

Mindful Moments



HEAD



HEART



HANDS



HEALTH

Mindful Breathing

Mindful breathing or the act of focusing on breath has been shown to decrease stress and anxiety while increasing endorphins. With great benefits, it seems easy to do, but how to get started?

- » Begin by finding a quiet place and get into a comfortable position – sitting or laying on back.
- » As you bring air into your nostrils, think about it filling your lungs, starting with the bottom filling completely to top. Aim to breath in for a count of 5.
- » As your lungs are completely filled, hold your breath for count of three.
- » Exhale pushing air out mouth. As you do focus on the feeling of emptying lungs completely. Aim for a count of 5 for exhale.
- » Repeat for at least 5 breaths.

Calm Down Jar

Supplies:

- » Clear Jar or Bottle
- » Warm Distilled Water
- » Glitter
- » Clear Glue or Glitter Glue
- » Hot Glue Gun

Directions:

Take and fill jar half way with warm water. Add ¼ cup of glue. Mix until well combined. Once combined, add glitter to liking, recommended

1 Tbs. Using different sizes of glue will add additional interest to jar. Once all glitter has been added, fill remainder of jar with water. Use hot glue gun to apply glue to outside of lip to seal jar. Allow hot glue to cool and dry completely before shaking. Shake and enjoy calming effects of watching the glitter settle.



Journal Prompts

- » What are things that I am good at doing?
- » Describe your favorite memory and what made it so special.
- » What is something you are grateful for?
- » Describe something you love doing.
- » Freely write words that come to your mind.



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Mindful Movement

Being mindful and intentional with movement of your body can allow you to better connect with how you are feeling, be more present, and be more aware of each part of your body. By practicing mindful movements, youth and adults can release tension, increase positive feelings and decrease negativity. As with all exercise, consult with doctor if beginning something new.

Stand Tall

Imagine a string attached to the top of your head, as it gently lifts, you stand taller. You feel your chest lifting, your shoulders go back and down and you feel your hips align under your shoulders. As you take a few deep breaths, allow your hands to open and hold them to your side.

Arm Raises

As you inhale bring your arms from by your side to over your head. Stretch your fingers to the sky. Feel the stretch down your arms, through your back. Exhale and allow your arms to return by your side.

Side Bends

With arms extended over head, bend to right keeping your rib cage pulled up and feeling the stretch on left side. Remain there for 2-3 breaths. Come back to middle and then repeat on opposite side.

Toe Reaches

From your arms raised, dive down and reach toward your toes – arms extended. Feel the stretch down the backs of your legs. Take a couple of deep breaths while reaching toward toes. With each breath, reach a little further.

Back Arch

With arms raised, gently reach up and back. Feeling the stretch in arms and chest. Remember mindful movements are not a competition, but about learning more about your body.

Repeat movements 3-5 times through.

Drawing Prompts

Art is another way youth can express themselves and use as self care. Invite youth to get to a comfortable place, laying on stomach or sitting in a chair. Allow participants time to create art based on prompts:

- » Draw something that makes you happy
- » Draw a sunset
- » Draw a time when you helped someone
- » Squiggle art
- » Doodle



Happy, Sad, Place, Activity

This activity helps young people identify causes or things that might cause an emotion as well as begin the discussion of self care and positive coping strategies. Encouraging youth to self identify ways they can implement self care and help them foster positive coping strategies is an important life skill.

Activity:

- » Make four posters, labeled one happy, one sad, place and activity. Have participants gather together. Share with them that each of us have emotions, or things that make us happy, sad, joyful, stressed, eager, nervous and countless other emotions. With those emotions, we all have different ways that we handle or cope with them. In this activity we will work to identify things that make us feel

happy or sad and things we can do to help us cope with those emotions and identify self-care strategies.

- » Hand out 4 sticky notes to each participant. Ask them to write down or draw a picture of something that makes them happy on one of the sticky notes. Share or ask for some ideas: friends, family, pet, favorite food or others to start them thinking.
- » Once everyone has had a chance to write, allow them to bring them and stick them on the **HAPPY** poster. Review some of the answers, affirm.
- » Ask participants to write down or draw a picture of something that makes them feel sad. Ask participants to fold this so their answer is not showing and place them on the **SAD** poster. Review some, being aware that some youth may share very personal things.
- » Ask participants to write down somewhere that when they are feeling sad helps make them feel better. Remind youth that everyone will have different places that provide joy. Share or ask for some ideas: outside, my room, the gym. Have them bring their sticky notes to the **PLACE** poster. Review.
- » Ask participants to write or draw an activity that makes them feel good. Share or ask for some ideas: going for a walk, journaling, listening to music, or working out. Have them place their ideas on the **ACTIVITY** poster. Review.

Debrief:

Share with participants that while each of us may have had the same or different things that make us happy or sad, we all experience different emotions. The ability to identify those emotions and have effective coping strategies can help improve mental health. Coping strategies are things that

allow us to regulate our emotions and handle a situation. In times of sadness or challenge, being able to think of places and activities that help. Encourage participants to regularly implement self care.



Meditation Videos

- » Be the Pond, Mindfulness for Kids, Cosmic Kids Zen Den, Cosmic Kids Yoga, [<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wf5K3pP2IUQ&t=52s>]
- » Guided Imagery - Age 6 to 12, Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V1-0JJJw_IQ]