

Mindfulness Resources

Mindfulness Definitions:

- *"Paying attention, on purpose, in the present moment, nonjudgmentally, for the cultivation of wisdom and compassion" -Jon Kabat-Zinn*
- *"Mindfulness is simply being aware of what is happening right now without wishing it were different; enjoying the pleasant without holding on when it changes (which it will); being with the unpleasant without fearing it will always be this way (which it won't)." ~James Baraz*
- *"Mindfulness is a state of active, open attention on the present. When you're mindful, you observe your thoughts and feelings from a distance, without judging them good or bad. Instead of letting your life pass you by, mindfulness means living in the moment and awakening to experience. -Psychology Today*
- *"In nearly all Asian languages, the word for mind and the word for heart are the same word. So when you hear mindfulness, you really need to hear the word heartfulness." -Jon Kabat-Zinn*
- *"Mindfulness is an act of love." -Unknown*

What is Mindful Awareness: (Three attentional skills working together)

1. The ability to focus on what you want, when you want.
2. The ability to observe and understand your sensory experience (seeing, hearing, tasting, touching, smelling, mental experiences)
3. The ability to let your experience come and go without pushing or pulling
-Presented by Shinzen Young

Sustaining a Meditation Practice:

- **Start With Why:** If you don't know *why* you want to meditate (i.e. how will it serve you? Improved relationships, reduced stress, be more present for your children) then it's going to be very difficult to find the motivation to take the time out of your day to do it. Start with WHY.
- **Commit to Set Period:** You don't need to endeavor to meditate for the rest of your life. Allow that to unfold in it's own time. For now, commit to something more short-term that feels realistic and attainable. Try 15-minutes a day for 30-days. Really commit to it, whether you feel like meditating or not, just do it. Make it a habit like brushing your teeth.
- **Meditation Buddy:** Accountability is huge when it comes to starting a new habit. Find a friend or family member interested in meditating or starting a new habit, and text each other day to make sure you followed through. You can also hire a coach for accountability at: (<http://www.coach.me>)
- **1-Minute Per Day:** I suggest starting your first month with 15-minutes. However, if after that, it feels like too much, and you notice yourself slipping, commit to just 1-minute. Everyone has 1-minute, and it's hard to argue yourself out of it. However, once most people begin, they sit for longer 😊

Hints & Reminders for Mindfulness:

- **Take 5**
 - Trace your pointer finger up and down each of your five fingers in the other hand. As you slide up the finger, inhale slowly through the nose, and as you slide down, exhale slowly through the mouth. This takes less than 30 seconds and can help ground and calm you in the present.
- **STOP**
 - STOP is an acronym: *Stop, Take a Breath, Observe, Proceed*
 - When you find yourself lost in rumination, stress, or anxiety, use STOP to check-in with yourself, notice what your mind is focusing on, reground in the present, and then proceed from there
- **RAIN**
 - RAIN is another acronym: Recognize, Allow, Investigate, and Nurture
 - You can use this to work with difficult experiences as they arise. First notice the experience, allow it to be there without fighting, explore what it feels like and what the mind is doing in relationships to it (e.g. fighting, resisting, pouting, etc.) and then show yourself compassion, perhaps with a phrase like: "I'm here for you. We got this."
- **"What if?" to "What is?"**
 - Often our minds are creating a story about "what if this happens" or "what if I get rejected" or "what if I don't do well." This sort of negative rumination about the future can be paralyzing and can cause great stress. When you notice this happening, shift your "what if" to "what is." Tune into what is here right now. Feel your feet on the floor. Notice what you can see around you. What can you hear? Reground.
- **What's Here Now?**
 - This is similar to the above strategy, but I like to use this question more as a mantra throughout the day, periodically checking in to see "what's here now?" Again, we can be easily swept away by thoughts, judgments, ideas, and stories. Sometimes this is great! But it's also important to be able to connect with what is *actually* here.
- **Listen to Understand, Not Respond**
 - Have you had the experience in conversation of thinking about what you're going to say next before the other person has stopped talking? If so, you're not alone! This isn't always a *bad* thing, but notice how you might miss certain things the other person is saying by getting caught up in what *you* want to say. See if you can *listen to understand* instead of *listening to respond*.
- **Presence in Daily Activities:**
 - Mindfulness is not just about focusing on your breath. In fact, one could argue that the only reason we would meditate would be to bring more mindfulness in our daily lives. Well, why wait? See if you can bring mindfulness to your daily activities-- Eating, showering, driving, brushing your teeth, etc. These are all opportunities for mindfulness.

Mindfulness Resources

Apps:

- **Simple Habit**
 - This app focuses primarily on shorter, 5-minute meditations on a variety of topics. Cory is one of the primary teachers on this app.
- **Headspace**
 - Headspace is one of the most well-known meditation apps on the market with a variety of meditations of varying lengths.
- **Calm**
 - This app is very similar to headspace and offers a variety of meditations of varying lengths.
- **Insight Timer App**
 - Insight Timer offers guided meditations, but it's most popular for offering a simple bell to start and end your meditation. It's also cheaper than the apps mentioned above.

