

## Day 3: Mindfulness Meditation

**Mindfulness** is the ability to remain aware of how you are feeling right now; your “moment-to-moment” experience (both internal and external). Thinking about the past or worrying about the future can lead to a level of stress that is overwhelming. By staying focused in the present moment you can bring your nervous system in to balance.

Meditations that cultivate mindfulness have been long been used to reduce stress. Some meditations bring you in to the present by focusing your attention on a single repetitive action (e.g., breathing, a few repeated words, flickering light from a candle), while other forms encourage you to follow and release internal thoughts or sensations.

### The Practice of Mindfulness Meditation

Key points of mindfulness meditation include:

**A quiet environment:** Choose a *secluded* place in your home, office, garden, or place of worship where you can relax without distractions or interruptions.

**A comfortable position:** Assume a *comfortable position* but avoid lying down. Sit upright in a chair or on the floor. Focus on keeping a straight spine. You may also try a cross-legged or lotus position.

**A point of focus:** The focus point can be internal (e.g., feeling, imaginary scene) or external (e.g., flame, meaningful word or phrase) that you repeat throughout your session. You may meditate with open or closed eyes. Choose to focus on an object in your surroundings to enhance your concentration.

**An observant, noncritical attitude:** Don't worry about distracting thoughts that flow through your mind. If thoughts intrude during your session, do not fight them – gently return your attention to the point of focus.



Resource: [www.helpguide.org](http://www.helpguide.org)