## **Beating Stress With Mindfulness**

Stress is an inevitable part of our lives. We have all experienced it to some degree: during an argument with a partner, while speaking to a large group, while meeting a deadline at work. Our experiences in an increasingly complex world constantly require us to adapt to changes and cope with stressors. Learning how to identify and manage stress can help prevent physical and psychological problems, increase your chances of future success and promote a longer, healthier life.

Mindfulness, which is best described as the practice of being more aware in the present moment, is one of the most effective ways to respond to personal stress. Examples of mindfulness include:

- Becoming aware of breathing. Feeling the stomach rise and fall with each breath.
- Feeling the physical sensations an emotion creates, such as rising heart rate or sweating
- Paying attention to all of the sounds in a room
- Noticing the body's reaction to stress, including tense muscles or shallow breathing
- · Watching the negative thoughts that arise when feeling stress or boredom

It can be difficult to get your mind to slow down, but focusing on the now can help improve your physical, social and mental health. Practicing mindfulness can result in:

- Improved organisational skills
- An increase in self-esteem
- A sense of calmness, relaxation and self-acceptance
- · Better quality of sleep
- · A decrease in depression
- · A decrease in overall anxiety and test anxiety
- · A decline in negative emotions
- Fewer conduct and anger-management problems

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