
Mindfulness for Families: Building an everyday toolkit for relaxation & self care

The Dorm Parent Collective

Objectives

- Discuss the principles and benefits of mindfulness when it comes to mental health treatment
- Learn and test out practical techniques and practices for everyday use
- Converse and connect with fellow Dorm parents

**“The time to relax is when you don’t have
time for it. “**

Jim Goodwin & Sydney Harris

Principles of Mindfulness

- **“Paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally to the unfolding of experience moment by moment.”**
(Kabat-Zinn, 2003).
- Embracing key attitudes of acceptance, non-judgment, curiosity, compassion
- Mindfulness ≠ meditation (although meditation can be a form of mindfulness!)
- **Meditation:** practice of going inward, engaging in self-reflection, contemplation, & inner awareness
- **Observation** vs. reaction, learn acceptance & tolerance

Mindfulness, Meditation, & Relaxation

- **Mindfulness skills:** invite you to be present in the current moment without the need to control experience
- **Meditation skills:** encourage awareness & focused attention; typically intrapersonal
- **Relaxation skills:** address anxiety & stress by targeting the body
 - Reduce muscle tension
 - Slow down breath
 - Calm & ground mind

Benefits of Practice

- Increases self awareness
- Aids people in making better choices
- Reduces stress, symptoms of anxiety and depression
- Slows heart rate
- Lowers blood pressure
- Improves attention span & memory
- Improves immune system
- Fosters greater compassion
- Boosts happiness & confidence
- Improves sleep quality

***Mindfulness, meditation, & relaxation skills need to be practiced!** Compare with strength training or exercise, need to build up & maintain

Modern Day Mindfulness

- Internet & phone apps
- Retreats
- In academic & work environments
- Therapeutic interventions
 - Dialectical Behavioral Therapy
 - Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
 - Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction
 - Meditation & Mindfulness Groups at the Dorm

Practical Techniques & Practices for Everyday Use

Practical Techniques

Mindfulness

- Do 1 activity mindfully everyday like making cup of tea/coffee, brushing teeth, showering. Engage with senses, continuously bring attention to the experience
- Focus on 1 task at a time
- Daily journal prompt

Meditation

- Breath practices
- Progressive muscle relaxation
- Peaceful place
- Candle gazing

Try it out!

- Shape breath [video](#)
- 4 count square breathing
 - 4 count inhale
 - 4 count hold full
 - 4 count exhale
 - 4 count hold empty
- Move your body!
- Get some sunshine/fresh air
- Singing Bowls
- Relaxing music
- Meditation apps!
- **Guided meditation**
- Journal your thoughts
- Call a friend
- Take a hot shower/bath

Relaxation & Self-Care

Physical: activities to care for and improve your physical health	Emotional: activities that encourage you to acknowledge, connect, and reflect on your emotions	Mental: activities to stimulate & activate your mind
Social: activities that allow you to nurture your relationships with others	Practical: working on tasks that address housekeeping or reducing future stress	Spiritual: activities that nurture your spirit

Discussion Questions

- What are the greatest challenges to you practicing daily mindfulness, meditation, or self-care activities?
- How do you currently model self-care to your young adult child/children?
- What could you do today, this week, this month to prioritize your self-care?
- How can you use this information to support your family in practicing self-care?