



Keck School of
Medicine of **USC**

STRESS-REDUCTION BOOKLET

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Introduction to the Stress-Reduction Booklet

Congratulations on an important first step. If you are reading this, that means you are considering making some important lifestyle changes. Taking better care of ourselves is not always easy.

This booklet is intended to provide you with **knowledge, practical tools, and resources** to help you reduce stress and improve your health.

Most of us are well aware that stress can impact disease risk, onset, and progression. Stress has been implicated as a contributing factor in a wide range of illnesses—both mental and physical—from depression to cardiovascular disease.

The good news is that there are simple ways to reduce stress. Exercise, sleep, nutrition, and many of the practical techniques included here, are effective ways to mitigate the negative effects of stress on our health. These are not necessarily short-term solutions, but life-long habits that take time, persistence, and a healthy dose of self-compassion, to cultivate. This booklet can help you get started in the right direction.



How to Use this Booklet

The following page contains an outline of the materials included in this booklet. You may use this outline to skip ahead to what you are looking for—whether specific practices, resources, or information. Or, you may choose to work through this booklet step-by-step; this offers the benefit of integrating these practices into your daily routine, slowly and steadily.

We hope that you find this booklet helpful. As always, reach out to your healthcare team if you have specific questions or concerns about your emotional or physical health.

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PART I:
STRESS-REDUCTION
KNOWLEDGE

Keys to Stress Reduction



Exercise

Exercise is one of the most powerful and effective ways to reduce stress. Whether it's a simple walk around the block or a more vigorous activity, both your body and mind will benefit. Aim for some form of exercise most days out of the week.



Nutrition

You should always consult with your medical team about diets best suited to your physical health and personal preferences. However, here are some basic rules of thumb to help optimize your dietary health: Eat your fruits and vegetables. Avoid processed foods. Listen to your gut. Enjoy moderation. Eat your food mindfully.



Sleep

Research continues to illuminate the importance of sleep for our mental and physical health, as well as its role in disease onset and progression. Aim for six to eight hours of sleep per night. Consult the "Sleep Hygiene" handout in this packet if you struggle with healthy sleep.



Social Support

Social support not only plays a role in our mental health – such as reducing our risk of depression – but our physical health, too. For example, some studies have shown that a lack of social support is associated with heightened levels of pro-inflammatory cytokines – substances involved in most chronic illnesses. Social support can take many forms, whether it's a social club, support group, or simply a conversation with a friend.



Contemplative Practice or Ritual

A contemplative practice may take the form of meditation, yoga, tai chi, prayer, or any other activity that helps you *slow down*. It need not be "spiritual" or religious. It can be as simple as drinking a cup of tea every morning before work. Making your practice routine can have substantial effects. Research suggests that having daily a ritual is among the best predictors of happiness.



Self-Care

We quickly experience burn-out without proper self-care. Self-care does not just mean taking a vacation once-per-year. Self-care means continuously paying attention to the needs of our mind and body. This might mean getting a little extra sleep one day. It might mean "cheating" on your diet; or it might mean going to the gym. We should aim to treat ourselves as we would a good friend. *How would you encourage a friend to treat themselves?* The more we nourish our own well-being, the greater our ability to show up to the things that matter to us in life.

Did You Know...?

