

# Mental-Health Starter Kit



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# 10th October 2020 World Mental Health Day

THE THEME FOR WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY THIS YEAR IS  
GREATER INVESTMENT AND GREATER ACCESS TO MENTAL HEALTH  
FOR EVERYONE AND EVERYWHERE.



Now more than ever we are realising the importance of investing in our mental health to cope with and emerge resilient from the numerous challenges this pandemic has posed us with.

We agree that advocating for larger policy level changes to ensure better mental health is important. At the same time, is there something you can you do now to **invest** in your mental health ? And is there something that you can readily **access** to make such an investment ? Yes, there is !

We have curated a starter kit for you consisting of resources that pave the way to a healthier, happier and more fulfilling life. And in line with the theme for this year, this kit is

- **ACCESSIBLE** as it draws from resources you already have
- **FREE** as it is completely free
- **GREAT FOR YOU** as it fosters holistic wellness

What better time to focus on your mental health than on World Mental Health Day, so **BEGIN NOW !**



# What exactly will you be doing ?

YOU HAVE ALL THE RESOURCES YOU NEED FOR WELLNESS AND MENTAL HEALTH WITHIN YOU. WE ARE GOING TO SIMPLY HELP YOU ACCESS THEM. WE HAVE CREATED A THREE WEEK OUTLINE FOR MINDFULNESS PRACTICES THAT WILL HELP YOU ACCESS THESE RESOURCES.

The core practice of *mindfulness* means living life with the awareness of our inner experience. Unless we learn to stay present to what is going on within us, we will be led and often misled by the habits of our mind. Habits of self-blame, other-blame, judgments and chronic worry can over occupy our mind and make us uneasy and in the worst-case scenario unwell.

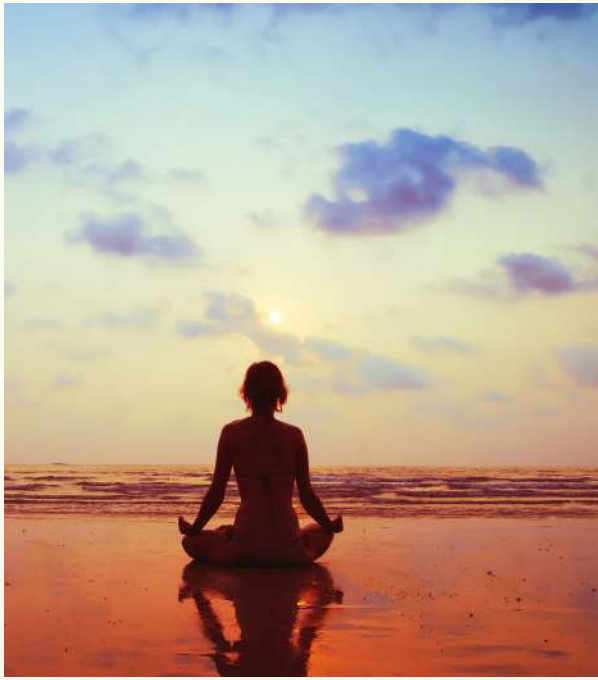


To be mentally healthy, we need to first identify these habits and then practice letting them go in favour of what is really happening in the present.

Mindfulness is being aware of our present from moment to moment, with an attitude of openness, non-judgment and acceptance. By bringing your awareness to what you are directly experiencing via your senses or to your state of mind via your thoughts and emotions, you are enhancing your ability to be mindful !!

# Different Aspects of Mindfulness

BEFORE DELVING INTO THE PRACTICE, LET'S SEE HOW DIFFERENT ASPECTS OF MINDFULNESS CAN HELP YOU FOSTER MENTAL WELLNESS !!



## *Paying Attention*

A large part of why we often find ourselves getting worked up and agitated is because we start attending to all of our minds stories which leads to a never-ending cycle of analysis and distress. While it is the nature of the mind to create stories, you can exercise control and agency by deciding whether and what aspects of your experience and thoughts require your attention.



## *Purpose*

This entails making a conscious choice to attend to what is important and healthy for you at any given moment, rather than getting swayed by every shift of our monkey mind.



## *Present Moment*

How often do we find ourselves dwelling into the past or the future ? Guesses would be very often and with that comes a lot of overwhelming emotions of regret, anxiety, fear, nervousness and more !! The practice of mindfulness is one way to bring ourselves to the only reality that exists, the PRESENT





## *Non-Judgment*

*"People are not disturbed by things, but by the view they take of them"*

An age old saying by Stoic Philosopher Epictetus that we often pass off as a cliché'. However, reality is that our judgments of good or bad, right or wrong, fair or unfair underlie most of our worries. Engaging in the practice of mindfulness is a great way to foster non-judgmental acceptance for your experiences. The hope being that rather than reacting with a harsh or critical message you will be able to respond with kindness and compassion.



