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Balance is key to helping us feel more composed and resilient in response to daily life and work challenges.

We can't control difficult encounters, but we *can* learn to control how we respond to them.

Mindfulness (the quality or state of being conscious or aware of something) provides the foundation we need to weather the stressors.

Our Freeman Health Energy & Life at Work (HEAL) Team has prepared a 21 day challenge just for you.

[Click here](#) to view a short mindful meditation practice.

At the end of the challenge FHS employees should mark their participation on the 2018 scheduled wellness event calendar *located under Wellness on the Main Menu of the intranet to earn four wellness points.*

*Participate in our
21Day Mindfulness & Meditation Challenge
Anytime of Year*



Feeling overwhelmed? You can seek help from your personal physician, a mental health professional, your religious leader, or Ozark Center Crisis Hotline @ 800-247-0061.



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Mindful check-in

2 minutes:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w1EZ_hpnhDM

Have you ever been driving somewhere, arrive, and not remember much of the drive because your thoughts were somewhere else?

Or been in a conversation with someone, or reading a book, and notice you can't recall what you heard or read? You're not alone!

We may think we're great multi-taskers, but our brains are great at screening out much of the input that comes our way, and by doing that, we can miss what's happening in the present moment as we get caught up in our thoughts.

Take 2 minutes to do this mindful check in at least once today.

Repeat it as often as you like throughout the challenge.

21 day mindfulness and meditation challenge:

Day 1



For 5 minutes of extra reading:

Meditation in Action – 5 Ways of Integrating Mindfulness into Everyday

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/05/13/meditation-in-action-5-tips-to-be-mindful_n_3253336.html?utm_hp_ref=gps-for-the-soul&ir=GPS%20for%20the%20Soul





21 day mindfulness and meditation challenge:

Day 2



Start your day right

2 minutes with Dr Elisha Goldstein: <https://youtu.be/l-07eqviDCg>

Here's a new habit to start your day off on the right foot, which can help shape the lens with which you see the rest of your day.

- ◆ Wake up to soothing sounds – change your alarm clock!
- ◆ Drink some water before anything else
- ◆ Take in some nature

*Add this practice on each morning of the challenge.
It only takes a few minutes.*

For 5 minutes of extra reading: 20 Meditation Tips for Beginners by mindfulness researcher Jon Kabat-Zinn

http://www.oprah.com/spirit/mindfulness-meditation-by-jon-kabat-zinn?cid=pi_omag_daily_mindfulness_tips



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Walking meditation

5 minutes:

<https://jackkornfield.com/walking-meditation-2/>

Walking meditation involves very deliberately doing and experiencing a series of actions that you normally do automatically without thinking.

Choose a place where you can walk slowly.

See if you can notice the sensations of:

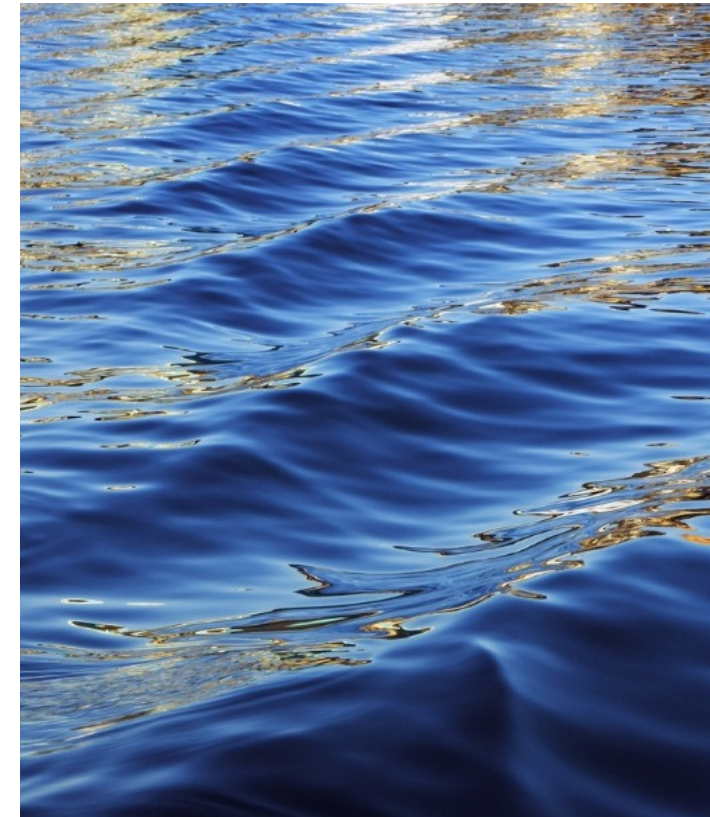
- Lifting one foot
- Moving your leg forward
- Placing your foot on the floor
- Shifting your weight as you move
- Your other foot lifting

If you notice your mind wandering, simply bring your attention back to your movement, without judging.

