



Stressors

chronic illness relationship issues crime
 racism divorce domestic violence legal issues
 substance use finances homelessness
 death of a loved one immigration status abuse pregnancy
 social media exposure to violence recent move

Physical Symptoms of Stress

- Shaky or jittery
- Racing heart
- Sweating
- Sleep difficulties
- Nausea/Stomachaches
- Changes in appetite
- Digestion problems
- Muscle tension/pain


Stress vs. Stressor


Stressor is the "thing" that triggers the stress response

Different for everyone

Perception is KEY

Stress Response
Your automatic physical and psychological response





Prefrontal Cortex
(Thinking Brain)

Hippocampus
(Learning and Memory)

Amygdala
(Emotional Brain/Alarm System)

MINDING YOUR MIND

MINDING YOUR MIND

The Brain's Response to Stress

Responses to Stress	
FIGHT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irritability • Loss of Temper • Defensiveness • Argumentative
FLIGHT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoidance • Anxiety • Fear • Isolation
FREEZE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numbing • Detachment • Giving up Easily • Not Listening
FAWN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People pleasing • Not saying "No" • Lack of boundaries • Codependency

Stress Response: Happens when **we believe** that we don't have the resources to deal with a challenging situation.



First Aid: Amygdala Hijacking

How to shorten the response:

- Elicit the Relaxation Response
- Mindful Awareness with non-judgment
- Take deep breaths or mindful sighs

What is Mindfulness?

A way of paying attention to what is happening in our **present moment experience** without getting swept away by our mind.



MINDING YOUR MIND

The Science Behind Mindfulness

30 + years of research

- Decreased stress, pain, reactivity, depression and anxiety
- Increased coping for serious, chronic and life threatening illnesses.

Biological indicators:

- ↑healing, ↓cortisol, ↑immune response, ↓cellular aging
- Increases grey matter in thinking areas of the brain
- Shrinks emotional areas of the brain

www.mindingyourmind.org

MINDING YOUR MIND

Pay attention to what?

- Sensations: Touch, Sight, Sound, Taste, Smell
- Witness Thoughts:
 - Noticing when they pop up, what are they about
 - Past, future thoughts or a judgement
- Mood States: Presence of sadness, anger, joy, boredom

Grounding




- 5 Things You See
- 4 Things You Hear
- 3 Things You Feel/Move 3 Parts of Body
- 2 Things You Smell
- 1 Thing You Taste
- Progressive Body Relaxation
- Feel your feet on the ground
- 4, 7, 8 Breath

MINDING YOUR MIND

Gaining Perspective

WHAT I CANNOT CONTROL


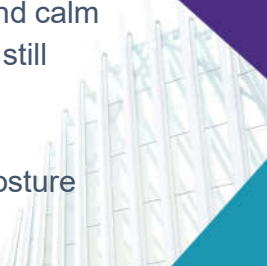
What other people think
How other people feel
What other people say
Rules and Directions
What other people need
If others agree with me

What I Can Control


How I behave
What I watch, read, listen to
How I care for myself and others
How I advocate for what I want
How I feel/express gratitude

www.mindingyourmind.org

Common Myths of Mindfulness

- Always being relaxed and calm
- Keeping the Mind/Body still
- Stopping thoughts
- A religious practice
- Must sit in meditation posture



Exercise for the Brain

Bringing the mind back to the present moment is the exercise.

- This rewires the brain
- Simple but not easy

You wouldn't go to the gym and expect to lift 100 pounds the first month



- Laughing
- Meditation/Mindfulness
- Therapy
- Medication
- Napping
- Healthy eating/drinking
- Self Generosity
- Yoga
- Tai Chi/Qigong
- Writing/journaling
- Cooking/Baking
- Identifying your strengths
- Being creative
- Exercising
- Reading
- Volunteering

- Time with friends/family/pets
- Showering/taking a bath
- Being in nature/outside
- Listening to music/dancing

Maintaining Wellness

SURVIVING TO THRIVING



Suggested Apps


- Relax Melodies
- Insight Timer; Find-Linda Rose Price
- Calm
- Headspace; App & Netflix
- Yoga with Adriene (YouTube)

Websites

MindingYourMind.org
Wellnessempowerment.care

Instagram

@Mindingyourmind
@Wellness.Empowerment



National Resources

Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/ **Call or TEXT 988**

Self-Injury Hotline: 1-800-366-8288

Samaritans 1-877-870-HOPE (4673) Call or Text
<https://samaritanshope.org/>

National Eating Disorder Association (NEDA):
1-800-931-2237 www.nationaleatingdisorders.org

Substance Abuse Hotline: 1-800-662-HELP(4357)



**MINDING
YOUR MiND**

Created in partnership with
Linda Price, CAGS

TOP 10 ACTIVITIES FOR RELAXATION

Managing anxiety and grief

- Cultivate a positive mindset; Crush the ANTS (Automatic Negative Thoughts).
- Daily practice in gratitude.
- STOP, BREATHE, and THINK to respond instead of react.
- Observe all thoughts and emotions with compassion. Label them (e.g. “worry” “sadness”) without judging.
- Practice progressive muscle relaxation: Tighten and relax muscles moving from head to toes.
- Try a breathing exercise:
 - Mindful sighing.
 - Belly Breathing: Place hands on belly and notice the movement.
 - 1-minute breathing: Inhale slowly, pause, exhale slowly, pause and repeat. Count each cycle.
 - 4-7-8: Breathe in for 4, pause for 7, and exhale for 8.
- 5-4-3-2-1: Notice 5 things you see, 4 things you hear, 3 things you feel, 2 things you smell, and 1 thing you taste (can be imagined).
- Gentle stretching with slow breathing.
- Other ideas: listen to calming music, play an instrument or sing, exercise, art, puzzles, read, write, yoga, Tai Chi, Qi-gong, walk outside in nature, listen to a meditation app.
- Treat yourself with gentleness and kindness..just like you would a friend.



For more information, please contact
michelle@mindingyourmind.org or
Visit www.mindingyourmind.org
www.wellnessempowerment.care