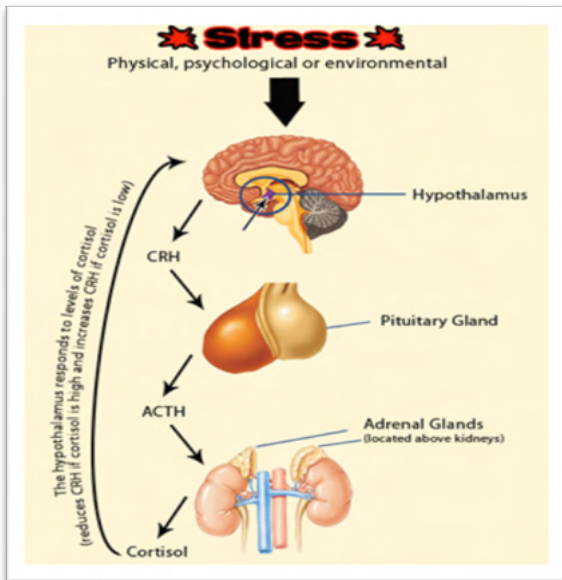
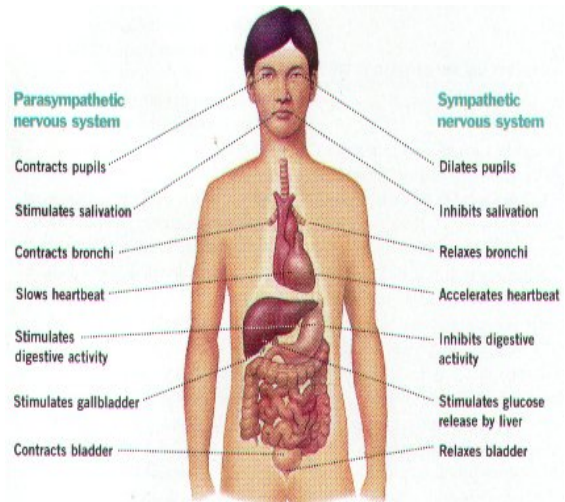
Knowledge	The Science
<p>Your <i>perception</i> of stress can affect your health. Those who <i>perceive</i> stress as harmful to their health are at greater risk of illness and premature death.</p> <p>On the contrary, viewing stress as something that can help you meet challenges is protective for your health.</p>	<p>In a study of 28,753 US adults, those who reported higher levels of stress <i>and</i> believed that stress was harmful to their health had a 43% increased risk of premature death.¹</p> <p>In another study, those who were taught to reappraise their stress as functional and adaptive – versus harmful – had improved cardiovascular responses to stress, including lower vascular resistance – a mechanism involved in cardiovascular disease.²</p>
<p>Stress leads to inflammation.</p>	<p>Continuous stress can lead to chronic, low-grade inflammation in the body and brain. Inflammation plays a role in most diseases.³</p>
<p>Mind-body practices, such as yoga and meditation, can reduce inflammation and impact the expression of certain genes.</p>	<p>Mind-body practices have been shown to alter levels of pro- and anti-inflammatory cytokines, as well as the expression of genes that regulate these responses.⁴</p>
<p>Connecting with others is good for your heart.</p>	<p>Social connection stimulates the release of a hormone called <i>oxytocin</i>. This hormone can lower cortisol, increase parasympathetic (relaxation) activity, and provide anti-inflammatory effects to the heart.⁵</p>
<p>Providing social support to others can improve your health.</p>	<p>Providing support to friends and family members, or volunteering with others, can improve one's health and longevity.⁶⁻⁷</p>
<p>Stress can affect your microbiome; and improving your microbiome can strengthen your resilience towards stress and disease.</p>	<p>The stress system contains pathways that interact with, and are influenced by, the microbiome – communities of bacteria that play a role in digestive, immune, and endocrine functions.⁸</p>

1. Keller, A., Litzelman, K., Wisk, L. E., Maddox, T., Cheng, E. R., Creswell, P. D., & Witt, W. P. (2012). Does the perception that stress affects health matter? The association with health and mortality. *Health Psychology, 31*(5), 677.
2. Jamieson, J. P., Nock, M. K., & Mendes, W. B. (2012). Mind over matter: Reappraising arousal improves cardiovascular and cognitive responses to stress. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General, 141*(3), 417.
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7. Musick, M. A., Herzog, A. R., & House, J. S. (1999). Volunteering and mortality among older adults: Findings from a national sample. *The Journals of Gerontology Series B: Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences, 54*(3), S173-S180.
8. Moloney, R. D., Desbonnet, L., Clarke, G., Dinan, T. G., & Cryan, J. F. (2014). The microbiome: stress, health and disease. *Mammalian Genome, 25*(1-2), 49-74.

The Stress Response

Two Branches of the Nervous System

- Your nervous system has two main branches: **sympathetic** and **parasympathetic**.
- The **sympathetic** is the “fight or flight” system. This gets activated with stress.
- The **parasympathetic** is the “rest, digest, and heal” system. This system dominates over the sympathetic when you are relaxed.
- If we are unable to “turn off,” or dial down, continuous sympathetic activity, it creates “wear and tear” on the body.



