

Bring Mindfulness with You in The New Year

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A lot of us have heard about the wonders of mindfulness and the benefits, but few of us engage in daily mindfulness practices. It can be hard to start a new practice if you aren't sure how to do so or where to go for more information. Let's talk about what mindfulness is, how to engage in mindfulness, and where to learn more so that we can bring mindfulness with us into the New Year!

- **What is mindfulness?** Mindfulness is all about being in the moment and focusing on the here and now in a non-judgmental way, rather than the past or the future. Mindfulness can look different for different people, it can range from focusing on something in your environment to imagining a scene in your head. Mindfulness is not about having nothing in your brain, it is all about accepting and letting go of things that are stressful or harmful and focusing on what we are experiencing in the present instead.
- **Why mindfulness?** Mindfulness is a wonderful way to reduce stress, increase happiness, and be more present in your daily life. Mindfulness can even help reduce pain and improve quality of life.
- **How do I practice mindfulness?** There are many ways to practice mindfulness, and they are not one-size-fits all so it is important to find what works for you. For some, mindfulness can be a meditation or self-compassion exercise to be kinder to themselves, which has been shown to improve emotional well-being. For others,

mindfulness can be a walk outside or a shower. The important part of mindfulness is to be kind to yourself, let go of negative thinking and just focus on the facts or what you can see, and maintain a focus on the present moment.

- **What are some resources to get me started on my mindfulness journey?** There are many free apps on smart phones such as Calm or Headspace. There are also many websites with free resources and mindfulness practices. For your convenience we have a few websites and books listed below. Enjoy exploring and bringing what works for you into the New Year! *Happy Mindfulness!*

****Websites:**

1. American Mindfulness Research Association (AMRA): <https://goamra.org/>
2. Self-Compassion (Dr. Kristin Neff): <https://selfcompassion.org/>
3. UC San Diego Health (Center for Mindfulness, Videos About Stress and Mindfulness): <https://health.ucsd.edu/specialties/mindfulness/resources/Pages/video.aspx>
4. UC San Diego Health (Center for Mindfulness, Guided Audio Files to Practice MBSR): <https://health.ucsd.edu/specialties/mindfulness/programs/mbsr/Pages/audio.aspx>

****Books:**

1. The Mindfulness Solution to Pain: Step-by-Step Techniques for Chronic Pain Management by Jackie Gardner-Nix
2. Mindfulness for Beginners by Jon Kabat-Zinn
3. Wherever you go, There you are by Jon Kabat-Zinn
4. Mindfulness: An Eight-Week Plan for Finding Peace in a Frantic World by Danny Penman and J. Mark G. Williams

****Please note that all the resources provided are for educational purposes and USU does not specifically endorse their services. Mindfulness resources are intended to provide information, not to treat chronic pain or other mental health concerns. USU does not control the websites or books referenced above.**

Brief References:

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