



The new buzz word, "*Mindfulness*", appears in many circles these days; mindful eating, mindful exercise, books on mindful parenting, mindful gardening and mindful meditation.

Mindful awareness is a state of being; being present with one's body, one's mind and one's experiences, moment by moment or simply put, "bare attention." Living a rushed and demanding life can interfere with our ability to give devoted attention. But what if we could teach our brain to stay focused in times of stress and anxiety? What if we could learn to approach difficult times in our lives with a mental calm? What if we could become skilled at resolving our tangled thoughts and frazzled feelings?

Global researchers have compiled evidence suggesting mindful meditation can boost satisfaction, improve health and reduce burnout in fields ranging from business to social work to education. It can elevate compassion and joy in relationships. Regular practice of mindfulness meditation can result in decrease levels of pain, increased immune response and brain activity as well as general stress reduction.

When we allow our minds to react and judge our moments, suffering becomes our present. In that suffering, the body describes our reaction through sensations of pain or discomfort or our mind describes our reaction through fear which can respond by anger, resentment or depression.

Mindfulness meditation centers on the breath, emotions, sensations and thoughts. Unlike many meditation practices, mindfulness does not focus on emptying thoughts from the mind but rather it teaches how to notice the body's responses to thoughts. The mind is made to think; it is impossible to stop that process. Mindfulness teaches meditators how to respond to one's emotions by softening anger and aggression through focusing on skillful habits that reduce reactivity in times of stress.

Mindfulness can help you make life more manageable by explaining why living fully in both pleasant and unpleasant times can enrich your life. Within an eight week program, you can learn the simple practices that show you how to pay attention to your life so you can make skillful decisions and increase your steadiness under stress.