The HPA Axis

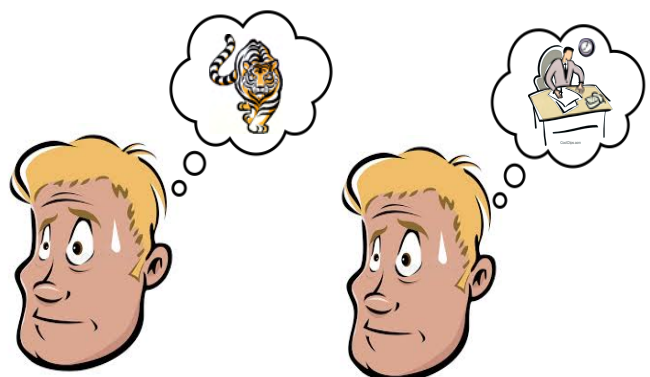
- One of the key players in the stress response is the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis.
- Under stress, the hypothalamus prompts the pituitary gland to release a cascade of hormones, which then trigger the release of cortisol and adrenaline from the adrenal glands. This helps fuel sympathetic activity.
- Excessive HPA activity is implicated in a number of mental and physical health disorders.
- The HPA axis is closely tied to the immune system and can compromise immune resilience.

The Stress Response is Triggered from the Outside *and* Inside

- Our stress system was originally designed to protect our ancestors from dangerous threats in the external environment, such as predators.
- However, the *mental* stressors we encounter in our modern life can tax the system in the same way. The brain treats internal threats just like external threats by activating our stress response.

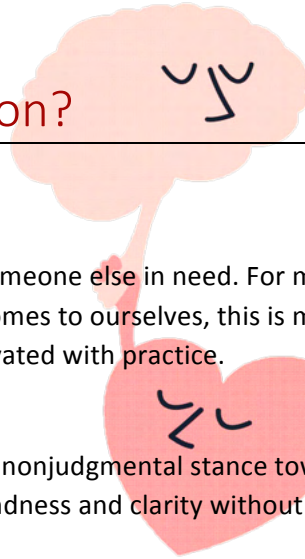
Stress Stimulus
50,000 Years ago

Stress Stimulus
Today



PART II:
STRESS-REDUCTION
EXERCISES

What is Self-Compassion?



What is Self-Compassion?

Self-compassion is treating ourselves as we would a good friend or someone else in need. For many of us, it's easy to be compassionate towards others; however when it comes to ourselves, this is much more difficult. Fortunately, self-compassion is a skill that can be cultivated with practice.

Self-Compassion contains the three following elements:

1. Mindfulness (vs. Over-Identification): Mindfulness entails an open, nonjudgmental stance towards our thoughts and feelings. We can view our negative experiences with kindness and clarity without being over-identified with them.
2. Self-Kindness (vs. Self-Judgment): We all make mistakes, fail, feel inadequate, and experience major life difficulties. Self-kindness means being warm and understanding towards these experiences. It's like having a compassionate mentor with you no-matter-what. We can embrace our limitations and the parts of ourselves that we "don't like." Fighting against them only intensifies the tug-of-war.
3. Common Humanity (vs. Isolation): Common humanity is the recognition that each and every human being suffers. Although each of our experiences are unique, we all know what it feels like to suffer. Instead of feeling isolated in our difficulties, we know that we are not alone.

What Does Self-Compassion Have to do with Stress-Reduction?

When we are not kind towards ourselves, this can actually be stressful! Just as our brain responds to threats on the *outside*, so too does it respond to *internal* threats. Being self-critical can actually activate our threat defense system and increase cortisol levels. On the other hand, practicing self-compassion can reduce stress and inflammation, release oxytocin, and boost our immune system. Self-compassion also strengthens our resilience towards burn-out.

What Self-Compassion is NOT

Self-Esteem: Self-esteem refers to our perceived sense of worth and value. Self-compassion, on the other hand, means that we are kind towards ourselves *regardless* of our successes and failures. While self-esteem may come and go, self-compassion is always there for us.

Self-Pity: While it may seem that being self-compassionate would lead to self-pity, the opposite tends to happen: not being so caught up in our internal dramas, we have more energy and attention available for others and the activities that are important to us in life.

Self-Indulgence or Weakness: Many people find it hard to be self-compassionate because they believe they will become "lazy," "indulgent," or "weak." Self-compassion does not mean engaging in pleasures all of the time. On the contrary, it means that we are always looking out for ourselves. If we are honest with our needs, we will compassionately help ourselves make better decisions, whether they invoke pleasure (e.g., resting) or displeasure (e.g., exercising more). When we try to shame ourselves into changing, we end up stuck in a self-critical loop.

See: Neff, K. (2015). *Self-Compassion: The Proven Power of Being Kind to Yourself*. Harper Collins: New York.

Self-Compassion “Check-In”

The self-compassion “check-in” can be used anytime throughout the day. Initially, you may want to set aside some quiet time to practice. As you become familiar with this process, you can readily cultivate it in moments of stress.

