

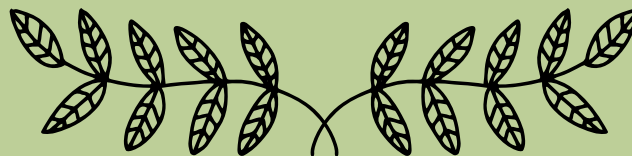


# MINDFULNESS




# What is Mindfulness?

Mindfulness is the practice of acknowledging, but not judging your thoughts while being fully present in each moment (i.e., being aware of where you are and what you are doing).

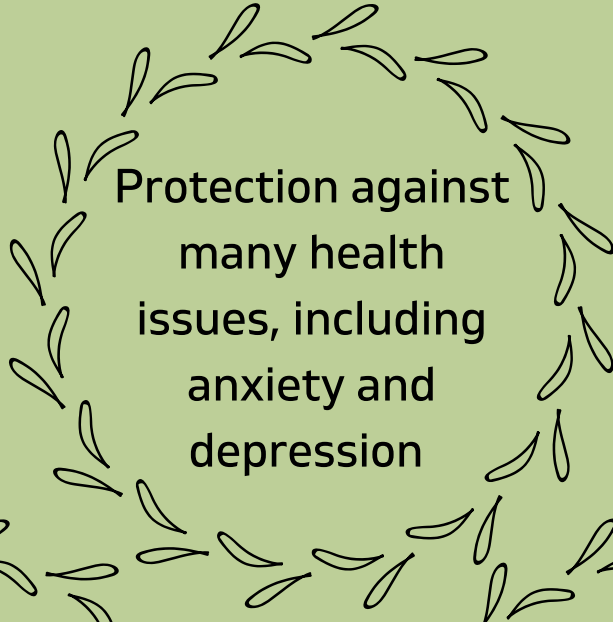


# Benefits of Mindfulness

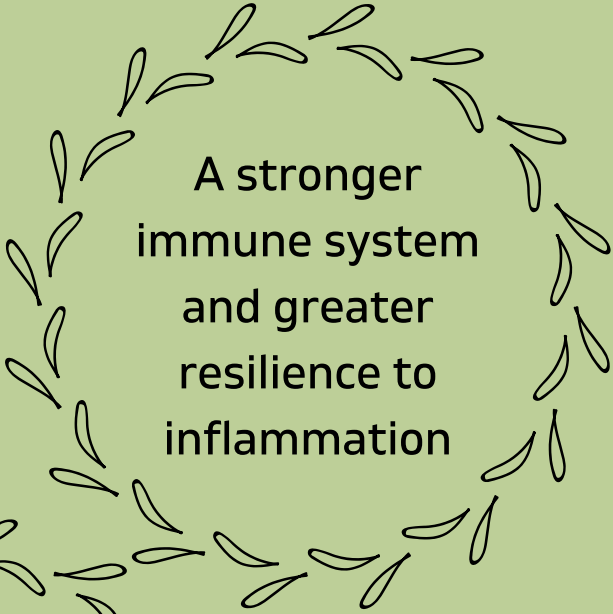
Practicing mindfulness alters the structure of the brain, allowing for:



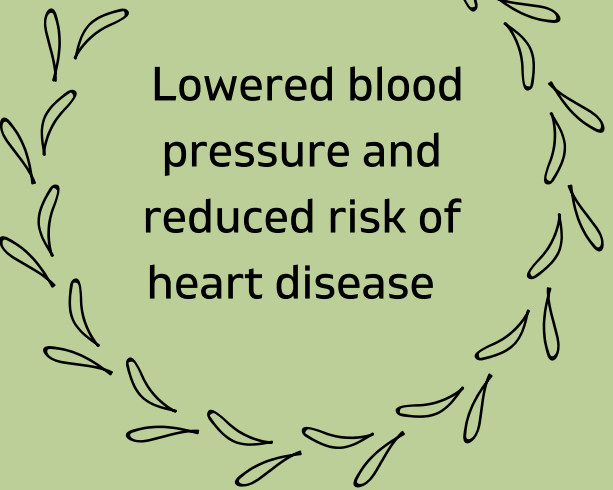
Improved mood and concentration, along with lower stress levels



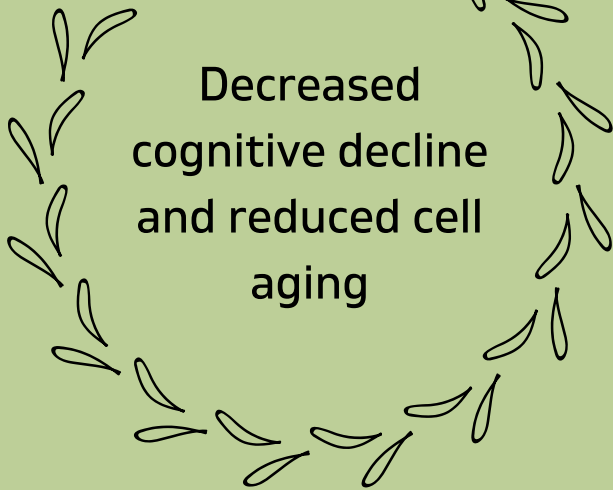
Protection against many health issues, including anxiety and depression