Practice this at least once for 5 minutes today.

21 day mindfulness and meditation challenge:

Day 3



For 5 minutes of extra reading: Greater Good in Action – Walking Meditation

http://ggia.berkeley.edu/practice/walking_meditation



21 day mindfulness and meditation challenge:

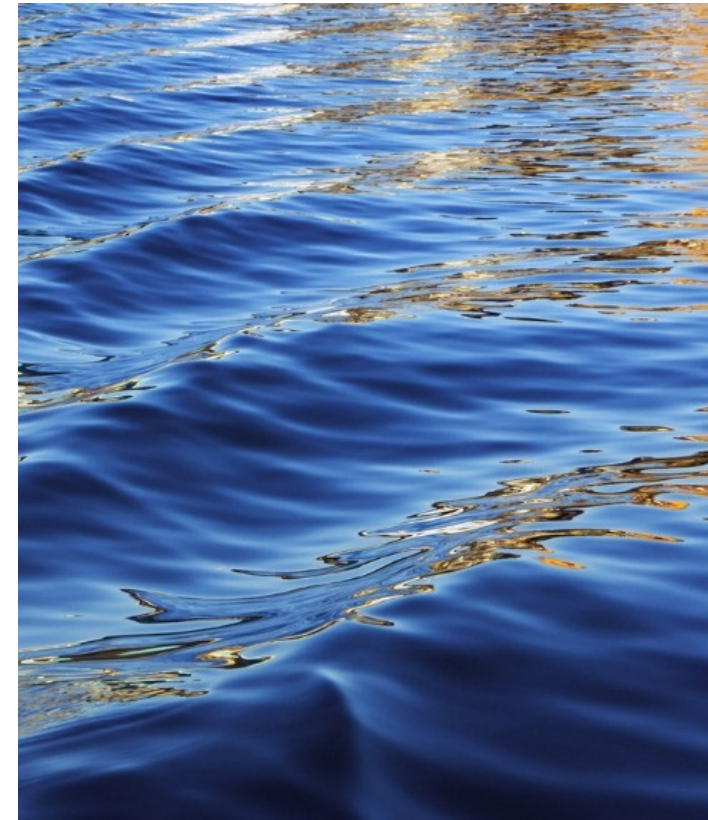
Day 4

Mindful eating

Have you ever sat down with a plate of food, and also used the time to do other tasks, or watch TV? And then noticed that your plate is empty, but you don't remember eating your food? Mindful eating is about using full awareness with all your senses while you eat.

Try eating a single raisin (or another small piece of food) without distraction. See if you can engage all your senses: sight, smell, touch, sound and taste. What do you notice? Were there any thoughts that came up? Try this 3 minute exercise: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z2Eo56BLMjM>

Practice eating at least one mindful meal or snack today, without distractions. No phone, email, book, or anything else but your food.



For some reading on your break today (but not while you eat!): **6 Ways to Practice Mindful Eating**

<http://www.mindful.org/6-ways-practice-mindful-eating/>



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Deep breathing

4 minutes:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EYQsRBNYdPk>

Deep breathing has been shown to help people feel calmer when they are feeling stressed and anxious. Practice when you are calm so you can easily use it during times of stress.

- Sit somewhere comfortable
- Breathe in slowly through your nose
- Hold briefly
- Breathe out slowly through your mouth, pursing your lips like you're blowing through a straw.
- Repeat
- If you notice your mind wandering off, that's normal. Simply bring your attention back to your breath.

Practice deep breathing (with the video or without) for a few minutes today.

21 day mindfulness and meditation challenge:

Day 5



For 5 minutes of extra reading: Can't do seated meditation? Try these meditation alternatives

<https://www.doyouyoga.com/cant-do-seated-meditation-try-these-meditation-alternatives-84816/>