- 1. Place a hand (or two) over your heart area. Take a couple deep breaths.**
- 2. Bring to mind something that has been challenging for you.**
- 3. Acknowledge that this experience has been difficult. You may offer some soothing words to yourself:**
 - *“I know this has been difficult for you”*
 - *“I can see that you’re really suffering right now”*
 - *“I know you’re doing the best you can”*
- 4. Recognize the common humanity of suffering. Remember that everyone suffers. *Just like me, others suffer and wish to be happy.***
- 5. Ask yourself a very important question: *what do I need right now?* This might a word or phrase you need to hear (e.g., *“It’s okay...”*, *“I know I will get through this...”*). Or maybe you need some rest. Or maybe you need to talk with a friend or loved one. Listen deeply to what you need most, and treat yourself with the care that you would naturally extend towards someone else in need.**

Being Kind to Your Emotions

Our emotions don't have to be our worst enemies—they can instead be our friends. When we make enemies with our emotions (i.e., push them away), we may end up feeling even more frustrated, upset, and helpless about what to do. Try instead to notice and be kind to your emotions – whatever they are. It's okay to feel sad, angry, jealous, and embarrassed, just like it is okay to feel happy, proud, and excited. Humans have a range of emotions. When we let them come and go, as they please, we live with more ease and less suffering.

Here is a suggested practice. *Feel free to make this into your own personal, unique practice in way that suits you!*

- Notice when a difficult emotion arises (e.g., sadness, frustration, or even the feeling of stress).
- Feel what it is like in your body. Where do you notice it? Does it move? Does it have a shape or color? Texture? Does it bring any images to mind? How long does it last?
- Offer the emotion kindness and compassion. Thank it for being here. You might invite it to stay as long as it needs to. Handle it with care and love, just like you would a baby. You've made a new friend and no longer have to fight against it.



Loving-Kindness Meditation

1. Sit in a comfortable position.

2. Begin by drawing to mind someone whom you feel positively towards (e.g., a friend, family member, or even a pet). Feel them in your presence. Then offer them words of loving-kindness, such as (feel free to use your own):

- May you be happy
- May you feel safe
- May you live with joy and ease
- May you be free from suffering

3. Then, most importantly, offer these same wishes towards yourself with the same attitude of goodwill.

4. Finally, expand your circle of loving-kindness to a neutral person (i.e., someone you sort of know), a difficult person (i.e., someone whom you have had difficulty with), a community of people (e.g., your school, neighborhood, city, etc.), and finally to all beings everywhere in the world.



Belly Breathing

Breathing from our belly, or “diaphragmatic breathing,” is one of the most simple and effective techniques to reduce stress and anxiety. Diaphragmatic breathing activates the parasympathetic (“rest, digest, and heal”) branch of the nervous system. It changes the way our heart beats – increasing “heart rate variability,” a marker of well-being and disease resilience – and stimulates pathways to the brain that help settle our emotions and focus our attention.

To get the most out of this technique, set aside 10-20 minutes per day to practice. You will notice that over time it becomes easier to breathe this way in your everyday life.

1. Get comfortable in a sitting or lying position. If you are sitting, it might be helpful to slouch so that the diaphragm region is more open.
2. Place one hand on your belly, and the other hand on your chest. Notice your natural breathing.
3. See if you can breathe so that the hand on your belly goes up and down, instead of the hand on your chest. You will be using your diaphragm to make this happen. The belly expands on the inhale, and contracts on the exhale.
4. Slow the breath down. Count 4-5 seconds on the inhale, and 5-6 seconds on the exhale. Continue breathing like this for 10-20 minutes.



Apps to pace your breath:

Breathe +

Breathe Deep

Breathe 2 Relax

4-7-8 Breath

1.



Breathe in through your nose
for a count of 4

2.



Hold for a count of 7

3.



Exhale for a count of 8 (flubbing
out your lips)

Tip: Keep your tongue on the roof of your mouth, right behind your teeth.

