

# *What is Mindfulness and Why Should I Do it?*



**Mindfulness is like a pause button for your brain that reduces stress and brings you into the current moment.**

Many of us worry about the future and stress over the past.

**You are not alone.**

Mindfulness is physical and mental awareness that comes from noticing the present moment without judgment. This practice is best done through connecting to your breath.



# What is Mindfulness?

Mindful practices have been used for thousands of years to help make you more self-accepting and present in the moment. Mindfulness helps you cope with stress and improve your health by slowing down the mind and body and building your awareness.

## What are the Benefits?

We live in a fast-paced world filled with technology. Mindfulness slows things down so you can appreciate the moment. Anyone can practice mindfulness anywhere and anytime! Your mobility level, location or length of time does not matter.

**Stress Reduction:** Mindfulness helps you combat anxiety and stress-induced diseases by quieting your mind.

**Improving Memory:** Mindfulness increases grey matter in areas of the brain that regulate learning and memory.

**Managing Moods:** Mindfulness helps you build awareness, understand your emotions and let go of negative thoughts.

**Improving Digestion:** Mindfulness increases circulation which is critical to digestive function. By quieting the mind, your body can relax and perform its normal functions properly.

Over time you'll be able to notice your mindfulness exercises getting easier, but like anything else you have to practice!



Try CJE's guided yoga and mindfulness practices at [www.cje.net/cyberclub](http://www.cje.net/cyberclub).

## Where Do I Start?

Try one of the mindfulness exercises below.

- **Deep Breathing (diaphragmatic breath):** Sit or lay down and place a hand above your bellybutton. Count to four while inhaling down into your stomach. Hold your breath and count to six, then exhale while counting to seven. Start small and work your way up to these numbers. The key is breathing deeply.
- **Mindful Eating:** Find a small, simple food like raisins or blueberries. Imagine you've never eaten it before and with each piece consider how it looks, feels, smells and tastes.
- **Body Scanning:** Lay on your back and close your eyes. Focus your attention on your feet and try to release any tension. Move up to your lower leg and do the same. Practice this all the way up to your head. Then open your eyes and notice how you feel.
- **Meditation:** Headspace, Calm and Mindworks are all websites and mobile apps that guide you through meditation exercises. There are free features and memberships available.
- **Nature Therapy:** The sights and sounds of nature decrease stress, depression and anxiety. Take a walk or sit on your porch and noticing sounds, smells, the breeze, the sun etc.
- **Journaling:** Start a routine of writing free-flowing thoughts or list things you are thankful for. Whatever gets you thinking outside of your normal thought cycle.
- **Art/Music Appreciation:** There are countless adult coloring books or Paint by Numbers that will bring your attention to the moment.
- **Yoga:** Through breath and meditation, yoga combines physical, mental and spiritual practices. You can find videos on YouTube to guide you.



# How can CJE SeniorLife help?

We provide the following supportive services:

**CJE Benefits Services**—We are available to help you identify and apply for a broad range of benefits and supportive services available to older adults. Benefits Specialists are SHIP certified to provide guidance on Medicare.

**CJE Care Management Services**—We make assessments, develop Care Plans and refer clients to appropriate services. We work collaboratively with physicians, coordinate home care, guide families and find practical resources that support independence.

**Community Engagement**—We provide education—geared toward your unique group—on well-being, emergency planning, physical, mental and financial health and many other subject areas.

**CJE Counseling Services**—Our Licensed Clinical Social Workers are specialists in the field of mental health services for seniors. We offer individual, family and group psychotherapy, as well as support groups.

**To find out more about our many services and programs, Call CJE SeniorLife at 773.508.1000.**

Since 1972, CJE SeniorLife has been dedicated to helping older adults live better every day connected to the community of their choice with access to trusted care and a full range of services, rooted in Jewish values. We enhance the lives of older adults and their families regardless of religion, sex, race, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or national origin.

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CJE SeniorLife® is a partner with the Jewish United Fund in serving our community.

1181bb.10.2020