

1. Manage Stress and Anxiety

Mindfulness practice helps us notice the impact of stress and anxiety and develop skills to effectively transform stressful situations.

The Practice of Body and Breath - By learning to use our breath and being aware of our thoughts and feelings, and taking time to clear our busy minds, problems can be observed calmly, and more helpful actions taken.

2. Strengthen Cognitive Health and Attention

Mindfulness contributes to greater clarity in executive choice, decision making, and healthy cognitive function. It strengthens our 'mental muscle' for bringing focus back to where we want it, when we want it.

The Practice of 'Waking Up' to the life you have - Switching off the 'auto pilot' and paying attention to our lives in the present moment makes our actions intentional rather than automatic, we can have more choice of action, break old habits and meet challenges with freshness of perception. We can enjoy life more, being fully alive.

3. Model Compassion, Kindness and Gratitude

As mindfulness practice deepens, we develop a stronger capacity for self-care and self-compassion and the ability to nurture, comfort and heal ourselves and others while showing a greater appreciation for our world.

The Practice of Loving Kindness - What we do affects how we feel, we can change what we feel by changing what we do. Being kind to ourselves can raise our mood and enhance wellbeing, being kind towards others will have a positive affect not just on the other person but on ourselves also.

4. Cultivate Awareness and Balance

Mindfulness gives us the skills to be present with our emotions, especially the difficult ones. Mindfulness practice can help reduce their intensity and impact on us and allows for new possibilities and patterns of behaviour.

The Practice of Allowing and Letting Be – allowing difficult thoughts, feelings and sensations mean we willingly allow them to remain in our awareness, without demanding they change or be other than they are. Holding something gently in awareness is an affirmation that we can face it, name it and work with it.

5. Foster Empathy and Connection

Mindful practice is a powerful way to develop a deeper sense of connection with both ourselves and others. Building our capacity for empathy supports us in effective communication, collaboration, and leadership.

Practice of sharing in a circle with deep listening and loving speech - Mindfulness allows us to be more present for others, developing the relationship skills of sharing our thoughts and feelings openly, listening deeply, using loving speech and reconciling conflicts with kindness, understanding and compassion. We respond to what others share without judgement, without giving advice or offering an opinion. In this way we nourish feelings of being seen, heard, understood, valued, and belonging. It builds a sense of connection with ourselves and others and we realise our experience is not unique.

6. Grow Resilience

Mindfulness equips us with resources like patience, flexibility, and equanimity, helping us to cope with adversity. Cultivating positive states of calm, relaxation and peace builds our inner strength to take on the daily challenges we face.

- Start the day with mindfulness – when you open your eyes take five deep breaths to reconnect with your body, notice and accept any thoughts and feelings and do some gentle stretches
- Punctuate the day with breathing spaces, especially in difficult moments, and make time for mindful practice as best you can, even a minute can help
- Befriend your feelings and diffuse automatic reactions, making calm choices instead
- Use kind and loving speech and practice deep listening
- Approach each task with mindfulness, take notice of what you are sensing around you
- Remember the breath, it is your friend, your anchor and is always present with you