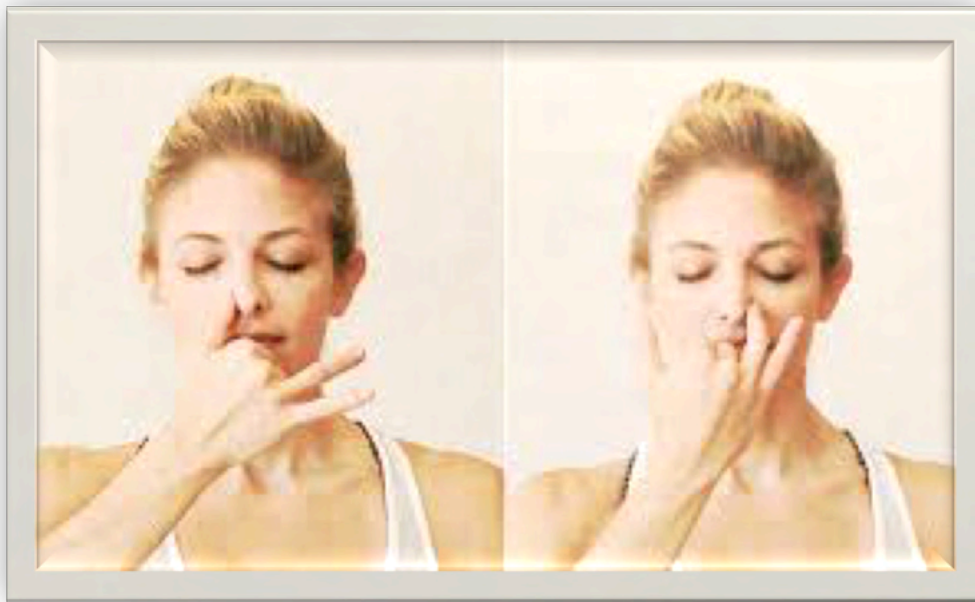
You can choose to make the counts longer or slower, but try to maintain the same ratio.

Alternate Nostril Breathing

Alternate nostril breathing is a great way to stimulate parasympathetic activity. Many people use this technique as a sleep aid.

1. Take your left thumb and cover your left nostril. Breathe deeply through your right nostril. Hold your breath at the top of the inhale.
2. Take your left ring finger and close your right nostril, while releasing your left thumb from your left nostril (alternating nostrils). Breathe out. Let all of the air exhale.
3. Now breathe *in* through that *same* left nostril. Hold at the top.
4. Switch back to covering your left nostril and open your right nostril. Exhale all the way through your right nostril.
5. Repeat this sequence for a total of 5-10 rounds.

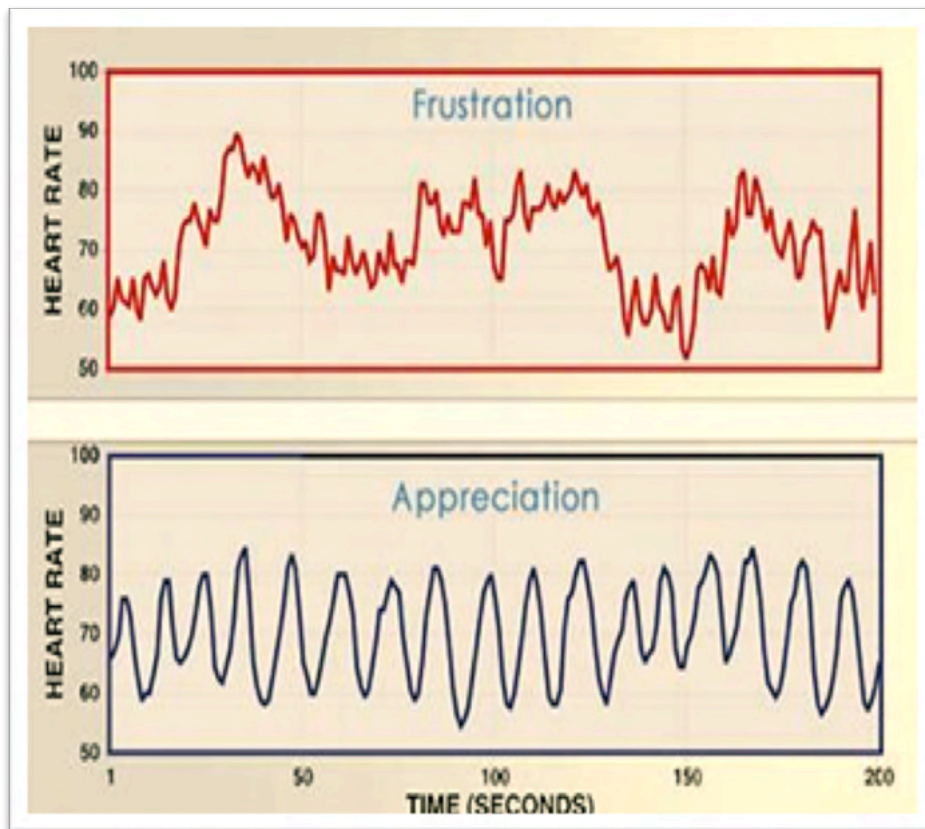
Note: you will complete one exhale and one inhale before switching nostrils.