A stronger immune system and greater resilience to inflammation



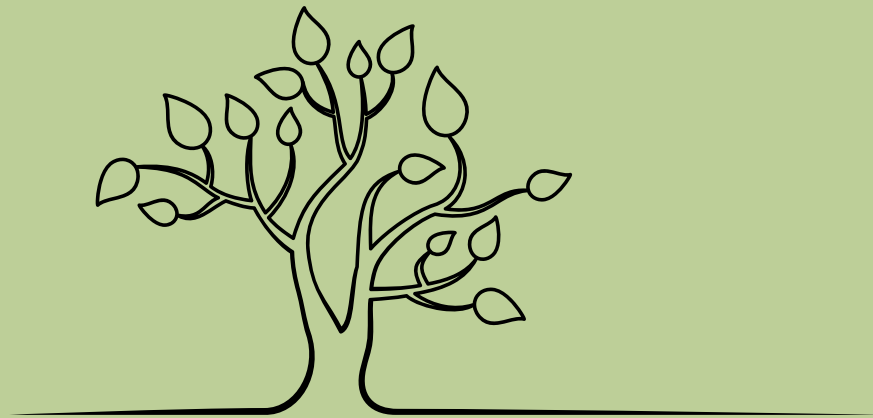
Lowered blood pressure and reduced risk of heart disease



Decreased cognitive decline and reduced cell aging

# Common Challenges to Mindfulness

- 1 Doubts about whether the practices will work
- 2 Physical or mental restlessness
- 3 Irritation, possibly about a bad mindfulness experience
- 4 Sleepiness or trouble focusing on the practice
- 5 Unsure of how to engage in mindfulness practices



It is normal to experience these challenges. Mindfulness is flexible and can be tailored to fit your needs, whether that means doing a walking activity, something before bedtime, or taking a mindful breath before class.

# Ways to Connect with Mindfulness

## Rec Center

MindBodySpirit exercise classes such as yoga and X-Fit



## OHP

Relaxation techniques and mindfulness activities



## SHAC & Chaplain's Office

Time to Meditate sessions



## Apps

Calm, Headspace, Insight Timer, and many more!

## Short Meditation Video



# Ways to Engage

## Mindfulness Techniques

- 🍃 Take-Five Breathing
- 🍃 Mindful Eating
- 🍃 Mindful Meditation




# Mindful Breathing Techniques

## Take-Five Breathing

GOAL: to deepen your breath, slow your heart rate, and provide something to focus on.


METHOD: hold your hand and trace your fingers with a finger on the opposite hand. Inhale when you trace up a finger, and exhale when you trace down a finger.

 **TIP: Try this out before a class or an exam to help focus your mind**

## Pursed Lip Breathing

GOAL: to keep the airways open longer and slow down your breath.


METHOD: breathe in through your nose, then slowly breathe out through puckered lips for about twice the time that you breathed in.

 **TIP: Try this out if you've been taking shallow, quick breaths**

## Oceanic Breathing

GOAL: to create a long, fluid, and smooth breath.

METHOD: in a comfortable position, take a deep inhale through your nose and imagine fogging up a mirror on your exhale through your mouth.

 **TIP: Try to say "haaah" slowly through your mouth while exhaling**





# Mindful Eating Techniques

Start small by choosing one meal per day or week to eat mindfully rather than changing everything at once.

Think about how the food got on your plate, including where and how it was grown, the person who prepared it, or the person who served it.

Before eating, remove screens or other distractions such as homework.



Before eating, check in with yourself and ask: *Am I hungry? Am I stressed? Am I thirsty? Do I feel rushed?* Then ask yourself, *if I feel this way, will this food help me feel better?*

During your meal, take time to chew slowly and savor the meal. It might help to take notes of the colors, taste, and textures of the food, along with how those sensations make you feel.







# Mindful Meditation Techniques

1

Find a quiet space, sit up comfortably, and allow for your hands to rest on top of your legs with your arms at your side.

2

Close your eyes, take a breath, and notice the way your chest expands and contracts. Don't try and control the breath, but rather let it follow its natural flow and rhythm.



**TIP: Check out our mindful breathing examples!**

3

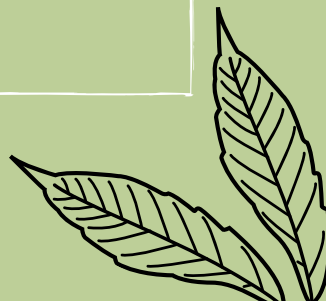
Thoughts may pull your attention away from your breath. Notice these thoughts, don't pass judgment, and gently return your focus back to your breath.



**TIP: If you are having trouble staying focused, try counting your breaths.**

4

A daily practice provides the most benefits, but do what you are capable of and what fits your lifestyle. Consider trying a bedtime meditation before sleep, a meditation at the beginning of the day, or incorporate it between classes.



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fold over or cut off

Resource 2

Resource 3

Resource 6

Resource 4

Title or title  
page  
(Resource 1)

Resource 7

Resource 5

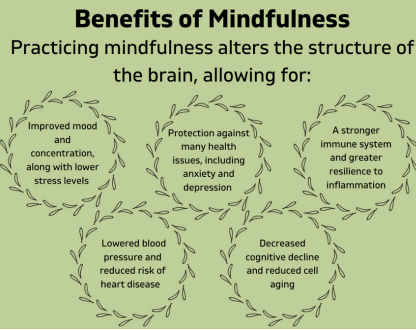
Resource 10

Resource 8

Resource 9

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# MINDFULNESS

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  - TIP: Check out our **mindful breathing examples!**
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