## *Compassion*

It is not uncommon for you to feel insecure, jealous and even sad in a world that encourages comparison and competition. Take a moment to imagine how beautiful and relieving it would be to be gentle and compassionate with ourselves and others around us. The practice of mindfulness can aid in generating a new-found openness for self and others, thereby fostering inner peace and wellness.

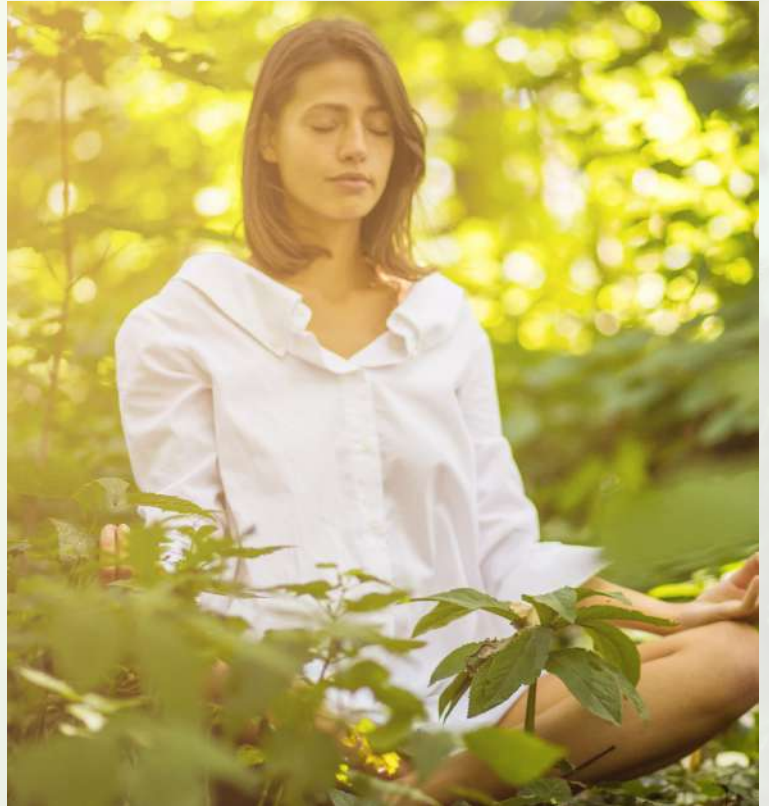


# What does science have to say ?

THE FACT THAT NUMEROUS SCIENTIFIC STUDIES SHOW A CLEAR LINK BETWEEN HAPPINESS, WELLNESS, PHYSICAL AND MENTAL FITNESS TO THE PRACTICE OF MINDFULNESS MAY MAKE THIS PRACTICE MORE APPEALING TO YOU ! SOME OF THE MANY BENEFITS ARE

## 1. It's good for your physical health

The practice of being mindful has been found to not only diminish many chronic health conditions, but also increase your ability to cope and tolerate pain. Additionally, mindful eating has been shown to aid in managing obesity and inculcating healthier lifestyle changes. Better sleep, more energy and improved vitality are some of the many advantages of leading a mindful life.



## 2. It's good for your emotional wellness

The main tenets of mindfulness are in itself geared towards fostering greater happiness and fulfilment in life. By reducing emotional reactivity and rumination, while improving focus and attention you are likely to experience a positive shift in the quality of your life.







**3. It fosters healthier relations**  
Mindfulness aids in creating greater understanding in relations. It enhances your ability to understand and communicate emotions with kindness rather than reactivity. It helps cope with conflicts, build emotional intimacy and cultivate happier relations. A few of the many things that we are all searching for as social beings !

#### **4. It is empowering**

Making a conscious choice regarding your well-being and health in itself is extremely empowering. You can choose to be mindful, you can choose to not get lost into the many narratives of your mind and you can choose to be gentle and kind to yourself in the face of challenges.

#### **5. You can start now**


Tools for practicing mindfulness are readily available to all. The simplest being anchoring onto our breath. Yes, the BREATH, something that is omnipresent and free of cost can be a great place to start being mindful. Just noticing your breath now as you read this, counts as step towards being mindful!





# 5 Reasons to Befriend Your BREATH

THE BREATH IS ALWAYS THERE, SERVING AS AN ANCHOR IN THE PRESENT MOMENT. IT IS A GREAT TOOL TO ENGAGE IN THE PRACTICE OF MINDFULNESS AND MEDITATION. WHILE THOUGHTS, EMOTIONS, SOUNDS AND SENSATIONS CAN COME AND GO, THE BREATH IS ALWAYS IN THE NOW



**Mindful breathing brings  
calm and relief to the  
mind and body**

**Thich Nhat Hanh**

## **1. The Breath Remains**

Take a moment to notice your breathing ! There is a gentle pace to it, it flows in and out. The breath in itself is not focused on reaching a specific count or becoming efficient. It is what it is! That's what makes it a great tool to learn from. Some of the many lessons that we can learn from our breath are the natural pace, rhythm and the un-fussiness in each breath.