Heart Breathing

- Place one or two hands on over your heart.
- Take some deep breaths in and out of your heart space, as if you were breathing through your heart.
- Think of something you are grateful for, or something that makes you feel comforted, at ease, and loved (such as a person or pet).

Your heart rate, or “heart rate variability” (HRV), looks very different depending on whether you are feeling tense, angry, or frustrated versus relaxed, grateful, or at ease.



Source: HeartMath (heartmath.com)

Introduction to Mindfulness

What is mindfulness?

Mindfulness is a way of paying attention to what is happening internally and externally. We observe our experiences in this present moment and treat them with kindness and compassion.

Why should I practice mindfulness?

Ever feel like your mind is running at 100 miles/hour? Or you have so many thoughts about the future or past that you can't focus? All of us experience this. By practicing concentration and mindful awareness, we can learn to not get so caught in our whirlwind of thoughts and emotions. We calm our minds and bodies by paying more attention to what is happening right here, right now. Paying attention with kindness increases our resilience to stress.

Some benefits of mindfulness:

- Stress or overwhelm
- Clinical symptoms like anxiety or depression
- Concentration and focus
- Emotional awareness and emotion regulation
- Impulse control/self-control
- Greater kindness and compassion towards self and others
- Improved parasympathetic/sympathetic balance
- Decreased levels of pro-inflammatory cytokines
- Greater tolerance to pain and discomfort



Mindfulness of the Breath

Paying attention to the breath is a wonderful tool to bring us into the present moment. It is best to carve out some time (e.g., in the morning, before bed) to practice mindfulness of the breath. But we can really practice this anywhere, anytime – thankfully, both mindfulness (awareness) and the breath are portable, so you can practice wherever you are.

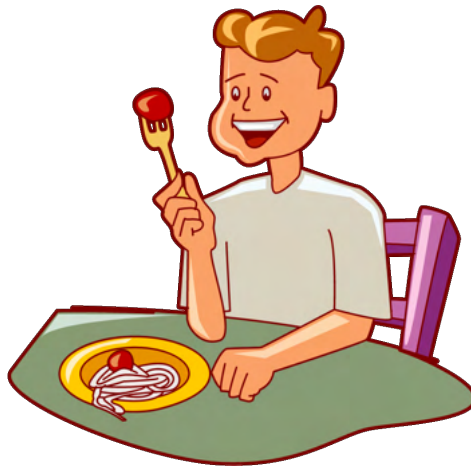
- 1. Sit in a comfortable position. If possible, try to keep your spine tall; the rest of your body is soft and relaxed. Take a couple of deep breaths. Feel the support of the chair/floor/cushion underneath you.**
- 2. Notice that you are breathing. Observe the qualities of the breath: is it choppy or smooth? Deep or shallow? Are the inhales longer than the exhales, or vice versa? Whatever you notice is perfectly okay. No need to change it or make it any different.**
- 3. See if you can find an anchor point, such as the belly or the tips of the nostrils, where you feel the breath most vividly. Now simply rest here. Feel the sensation of the inhales and exhales as they move in and out. The mind will wander – no problem. This will happen over and over again, each time providing us an opportunity to practice mindfulness. Simply observe when the mind wanders (maybe kindly note, “*mind wandering*”), and gently bring your attention back to the breath again (and again, and again).**



Mindful Eating

Mindfulness isn't only about following our breath on a cushion. We can be mindful anywhere, with whatever we are doing. In each moment, you can be aware of the sounds, smells, tastes, sights, and external sensations happening around you. Here is a practice where we apply our awareness to what we eat. Try this at home during dinner, or anytime you are curious about the wonderful world of food and taste.