21 day mindfulness and meditation challenge: Day 6



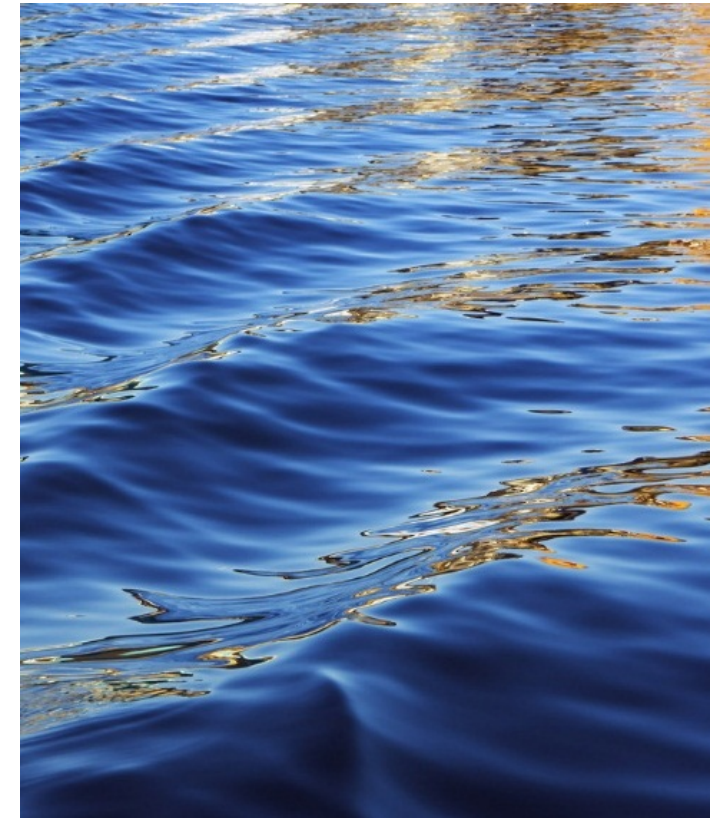
Mindful creative projects

You may have seen the large number of coloring books available for adults in bookstores. Did you know that coloring (or focusing on other creative activities) can be similar to meditation, and help reduce stress through focusing the mind away from stress-generating thoughts?

Mayo Clinic Minute: Benefits of coloring <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YXh2C2L3wKw>

Try some mindful coloring today (or spend some time fully focused on a creative hobby you enjoy). Aim for 5-10 minutes.

No coloring book? Check out this site for some free sample coloring pages:
<https://www.art-is-fun.com/free-adult-coloring-pages/>



For 5 minutes of extra reading: Why coloring could be the new alternative to meditation

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/coloring-benefits-meditation_us_55b7c9c1e4b0074ba5a6724f



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Body relaxation

4 minutes

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=41GqbdgYAmE&t=4s>

Stress and anxiety can often lead to physical aches and pains, as our stressful thoughts lead to muscle tension, and then our muscle tension leads to stressful thoughts!

Progressive muscle relaxation can be an effective tool to help train your muscles to return to their relaxed state.

- Sit in a quiet place
- Breathe in and tense a part of individual part of your body (starting with your face and working down)
- Breathe out and let go of the tensing
- Repeat for the next part of your body

Practice this progressive body relaxation once today (use the recording above if you like).

21 day mindfulness and meditation challenge: Day 7



For 5 minutes of extra reading: **Mayo Clinic - Types of Relaxation Techniques**

<http://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management/in-depth/relaxation-technique/art-20045368?pg=2>

21 day mindfulness and meditation challenge: Day 8



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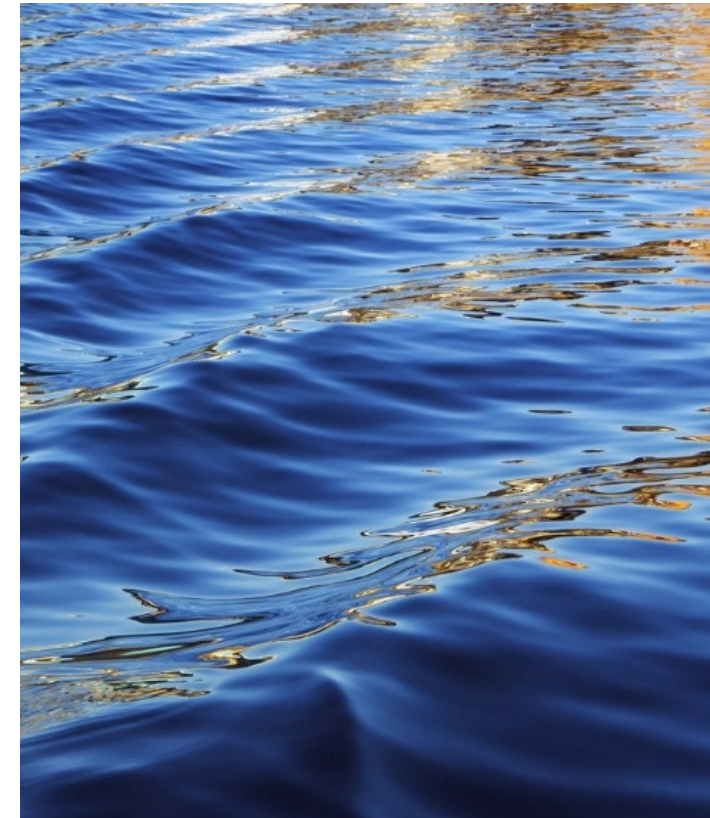
Simple mindful meditation

5 minutes <https://youtu.be/Wa79BHAurBg>

Simple mindfulness meditation is sitting and focusing your attention to your breath wherever you feel it most.

