



Hello again! APC Psychologist Tyler here with another newsletter for all. Today I will be talking about mindfulness, something that we all may have at least heard about, but what does this actually entail?

Mindfulness can be defined as **awareness and acceptance** of one's own inner experiences (Psychology Today, n.d.). It is often practiced as a part of yoga and does traditionally have roots in Buddhist practice. What if I don't like to do yoga? I hear you. Yoga is one way to practice mindfulness, and if you do yoga, that's great! There are other ways to functionally practice mindfulness that you may find more appealing. The concept of mindfulness was adapted in the 1970s by Dr. Jon Kabat-Zinn who termed it Mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) and created a program around it to take some of the therapeutic aspects of yoga and Buddhism without some of the spiritual elements. MBSR has been found to improve symptoms of anxiety, depression and stress, increase cognitive capacity, and help with pain management to name a few things (Healthline, 2022).

To break down what is going on during mindfulness, there are two stress pathways in our brain that the act of mindfulness seems to impact, and these seem to influence the parts of our brain that have to do with **attention** and **emotional regulation** (Creswell et al., 2019). Both of these aspects are impeded when we are experiencing common mental health disorders such as anxiety, depression or extreme stress (Tang et al., 2015). Knowing that, you are able to activate these functions by doing anything that forces you to pay attention to your body. This can explain why even simply taking a deep breath can help alleviate stress.



It is more effective if you practice mindfulness in a way that is **meaningful to you**. Some quick examples of activities that engage our brains in mindfulness-like ways are box-breathing, doing art, journalling, and more! Many of these things can be done in a matter of seconds, so if you feel too busy to fit mindfulness exercises into your day, you can do these while completing everyday routines or on your commute.

Here are a couple of links to some websites that have several examples of mindfulness exercises you can do. There is quite the range, so hopefully some of them are a good match for you!

[21 Mindfulness Exercises & Activities For Adults \(+ PDF\) \(positivepsychology.com\)](#)

[Mindfulness Activities: Easy Mindfulness Exercises for Any Age \(healthline.com\)](#)

I hope this provides some value to you and that there is application you can pull from this. If you would like to discuss more about how this can benefit you, feel free to book an appointment with me.

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### References

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