- 1. Begin by observing the food item. What do you notice about it? Are there things that you haven't noticed before about this same food item? Smell it. What do you notice?**
- 2. Slowly bring the food item to your lips, tongue, and finally your mouth. Notice the sensation in your mouth. Try to describe it with descriptive words (e.g., salty, sweet, spicy) rather than judging words (e.g., good, bad, love/hate it). Notice the sensations in your body when you taste this food. Are you having any thoughts? Emotions? Automatic reactions?**
- 3. If you choose, consider where the food came from. What were all of the steps to get it here? Did it have to be grown? Shipped across the country? Cleaned, prepared, and cooked by someone? Consider how lucky you are to enjoy the taste and nutritional benefits of this food item.**
- 4. Continue to eat mindfully. Repeat and tell a friend.**



Mindfulness of Sounds

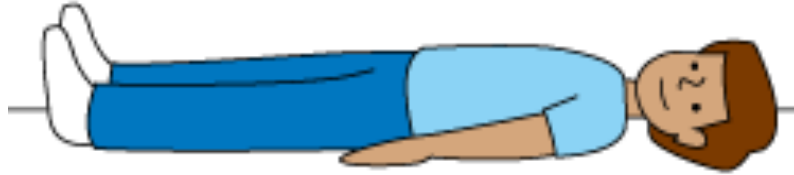
Paying attention to the sounds around us is one way to build a mindful “muscle.” When we notice the mind getting pulled back into thoughts or other distractions, we mindfully bring it back to sounds (which are always occurring in the present moment). This kind of external awareness also helps our brain with the “orienting” function, a process that makes us feel safe, relaxed, and in-tune with our environment. Paying attention in this way can stimulate the parasympathetic, i.e., relaxation, part of our nervous system.

1. **Bring your attention to sounds in the environment. Maybe start with a “scan” of all the sounds, or create a mental “checklist” of everything you can hear.**
2. **Either continue to explore different sounds, or perhaps settle your attention on one sound, in particular (e.g., something soothing, like birds chirping).**
3. **When the attention wanders away from sound, just notice that the mind has wandered, and gently bring it back to focusing on sound.**

Tip: When you feel overwhelmed or stressed out during the day (e.g., at work), take a couple minutes to explore the sounds in the room. You can also do this with sight, or any of the other senses.



Body Scan



Body scans are a great way to reclaim the connection between the central nervous system (brain and spinal cord) and peripheral nervous system (rest of body). It also helps sharpen our present-moment attention with continued practice.

- 1. Sit or lie in a comfortable position. Take a couple of deep belly breaths to settle in.**
- 2. Start out by noticing how your entire body feels. Maybe send some deep breaths throughout the body or in places of tension.**
- 3. Bring your attention to your toes and feet. Notice any physical sensations here. What do you notice? Tingling? Pulsating? Pressure? Pain? Temperature? Clothing? Itchiness? Just notice. Whatever you discover is perfectly okay—no need to make it stay, go away, or change it in any way. Just bring compassionate awareness to these sensations.**
- 4. Repeat this moving all the way up through the body, including the ankles, lower legs, upper legs, hips, groin, lower back, middle back, upper back, stomach, chest, neck, shoulders, arms, hands, face, and head.**
- 5. When the attention wanders off into thought, just notice this and bring it back to the physical sensations that you feel in that part of the body. With practice, your attention will grow stronger.**

Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR)

PMR is a technique that has been around for decades. It can help with muscle tension, anxiety, and activating parasympathetic (“rest, digest, and heal”) activity. Not only does our brain send signals to our muscles, but it also receives signals from them. Thus, if our muscles are tight, our brain receives a message that we must be anxious; but if our muscles are relaxed, our brain perceives our body and environment as safe, relaxed, and open.

1. Sit or lie in a comfortable position. Take a couple of deep belly breaths to settle in.
2. Start out by noticing how your entire body feels. Maybe send some deep diaphragmatic breaths throughout the body or in places of tension.
3. Starting with the face, scrunch up those muscles for ~3-5 seconds (hold tight!)... then let go for ~5 - 10 seconds. *Notice how your muscles in the face feel. Can you notice the difference between a relaxed and tense state?*
4. Repeat this same procedure all the way through your body, covering the neck, shoulders, arms, hands, chest, belly, hips, groin, upper and lower legs, and feet. Notice how your body feels.
5. With practice, you can learn to simply notice and release tension (without squeezing) during your normal day.



Grounding

Grounding helps bring us into the here-and-now. This can be especially helpful when we feel emotionally overwhelmed. Grounding in our environment activates parts of the brain that regulate safety, calm, and connectedness.

Technique #1:

Feel your feet on the floor. Feel the energy of your body move down towards your feet. You might imagine that your feet have roots going deep into the ground.



