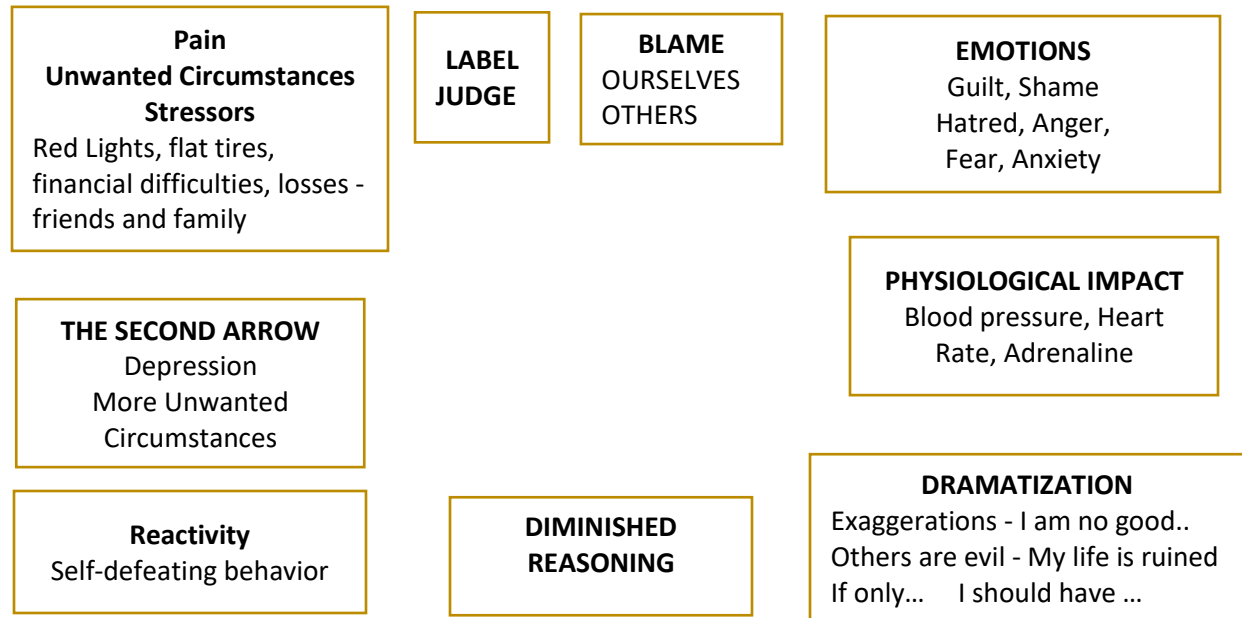


Beginner Meditation

Catastrophizing Cycle



| Problem | Toolkit |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Thoughts | Awareness |
| Problems we cannot change | Letting go (anger and thoughts) |
| Guilt and Shame | Self-Compassion |
| Hatred and Anger | Compassion and forgiveness |
| Anxiety / Sleep | Concentration / Mindfulness |

- Process vs Goal
 - Goal oriented. When I achieve my goals, I will be happy.
 - Process – living by values – Alters our attitude
 - Every day I am growing. I am more: Mindful, Compassionate, Accepting.
 - Every day that I try I am a success.
 - “You are perfect as you are but you still can improve.
- How we relate to experience
 - Mindfulness is a chance to see how you relate to experience which opens us to other options.
 - Optimism or pessimism.
 - Faith and Confidence or fear.
 - Catastrophizing or being realistic.
 - Exaggerating or minimize.
 - Our disposition is how we relate to experience and we can change

Guided Meditation

Key instructions

- Motivation – Intentionality - Why are you meditating. - May I find peace, calmness and contentment. May I be kind to myself and others. May I have realistic expectations of myself

Beginner Meditation

and others. May I have the wisdom to respond constructively to difficult situations. Point of focus is present moment experience

- Kind Attention – be kind to yourself. It is difficult and it takes a while.
- Letting go - We will let go of any preconceived notions of what a meditation should be and just observe what is happening
- Noting - Is a technique to help you maintain attention. I am breathing in, I am breathing out. I am angry.

