

MINDFULNESS

What is mindfulness??

- Simply put...it's noticing what is happening NOW
- Having awareness or taking notice of the present moment (how you are feeling on the inside, how your body feels, what is happening around you, etc.).

Mindfulness Activities for YOU at Home (some activities will help you practice being more mindful while others help you respond or cope with emotions that you notice while you are being mindful):

- Create a mind jar
 - Materials: water or baby oil, glitter, glitter glue and a glass jar (with a lid) or a bottle (with a top)
 - Directions:
 - Pour ½ c water into glass jar or plastic water bottle.
 - You can also choose to use baby oil instead of water. The glitter will still suspend and settle to the bottom.
 - Pour ½ c glitter glue or clear glue in the jar.
 - If you are using loose glitter, add 1-2 tsp to the jar.
 - Fill up the remainder of the jar with water.
 - Shake the jar well to distribute the glitter.
 - If desired, use a hot glue gun or super glue to secure the lid to the jar, as this may prevent water leaking from the jar.
 - Use: The glitter can be viewed as our emotions/thoughts when we are stressed. Everything is swirling around and we can't think clearly. Watch what happens when you are still for a couple moments. Your thoughts are similar to the glitter; after a few moments, everything starts to settle and clear as you take time to calm.
 - Links for prompts to use mind jars
 - <https://www.mindful.org/how-to-create-a-glitter-jar-for-kids/>
 - <https://www.firefliesandmudpies.com/glitter-timers/>
- Write in a journal daily
 - This isn't a graded assignment (spelling and grammar don't matter for this)! This is for you, unless you choose to share it with others.
 - Write your thoughts, what's going on in your day, what you're feeling and why you might be feeling that way.
 - Daily journaling can act as a positive outlet/coping strategy but it can also give you additional awareness and insight into your thoughts and feelings.
- Color!
 - This is a quiet, independent activity. Take your time and focus on the task of coloring. If you make a mistake and go outside of the line, take a deep breath, tell yourself "it's okay," and keep moving forward with your coloring.
 - There are TONS of free coloring pages online with a variety of themes and images.
 - <https://www.crayola.com/featured/free-coloring-pages/>
 - Coloring apps are also available (Happy Color is one example of a coloring app)

- 5 Senses Grounding Exercise
 - Get yourself into a comfortable seated or laying position. Once you're comfortable, take 2-3 deep breaths. Take a moment to notice...
 - Something you can see
 - Something you can touch
 - Something you can hear
 - Something you can smell
 - Something you can taste
 - This activity helps to center yourself and bring you into the present moment!

- Breathing Exercises (we will try to provide visuals and videos to show how to do these exercises)
 - Buddy or Tummy Breathing
 - Grab a favorite stuffed animal or toy and find a comfortable place to lay down on your back (floor, bed). Once you're comfortable, place your toy or stuffed animal ("breathing buddy") on your belly. Keep your eyes open during this breathing exercise so you can watch your breathing buddy move. When your breathing buddy is in place, take a slow deep breathe so the air fills your chest and belly and you see your breathing buddy rise. Let your breathe out slowly and watch your breathing buddy go back down. Repeat.
 - Counted Breathing
 - Find a comfortable place to sit for this exercise (chair or cross-legged on the floor). You can either close your eyes or find an item that you can focus your attention on (if you don't feel comfortable closing your eyes). Once you are comfortable, breathe in (count 1), breathe out (count 2), breathe in (count 3), breathe out (count 4), breathe in (count 5), breathe out (count 6), breathe in (count 7), breathe out (count 8), breathe in (count 9), breathe out (count 10) and repeat.
 - Shape Breathing
 - Breathe in and out while drawing the lines of a shape (can be done in the air with your finger or on paper with a pencil or pen). Pick a shape...we recommend a square. For a square, you would breathe in while drawing the first line, breathe out while drawing the second line, breathe in while drawing the third line, and breathe out while drawing the fourth line. Repeat as many times as you need.
 - Huh Breathing
 - Take a deep breath in and bring your shoulders up to your ears. For your breath out, release you air at a fast pace while making the "huh" sound and drop your shoulders. Repeat this 3-5 times.
 - Dragon Breathing
 - Sit up straight
 - Breathe all the way in
 - Stick your tongue out
 - Breathe out like a dragon

- Nature walks (can be done by walking around your yard or neighborhood OR sitting on the steps/porch outside of where you live)
 - While outside, take a moment to LISTEN. What do you hear? Do you hear birds chirping? Is there a car going by? What you do smell? What can you see? What do you feel?
 - Family challenge: See who can record the most things they can see!! You can make it specific or not...it's up to you!

- Check out YouTube for guided mindfulness/meditation practice
 - Kids Meditation (Stop, Breathe, Think)
 - <https://www.youtubekids.com/search?q=mindfulness+meditation>
 - Here are some guided mindfulness/meditation practices we liked from the link above...
 - Butterfly Body Scan
 - https://www.youtubekids.com/watch?v=56_8aK3cLEA
 - Bulldog Finds His Heartbeat
 - https://www.youtubekids.com/watch?v=GkY8_WIDexQ
 - Bulldog Finds His Quiet Place
 - <https://www.youtubekids.com/watch?v=QKDLEdpRIRE>
 - Fading Tone
 - <https://www.youtubekids.com/watch?v=hzuaKhwskw>

Helpful Apps:

- Calm
- Headspace
 - YouTube has headspace lessons/exercises as well (if you didn't want to download the app...the app takes you step by step and is free).
- Three Good Things: A Happiness Journal
- Breathe, Think Do Sesame (Ages 2-5)
- InsightTimer
- Stop, Breathe & Think Kids

Resources:

<https://blissfulkids.com/what-is-mindfulness-and-how-to-explain-it-to-kids/>

<https://www.firefliesandmudpies.com/glitter-timers/>

<https://www.mindful.org/how-to-create-a-glitter-jar-for-kids/>

<https://www.thepathway2success.com/10-mindfulness-activities-you-can-try-today/>

www.youtube.com and www.youtubekids.com