Technique #2:

Let your eyes wander around the room (or the external environment, if you are outside), wherever they'd like. If something soothing catches your eye, let your attention rest there. Notice as many detail as possible: shape, color, texture, patterns, depth, the way light plays off it, etc. Rest here.

You may do the same with sounds: scan your environment for sounds. If you find something soothing, such as the birds chirping, rest your attention on this sound.



Technique #3:

Name objects in your environment, e.g., "chair," "desk," "pillow."
Name what color they are.

Or

Name 5 things you can see; 4 things you can hear; 3 things you can touch; 2 things you can smell; 1 thing you can taste.



Gratitude

Gratitude is one of the strongest predictors of life satisfaction. Try to get in the habit of practicing gratitude every day. Some suggests are:

- Make a list of things you are grateful for.
- Mentally note what you are grateful for once a day, such as in the morning or before bed.
- Express gratitude to others.
- Take a walk and appreciate the beauty you see.
- Practice “heart breathing” (see Heart Breathing exercise) and bring to mind someone, or something, that brings you joy.



15 Sleep Hygiene Tips

1. Go to bed around the same time each night
2. Follow the same routine before bed (*for example: brush teeth, put on PJs, get in bed, read book*). This signals your brain that it is time to sleep.
3. Limit electronic device use before bed. Blue light from electronic screens mimics sunlight in that it inhibits the release of melatonin, which keeps us feeling awake. If you have blue lights in your room (e.g., on a cable box or fan), cover them up or remove them.
4. Do NOT bring electronics into bed with you. You do not want to associate being “awake” with the place you are supposed to be sleeping.
5. Limit caffeine and nicotine use.
6. Limit alcohol use.
7. If you find yourself unable to fall asleep for a period of time, get out of bed for a while and return when you feel ready to sleep. You want your brain to associate your bed with sleep – not alertness and frustration.
8. Avoid daytime naps if it makes you feel less tired at night.
9. Avoid large meals right before bed. At the same time, try not to go to bed hungry.
10. Engage in a relaxation technique before bed, such as a breathing exercise.
11. Make your sleeping environment as dark as possible. Use a sleep mask if necessary.
12. Exercise during the day.
13. Avoid working on anything too stimulating before bed.
14. Write down and be curious about your dreams.
15. See your doctor if you are still having trouble sleeping.



PART III:
STRESS-REDUCTION
RESOURCES

Resources

Apps	
Mindful USC	Mindfulness/Meditation
Headspace	Mindfulness/Meditation
Calm	Mindfulness/Meditation
Insight Timer	Mindfulness/Meditation
Waking Up	Mindfulness/Meditation
Breathe2Relax	Paced Breathing
Breathe +	Paced Breathing
State	Breath Exercises
Wim Hof Method (WHM)	Breath Exercises
Inner Balance	Biofeedback/Relaxation (Order sensor from HeartMath.com)

Books	
Wherever You Go, There You Are or Full Catastrophe Living (John Kabat Zinn)	Mindfulness
Self-Compassion: The Proven Power of Being Kind to Yourself (Kristen Neff)	Self-Compassion
The Mindful Path to Self-Compassion: Freeing Yourself from Destructive Thoughts and Emotions, (Christopher Germer and Sharon Salzberg)	Self-Compassion/Mindfulness
Get Out of Your Mind and Into Your Life: The New Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (Steven Hayes)	Mindfulness/Acceptance
The Happiness Trap: How to Stop Struggling and Start Living (Russ Harris)	Mindfulness/Acceptance
Living Beyond Your Pain: Using Acceptance and Commitment Therapy to Ease Chronic Pain (JoAnne Dahl)	Mindfulness/Chronic Pain
Mindsight: The New Science of Personal Transformation (Dan Siegel)	Mindfulness/Neuroscience
Waking the Tiger (Peter Levine)	Stress/Physiology/Trauma
The Body Keeps Score (Bessel van der Kolk)	Stress/Physiology/Trauma

Websites and Online Resources	
mindful.usc.edu	Mindful USC
self-compassion.org	Kristen Neff's website on self-compassion
freemindfulness.org	Free Mindfulness Resources
mindfulness.usc.edu	USC Center for Mindfulness Science
uclahealth.org/marc	UCLA Mindful Awareness Research Center
soundstrue.com	Books, audio programs, podcasts, and resources for

	stress-reduction and health
psycharmor.org	Online courses for military and family members
nicabm.com	National Institute for the Clinical Application of Behavioral Medicine (recourses & online courses)