For beginning meditators there are aids that can help you keep focus. They are like crutches. If you can't meditate without them then you need them. If you can meditate without them you are better off.

Crutches:

Long Slow breaths - When your heart rate is high it is difficult to meditate. Long slow breaths will slow down your heart rate. Counting your breath is a technique to help keep focus. When agitated use counting until you are relaxed enough that you can drop the counting.

- Step 1 - Goal – Decreasing heart rate and blood pressure. Instructions - Breathe in an out while counting to 5. Constantly increasing the count and as you are able to breathe deeper and deeper. Increase the count until you feel that it is deep and long enough without being uncomfortable. When you feel that your heart rate has decreased go to step 2.
- Step 2 - Goal – Grounding – Present moment experience Instructions - Breathe in an out while still counting to whatever number makes you feel comfortable. On the in-breath focus all of your attention on the sensations in your nostrils. On the outbreath imagine a wave of relaxation going through your body from head to foot. Focus on the sensations. Can you feel the air coming in your nostrils? Can you feel your muscles relax?
- Step 3 - Goal – Deepening the absorption - Instructions - Stop counting. Let the bodily sensations become your anchor. Continue to breathe deeply and notice the sensations in your nostrils and on the outbreath, imagine a wave of relaxation going through your body from head to foot. If your mind wanders go back to step 2 until you are ready for step 3 again.
- Step 4 - Goal – Open awareness - Mindfulness without any crutches. Instructions - Breathe naturally - Notice whatever sensations you notice. You could focus on your breath, the sounds. When thoughts arise notice that they are thoughts and just let them go. Notice your attitude. Is it a kind and open non-judging awareness? Just be aware of your attitude and don't judge your attitude. If you have trouble focusing go back to step 3 and focus on your breath.
- Gratitude – close out each meditation

Itchy Nose.

Your emotional state of mind is your responsibility. Once you become conscious of your state of mind you have the opportunity to change it. Notice how you can get upset by small things and then see the triviality and laugh at yourself. You altered your emotional state.

Mindfulness vs. Meditation

Meditation is a formal practice that cultivates focus, concentration and awareness. These are the skills that you need to be mindful throughout the day

Definition of Mindfulness:

- “Mindfulness is the **awareness** that emerges through **paying attention on purpose**, in the **present moment**, and **nonjudgmentally** to the **unfolding of experience** moment by moment.” ...Jon Kabat Zinn
- Awareness of the present moment with acceptance. Chris Germer

Beginner Meditation

Mindfulness Exercises

- Mindful Eating, showering, walking, washing dishes, listening to others etc.

Tips for beginners

- Begin with the goal in mind: The goal is to be aware of what is happening in the present moment. The goal is NOT to stop thinking! When thoughts arise it is ok, just become aware that there are thoughts and label them.
- Remember that this is “practice”. Your mind will wander but you can accept this with compassion.
- Cultivate a real sense of curiosity and interest.
- The best meditation technique is the technique that works for you in the present moment.
- If you are very stressed out the following might be of help. Use techniques such as counting the breath and intentionally breathing deeply. Affirmations, mantras.
- Middle way - The more complex the meditation is the more that you will be forced to focus and concentrate. If the meditation is too complex you will get frustrated. There are techniques that increase the complexity.
- Try to keep a smile on your face!

Key Points

- Meditation is a practice that cultivates an objective observer that is empathetic, insightful, calm and accepting.
- When the objective observer can stay with us in our daily routines we are mindful.
- As the objective observer awakens we are able to be less reactive and behave in a compassionate, open manner and be able to find constructive actions that allow us to be more resilient.

Homework - Optional

See BeingMindful.com – Meditation Program – Week 2

- Every day - One Long Slow Breath
- Decide what you think that you can do in this list and do it.
 - mind wanders.

If you want to be on the **email distribution list** or have **any questions** send me an email:

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Website: BeingMindful.com

If you want the **detailed notes** for the class go to Beingmindful.com on the Handouts page under Navigating Challenges through Mindfulness Training.