

Mindfulness Meditation

- Sit in a comfortable but erect and dignified position. If you are using a chair, sit in one with a straight back and your feet flat on the floor or a bolster if your feet don't reach the floor. If you sit on the floor, you may want to sit Indian style with a thick cushion to raise your buttocks. Either way, the point is to keep the back, neck and head aligned in the vertical, to relax the shoulders and do something comfortable with your hands.
- Once you are comfortable, close your eyes and draw your attention to your breathing. Simply notice your breath. Don't try to change your breathing, be aware of it.
- During meditation, the mind will leave the focus of attention. The activity is not considered a distraction, but part of the practice. Each time you notice that your mind has left your breath, notice where it is. Then let go of the thought and bring your attention back and observe the breath. If you notice that you are judging yourself during this process, you don't have to judge yourself for judging yourself.
- You may want to begin meditating for 20 minutes or less.
- When your practice of focusing on the breath feels stable, you can expand your attention to include focusing on your body as a whole; your thoughts and feelings or perhaps the sounds around you. Note the nature of thoughts and feelings and that individual thoughts do not last long. Avoid being drawn into thinking about the thoughts, simply observe and note them. Come back to your breath if you get lost in this process.
- If you have the urge to react to physical sensations, such as an itch, simply notice the urge and stay with the focus of your meditation.

Adapted from Full Catastrophe Living, by Jon Kabat-Zinn



MINDFUL LIVING



Stress Reduction Tips

- *Make ordinary, repetitive occasions such as the telephone ring or a trip to the restroom a reminder to notice your breath and activity of your mind for a few moments.*
- *Experiment with being compassionate and nonjudgmental with yourself when you are reminded of your limitations.*
- *When you're in a hurry, ask yourself do I really need to hurry?*
- *Try welcoming your emotions as they come, instead of pushing them away.*
- *Turn off the radio in the car and pay attention to driving and to your thoughts.*
- *The violence in the news can create anxiety and over-stimulation in us. Take a break from the news.*