## **2. The Breath Teaches us Resilience**

The natural tendency of the mind is to wander, ruminate, fix or avoid. Our fast-paced lives have made it difficult for us to be still and that's exactly what the breath teaches us. Imagine getting perturbed and distressed by every googly and bouncer life throws at us. By practicing to bring your attention to our breath, you can learn to be resilient and present in the face of difficulties and temptations.



### **3. The Breath Connects us to our Body:**

Most of us experience with our heads and while that is ok, anchoring to the breath can allow us to experience with our senses too. The breath can forge a deep connection between the mind and the body, allowing you to engage in present moment sensing. Of all the joys, the greatest is to be fully alive !

### **4. The Breath Fosters Curiosity and Openness:**

Delve a little deeper and you will notice the subtle differences in each breath—the duration, intensity and sensations. Although fairly simple, isn't breathing a rather mysterious process ? To be mindful of how each breath travels in and out can train us to be more curious. And this in turn may lead us to view often mundane events in our daily life with greater curiosity.

### **5. The Breath Allows us to Rest and Revive:**

Have you noticed that when you are anxious or on the move, your breath is shallow and quick, and the heart seems to be beating faster? As the breath slows does, you find yourself feeling calmer and the body returns to it's balance. Taking out a few minutes of our rather frantic lives can allow us to recover and rejuvenate ourselves. Think of it as a free spa day !!



# Begin Your Journey towards Wellness and Awareness: Start Your Practice Today

A GREAT WAY TO PRACTICE MINDFULNESS IS THROUGH SILENT AWARENESS OR MEDITATION- AN EXPERIENTIAL PRACTICE THAT FOCUSES ON DEEPLY CONNECTING WITH YOUR MIND. GIVEN BELOW IS A FREE 3 WEEK COURSE THAT CONSISTS OF 3 MEDITATION PRACTICES THAT CAN BE HELPFUL TO BEGIN WITH AS YOU EMBARK ON THIS JOURNEY TOWARDS WELLNESS !

## HOW TO DO THE COURSE ?

You can practice each of the meditations for a span of 1 week before moving to the next, alternatively, you could practice a different meditation every day for the next 3 weeks.



## 1.BREATHING MEDITATION

One of the simplest forms of meditation, this practice aims at fostering awareness of the breath. Having understood why become aware of the breath, start your practice by finding a calm room. Sit in a comfortable and relaxing position, while being mindful of the posture. Gently bring awareness to the breath over and over again in the next few minutes, training the mind to be in the here and now !!

Use this link for a 10 min guided breathing meditation practice:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PriMk7m99ds> (English Audio)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z5sBl7pRVec&list=PLnm\\_TbTXJzfNXceSL-hozpL4bigoldnR4&index=2](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z5sBl7pRVec&list=PLnm_TbTXJzfNXceSL-hozpL4bigoldnR4&index=2) (Hindi Audio)



## 2. MOUNTAIN MEDITATION

We often find ourselves getting fearful, nervous and sometimes even paralysed in the face of difficult life circumstances and overwhelming emotions. As the name suggests, the practice of mountain meditation is designed to cultivate stillness and resilience in order to face such adversities. It aims to foster your inner strength and stability in the face of both internal and external challenges. Sit, envision and embody the resilience of a mountain as you engage in this meditation practice!

**Use this link for a guided mountain meditation practice:**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C\\_lmHtMtpIg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C_lmHtMtpIg) (English Audio)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x3IzH0AU0SA> (Hindi Audio)



### 3. METTA MEDITATION

The beauty of this meditation practice lies in the discovery of your capacity for loving kindness both for yourself and for others. The essence being that developing compassion towards ourselves and our emotions enables us to be more accepting of others around us. Now more than ever, the human race is realizing the importance of compassion for one another as we lead interdependent lives. Engage in this practice and you will be amazed at your capacity to foster loving kindness both for yourself and other !

**Use this link for a guided metta meditation practice:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jxC9x5eg1Y0> (English Audio)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LPOYnDl6ZJY> (Hindi Audio)





# ABC of Mindfulness : A Gentle Reminder

## A- Awareness

Check in with yourself and notice what is going on. Be mindful of the temptation to judge and label what we observe. Simply notice with a non-judgmental attitude



## B- Breath

Anchor in the present by focusing on the breath. Take 3 mindful breaths. Notice each breath fully. Notice the breath travelling into and exiting the body each time. Do this a minimum of three times before moving on to 'C'.



## C- Compassion

Now that you have tuned into the present moment, keep that softness and tenderness alive. Be kind and gentle with yourself!



**Tip: You could take a screenshot of this image, print and put it up on the wall, mirror, diary or journal to serve as a daily reminder !!**



We hope this starter kit has been helpful and had encouraged you to embark on a journey of fostering happiness, resilience and mindful wellness. If you have enjoyed this starter kit, you might be interested in learning more about our mindfulness programs. For the same, you can use the following link to subscribe to our youtube channel.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCKUGZFYCVkANOrkS6nzphZg>

Official website

[www.innerspacetherapy.in](http://www.innerspacetherapy.in)