these practices into our daily routine. The list of the benefits of Mindfulness Meditation practice is growing. Research has shown that Mindfulness practice positively impacts heart disease, chronic pain management, immune system functioning and decreases stress, anxiety and depression. It increases our ability to focus when called for and take in the wide view when needed. It allows us to connect deeply to ourselves and to others.

## VIDEOS

Dr. Richie Davidson, Ph.D: Transform your Mind, change your Brain

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7tRdDqXgsJ0>

Rick Hanson, Ph.D : How to change your Brain

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gDI6\\_9TmgCY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gDI6_9TmgCY)

Rick Hanson, Ph.D: Hardwiring Happiness

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jpuDyGgleh0>

News Anchor Dan Harris: How to Hack your Brain's Default Mode with Meditation

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FAcTlrA2Qhk>

Anderson Cooper – 60 Minutes

<http://www.cbsnews.com/videos/mindfulness/>

Dr. Richie Davidson, Ph.D, Jon Kabat-Zinn ,Ph.D, Amishi Jha , Ph.D

The Emerging Science of Consciousness: The Mind, Brain and Emerging Experience

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5TeWvf-nfpA>

Jon Kabat-Zinn speaking on Mindfulness at Google

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3nwwKbM\\_vJc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3nwwKbM_vJc)

#### Articles

How Mindfulness Can Make for Better Doctors

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/10/15/health/15chen.html>

Easing Doctor Burn-out with Mindfulness

[http://well.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/09/26/easing-doctor-burnout-with-mindfulness/?ref=health&\\_r=2](http://well.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/09/26/easing-doctor-burnout-with-mindfulness/?ref=health&_r=2)