Free Guided Meditations:

- Type the following keywords into Google:
 - MindfulnessExercises.com
 - UCLA Mindful Awareness Research Center
 - Tara Brach Guided Meditations

Podcasts:

- Simple Habit Podcast (led by Cory Muscara)
- On Being
- 10% Happier
- The Meditation Podcast

Talks & Teachings:

- **Dharma Seed**
 - This is a compendium of thousands of meditation talks given by hundreds of different teachers around the world. Keep in mind that many of these talks will have a Buddhist slant, but they are rich in content and instruction around cultivating a meditation practice, what the roots of meditation are, and how to refine your practice
- **Audio Dharma**
 - Similar to Dharma Seed, this site offers many different talks by many different teachers.
- **Mindfulness with Jon Kabat-Zinn**
 - Type these keywords into Google and you will find one of JKZ's most popular mindfulness talks with over 3MM views. It's an hour long, but gives a great overview of mindfulness
- **All it Takes is 10 Mindful Minutes, Andy Puddicombe**
 - Type these keywords into Google for a great Ted Talk by Headspace founder, Andy Puddicombe

Mindfulness Resources

Books:

- **Business**
 - *Search Inside Yourself*, Chad Meng Tan
 - *Mindful Work*, Eamon Dolan
 - *The Mindfulness Edge*, Matt Tenney

- **Chronic Pain**
 - *You are not Your Pain*, Vidyamala Burch
 - *The Mindfulness Solution to Pain*, Jackie Gardner-Nix

- **General**
 - *Full Catastrophe Living*, Jon Kabat-Zinn
 - *Wherever You Go There You Are*, Jon Kabat-Zinn
 - *Mindfulness in Plain English*, Bhante Henepola Gunaratana
 - *Mindfulness: An Eight-Week Plan*, Mark Williams and Danny Penman
 - *The Miracle of Mindfulness*, Thich Nhat Hanh

- **Kids (Teaching Mindfulness to Kids):**
 - *Sitting Still Like a Frog*, Eline Snel
 - *Ready, Set, Breathe*, Carla Naumburg
 - *Planting Seeds: Practicing Mindfulness with Children*, Thich Nhat Hanh

- **Kids (Mindfulness books for kids)**
 - *Mindful Money, Happy Panda*, Lauren Alderfer
 - *Peaceful Piggy Meditation*, Kerry Lee MacLean
 - *A Pebble for Your Pocket*, Thich Nhat Hanh

- **Parents**
 - *Parenting in the Present Moment*, Carla Naumburg
 - *The Whole Brain Child*, Dan Siegel
 - *The Mindful Child*, Susan Kaiser Greenland
 - *Everyday Blessings*, Myla and Jon Kabat-Zinn

- **Self-Compassion / Heartfulness**
 - *Real Happiness*, Sharon Salzberg
 - *Radical Acceptance*, Tara Brach

- **Skeptics**
 - *10% Happier*, Dan Harris
 - *The Mindful Geek: Mindfulness Meditation for Skeptics*, Michael Taft

- **Trauma**
 - *The Body Keeps the Score*, Bessel van der Kolk
 - *Mindfulness-Oriented Interventions for Trauma*, Victoria Follette et al.

Mindfulness Resources

Retreat Centers

- **Long Island Center for Mindfulness**, Long Island
 - If you are looking for secular mindfulness retreat that is local, Cory offers weekend meditation retreat a few times a year in Wading River, as well as longer retreats outside of the Long Island area.
- **Insight Meditation Society (IMS)**, Massachusetts
 - IMS offers a variety of silent meditation retreats (most of which are Buddhist-based) of varying lengths, ranging from a few days to several months, from meditation teachers all over the world
- **Spirit Rock**, California
 - Spirit Rock is essentially the “Insight Meditation Society” of the West Coast, although, I would argue, that the location is much more scenic!
- **Omega**, Upstate New York
 - Omega is a gorgeous retreat center that offers a number of retreats with different themes (mindfulness, yoga, energy healing, nutrition, trauma, etc.) all throughout the year. Visit eomega.com for more info.
- **Kripalu**, Massachusetts
 - Kripalu is very similar to Omega in its intention and offerings, just located in Massachusetts instead of New York. Beautiful location.
- **IBME**
 - This organization is devoted to running mindfulness retreats specifically for teens. They offer a variety of programs around the country, often in scenic places surrounded by nature
- **Goenka Retreats**, Global
 - You may have heard of someone going on a “10-Day Silent Retreat.” Most likely, it was a Goenka meditation retreat. If you’re looking to take a deep dive into meditation, this is a no-nonsense way of diving in. You’ll be meditating most of the day in silence for 10-Days. These retreats are offered all around the country and world, and can be a very powerful for people looking to deepen their meditation practice.

