

## Holiday Mindfulness



Life may get hectic for you once November rolls around. Halloween has barely passed before Black Friday sales begin, Thanksgiving looms upon you, the kids are off on Thanksgiving break, and then it's barely a month before Christmas! Before you know it, you're rushing around trying to prepare for the bustling holiday season while still juggling your other demands at work and home.

In the midst of the craziness of this time of year, practicing a technique called **mindfulness** can help you slow down, breathe, and stay in the moment. But what is mindfulness, and how do you know you've achieved it?

**Mindfulness** is a focused awareness of whatever you are doing and wherever you are **right now**. According to psychologytoday.com, mindfulness is defined as living in the moment. It also involves allowing your thoughts to flow through your head without judging them as good or bad. You accept what you're thinking and feeling without attaching labels to your thoughts. This gives you a space between what happens and how you react to it, allowing you to be less reactive and more thoughtful in your actions. As Hans Selye, MD summarized: **"It is not stress that kills us. It is our reaction to it."**

How do you know if you've achieved mindfulness? Put simply, you aren't dwelling on the past or worrying about the future. You are actually living in the present with your attention focused on what you feel, see, hear, think, smell, touch, and taste right now.

By practicing mindfulness, you'll find that it becomes easier for you to focus your attention and you have fewer periods where your mind wanders. You'll also be able to increase the time you spend meditating.

Want to get started? [Click here \(link to document\)](#) for some tips from HRH Emotional Fitness specialists and mindful.org on how to begin your mindful habit. There are also many apps now available to help you build a mindful habit, including apps for [adults \(link to document\)](#) and [children \(link to document\)](#).

**Practicing mindfulness is a process—don't view this as another task to check off on your to do list, but rather enjoy the journey.** Work to carry this calm into the rest of your day by pausing to mindfully breathe whenever you find yourself either worrying about the future or regretting something in the past. Allow this to bring some calm to your holidays!

Information was obtained from the following links: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/mindfulness>  
<https://www.mindful.org/mindfulness-how-to-do-it/>