What are the benefits?

Studies show that practicing mindfulness on a regular basis can be profoundly relaxing. It reduces anxiety, helps lift moods, improves attention and performance, and increases an overall sense of well-being.

How does it work?

There are many ways to practice mindfulness. The simplest is to focus on your breath. Focusing on each inhale and exhale slows down your breathing and your heart rate, helping anxious, stressful feelings fade away. Your thinking becomes clearer. With practice, you will feel more focused, and able to withstand life’s challenges a little better.

Here’s how to do it

- Find a quiet place to sit for 5 minutes or so, and gently close your eyes if you want.
- Relax your stomach, shoulders and jaw and begin to focus on your breath flowing in and out.
- Don’t force it. If your mind wanders from your breath, bring it back by saying to yourself “I breathe in and I’m calm,” and on the exhale say, “I breathe out and I let go.”
- If intrusive thoughts arise, observe them like clouds drifting by without judgment, and return your attention to your breathing.

Additional mindfulness techniques include focusing your full attention on everyday objects like a tree, or on simple activities like eating. For example, while eating, chew each bite very slowly, noticing the textures in your mouth and the flavors bursting on your tongue.