Mindfulness Organizations in US:

- There are a number of organizations around the country that are research, teaching, and exploring mindfulness. A few that may be helpful resources are listed below:
 - **Benson-Henry Institute for Mind Body Medicine**
 - **Center for Investigating healthy Minds (CIHM)**
 - **Center for Mindfulness at UMass Medical School**
 - **Duke Integrative Medicine**
 - **Greater Good Science Center at UCLA**
 - **Holistic Life Foundation**
 - **Mind & Life Institute**
 - **Mindful.Org**
 - **Mindful Schools**
 - **Mindful Awareness Research Center (MARC) at UCLA**

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Mindfulness Research:

- Visit www.goarma.org to receive a monthly email on new mindful research

Representative Work-Related Benefits of Mindfulness Training

Decreased mind-wandering ¹	Increased emotional resilience ¹⁰
Increased focus ¹	Improved mood and wellbeing ⁹
Improved working memory ²	Increased creative thinking ¹²
Improved critical cognitive skills ^{1, 2, 4}	Improved moral reasoning and ethical decision making ^{13, 14}
Reduced test-anxiety ^{3, 6}	
Improved concentration ^{4, 5}	Reduced sunk-cost bias ¹⁵
Reduced symptoms of stress ^{5, 6, 11}	Improved negotiation outcomes ¹⁶
Reduced burnout ⁷	Improved rational decision making ¹⁷
Improved immune function ⁸	

1. Mrazek, Franklin, et al, (2013) **Mindfulness Training Improves Working Memory Capacity and GRE Performance While Reducing Mind Wandering**, *Psychological Science*.
2. Jha AP, et al (2010). **Examining the protective effects of mindfulness training on working memory capacity and affective experience**. *Emotion*.
3. Verplanken, B. & Fisher, N. (2013). **Habitual worrying and benefits of mindfulness**. *Mindfulness*.
4. Zeidan, F. et al (2010). **Brief Meditative Exercise Helps Cognition**. *Consciousness and Cognition*.
5. Levy, D. and Wobbrock, J. (2012). **Mindful multitasking: Meditation first can calm stress, aid concentration**. *Proceedings of Graphics Interface*.
6. Zeidan, F et al, (2013). **Neural correlates of mindfulness meditation-related anxiety relief**. *Social, Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience*.
7. Cohen-Katz, J., et al (2005). **The effects of mindfulness-based stress reduction on nurse stress and burnout: A qualitative and quantitative study**, part iii. *Holist Nurs Pract*.
8. Davidson, R. J., Kabat-Zinn, J., et al. (2003). **Alterations in brain and immune function produced by mindfulness meditation**. *Psychosomatic Medicine*.
9. McCraty, R. et al (2003). **Impact of a workplace stress reduction program on blood pressure and emotional health of hypertensive employees**. *Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine*.
10. Stanley, E., et al (2011). **Mindfulness-based mind fitness training: A case study of a high-stress predeployment military cohort**. *Cognitive and Behavioral Practice*.
11. Wolever, R., et al (2012). **Effective and Viable mind-body stress reduction in the workplace: A randomized controlled trial**. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*.
12. Colzato, L. et al. (2012). **Meditate to create: the impact of focused-attention and open-monitoring training on convergent and divergent thinking**. *Frontiers in Psychology*.
13. Shapiro, S. et al (2012). **Mindfulness-based stress reduction effects on moral reasoning and decision making**. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*.
14. Ruedy, N, Schweizer, M (2010). **In the Moment: The Effect of Mindfulness on Ethical Decision Making**. *Journal of Business Ethics*.
15. Hafenbrack, A et al (2013). **Dibiasing the mind through meditation: Mindfulness and the sunk-cost bias**. *Psychological Science*.
16. Reb, J & Narayanan, J (2013). **The Influence of mindful attention on value claiming in distributive negotiations: evidence from four laboratory experiments**. *Mindfulness*.
17. Kirk, U et al (2011). **Interoception drives increased rational decision-making in meditators playing the ultimatum game**. *Frontiers in Neuroscience*.

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Contact Information & Social Media for Cory Muscara:

- **E-Mail:**
 - cory.muscara@gmail.com
 - This is my preferred contact method. For logistical questions, you can reach my assistant, Donna, at 4Donnalacey@gmail.com
- **Website:**
 - www.LImindfulness.com
 - This is where you can find information on upcoming workshops, courses and retreats
- **Newsletter:**
 - To stay up-to-date on course offerings and tips, subscribe to my newsletter on the homepage of my website: www.LImindfulness.com
- **#CoffeeWithCory:**
 - Each morning I write a brief “though-of-the-day” type message called #coffeewithcory, which I post on all my social media platforms (see below). However, if you would like to subscribe to this and receive a daily email, you may do so on the homepage of my website
- **Social Media:**
 - Facebook: www.Facebook.com/CoryMuscara
 - LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/in/CoryMuscara
 - Instagram: [@CoryMuscara](https://www.instagram.com/CoryMuscara)
 - Twitter: [@CoryMuscara](https://twitter.com/CoryMuscara)