

Outline for Support Group October 2017:
Mindfulness; Staying in the Present

What is Mindfulness?

“a mental state achieved by focusing one’s awareness on the present moment, while calmly acknowledging and accepting one’s feelings, thoughts, and bodily sensations, used as a therapeutic technique.” (Dictionary.com)

What are the benefits of mindfulness?

From the American Psychological Association:

- Reduced rumination
- Stress reduction
- Improved working memory
- Focus
- Less emotional reactivity
- More cognitive flexibility
- Relationship satisfaction
- Other: self-insight, morality, intuition, and fear modulation
- Health benefits: increased immune functioning, improvement to well-being, reduced psychological distress, increased information processing speed, decrease task effort and having thoughts that are unrelated to task at hand

How does one practice mindfulness?

- Yoga
 - o Find a local yoga class. Interview the instructor to see if they have experience with brain injuries and or individuals with physical limitations.
 - o Search for a local certified yoga therapist in your area:
<http://www.iayt.org/search/custom.asp?id=1156>
 - o Loveyourbrain.com is a website for TBI resources. It has meditation help and yoga videos that accommodate TBI.
<http://www.loveyourbrain.com/yoga-videos/>
- Meditation: guided meditation videos online
 - o <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qzR62JJCMBQ>
 - o <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fpiw2hH-dlc>
 - o <http://www.loveyourbrain.com/meditation-movement/>

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- Meditation apps:
 - o Calm
 - o Headspace
 - o Insight Timer
 - o Breathe
- Diaphragmatic breathing
- Progressive muscle relaxation
- Coloring
 - o <https://www.thebalance.com/free-printable-coloring-pages-for-adults-1358144>
- Journaling
 - o Consider a journaling outline with positive writing prompts.
- Cognitive strategies:
 - o “5-4-3-2-1” Relaxation technique:
 - In your head list 5 things you see, hear, and feel. Then 4 things you see, hear, and feel. Then 3-2-1.
 - o Container exercise
 - o Calm/safe space
- Strategies for crisis moments, severe anxiety:

Coping & Grounding Skills

- Take 3-4 slow, deep breaths
- Count backward from 100 by 3's
- Count colors / shapes in the room
- Study the details of an object
- Visualize a relaxing scene with all 5 senses (ex: at the beach)
- Use positive self-talk statements
- List an animal for each letter A-Z
- Talk to friend/family member
- Listen to your favorite song
- Take a cold shower
- Tense & relax your muscles
- Go for a nature walk
- Hold ice on your hand or neck
- Eat Fireballs or Lemonheads
- Do your favorite stretch
- Put a cold rag on your forehead