

Mindfulness to Reduce Stress

Mindful Breathing

- 1 Choose a "down time" location, like the subway, in the shower, or making a meal.
- 2 Shift your focus to your breathing, and pick a single aspect to focus on.
- 3 Spend at least 5 minutes in this state of awareness.



Health Benefits:

- Reduced stress
- Increased relaxation
- Reduced blood pressure

Why it works to reduce stress:

Focusing on a single sensation can help to still a racing mind.

Mindful Eating

- 1 Choose a convenient mealtime when you won't be expected to socialize.
- 2 Eat slowly. Focus on each sensation of your first bite in turn: smell, sight, touch, sound, taste.
- 3 Immerse yourself in the richness of the practice of eating and try to eat your whole meal slowly.



Health Benefits:

- Reduced stress
- Improved digestive functioning
- Reduced overeating and weight gain

Why it works to reduce stress:

Taking time to appreciate the small things we often miss can liberate us from ruminating on our daily concerns.

Body Scan Meditation

- 1 Set aside a time and place in your day where you can sit comfortably and you won't be distracted or disturbed.
- 2 Find a comfortable but attentive seated position, close your eyes, and bring your attention to your toes.
- 3 Working up from your toes, bring awareness to each body part in turn: your feet, ankles, calves, knees, etc. up to your head.



Health Benefits:

- Reduced stress
- Decreased muscle tension
- Increased pain tolerance

Why it works to reduce stress:

Body scan meditations encourage self-awareness of sensations we might otherwise be ignoring.

Mindful Yoga



- 1 Set aside at least 15 minutes in a quiet, open and airy space for your yoga practice.
- 2 Instead of treating your practice like a session at the gym, treat it like a meditation where you bring your full awareness to both your physical and emotional sensations as you move through the poses.
- 3 Observe how the physical sensations from each pose give rise to emotional sensations like released tension leading to relaxation, or even feelings like pain leading to frustration.



Health Benefits:

- Reduced stress
- Enhanced concentration
- Improved memory and performance

Why it works to reduce stress:

In addition to all the benefits of a mindful meditation, mindful yoga adds a physical element that provides a boost of energy and positive chemicals in the brain.