



Better Together: Mindfulness and Exercise



We live in a fast-paced world, where work and personal life are often mixed together in a blur of activity. We are often focused on getting as much done as we can in a day, that we don't set aside enough time for ourselves. Simply taking time in your busy schedule to be mindful of your emotions, feelings, and senses can help boost your overall wellbeing. Engaging in mindfulness allows you to live in the moment and not focus on the past or future. Practicing mindfulness is something that everyone can benefit from. **Here's how mindfulness can improve your overall health.**

- **Mindfulness improves well-being.** Being mindful makes it easier to savor the pleasures in life as they occur, helps you become fully engaged in activities, and creates a greater capacity to deal with adverse events. By uncovering our own blind spots in terms of patterns of thoughts, feelings, and actions, mindfulness will help to expand our understanding of our own internal environment. This enhanced self-awareness will improve decision-making, academic success, self-esteem, satisfaction with life, and help minimize emotional and interpersonal problems.
- **Mindfulness improves physical health.** If greater wellbeing is not enough of an incentive, scientists have found that in a variety of ways, mindfulness strategies help to enhance physical health. Mindfulness can: help relieve stress, treat heart disease, lower blood pressure, reduce chronic pain, improve sleep quality, and alleviate ongoing physical pain.
- **Mindfulness improves mental health.** In recent years, psychotherapists have turned to mindfulness meditations as an important element in the treatment of a number of problems, including: depression, substance abuse, eating disorders, couples' conflicts, anxiety disorders, and obsessive-compulsive disorder.

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Mindfulness is not only a great way to decrease stress, it is also shown to increase your exercise performance too. Punching, sweating, and grunting out stress is not the only way to go. A study developed by Jon Kabat-Zinn found that increased mindfulness can lead you to make choices that result in more physical activity, aid in behavioral changes that promote physical activity, and foster a more accurate perception of your level of physical activity. Kylie Gates, Les Mills Creative Director, first discovered mindful meditation through teaching fitness classes. Kylie's class included a short 8-10 minute period of relaxation and meditation at the end. She says that the short meditations provide her with clarity and focus.

Most of us, if not all, have had the experience of feeling scattered or a bit overwhelmed at work. To combat these emotions that contribute to stress and discomfort, organizations and businesses are developing interactive ways to help employees alleviate stress. **Here are some ways Employee Health and Wellbeing are engaging employees in stress reduction:**

- On Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, a 15-minute Morning Meditation will be taking place at 8:15am starting October 26. Check out our website for more information.
- On Tuesdays and Thursdays at 4pm, a 15-minute meditation called "Workplace Wind-Down" will be taking place starting October 26. Check out our website for more information.
- Starting October 26 on Mondays at 12pm, and Wednesdays/Fridays at 12:30pm there is a 30-minute Yoga Break at lunch. Check out our website for more information.
- On October 14, join Employee health and Wellbeing for their 3rd Working Well Discussion on Using Mindfulness and Movement to Regain Focus and Reduce Stress. Check out our website for more information.