Expect your mind to wander – that is the nature of the mind. When you notice your attention has wandered, simply bring it back to your breath – this recognition of mind wandering is part of mindfulness practice.

Practice with this 5 minute meditation video at least once today. Challenge yourself and see if you can add another 5 minutes at the end.



For 5 minutes of extra reading: **What meditation does to your brain**

<https://yogatime.tv/blog/what-meditation-does-to-your-brain/>



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Continuing with mindful breathing

7 minutes <https://youtu.be/hmRMJnvmJhU>

The key to mindfulness practice helping with stress reduction is repetition!

Simple mindfulness meditation is sitting and focusing your attention to your breath wherever you feel it most.

Expect your mind to wander – that is the nature of the mind. When you notice your attention has wandered, simply bring it back to your breath – this recognition of mind wandering is part of mindfulness practice.

Practice with this 7 minute meditation video at least once today. Challenge yourself and see if you can add another 5-7 minutes at the end.

21 day mindfulness and meditation challenge: Day 9



For 5 minutes of extra reading: **Is meditation the key to preventing medical errors?**

<http://www.beckershospitalreview.com/quality/is-meditation-the-key-to-preventing-medical-errors.html>



21 day mindfulness and meditation challenge:

Day 10



Mindful movement - desk yoga

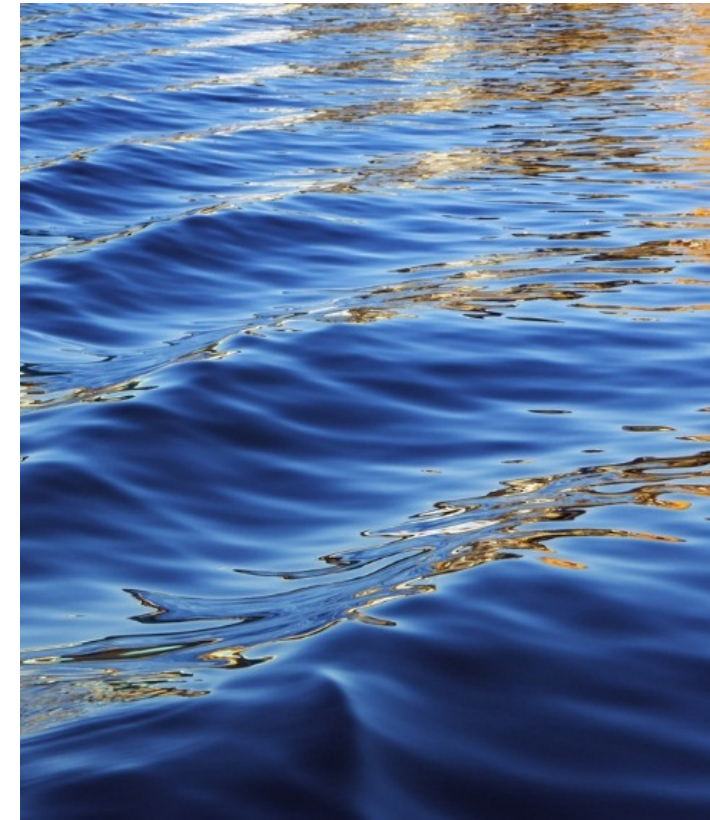
6 minutes <https://youtu.be/tAUf7aajBWE>

Sometimes a good stretch break can do wonders!

Do some gentle, mindful stretching with this video. See what you notice with all your senses while you do it. Again, if you notice your mind wandering, just come back to the practice.

Yoga is adaptable to wherever you are in your body. Practice to where the stretch feels welcome and comfortable, never to pain.

Practice this exercise at least once today.



For 5 minutes of extra reading: **10 Yoga exercises to undo the damage of a desk job**

<https://www.doyouyoga.com/10-yoga-exercises-to-undo-damage-of-a-desk-job-99571/>



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S.T.O.P

3 minutes <https://youtu.be/AXicKBI8C5g>

Stop (pause, and be present)

Take a breath (a slow, deep one)

Observe (what's going on around you and in your mind)

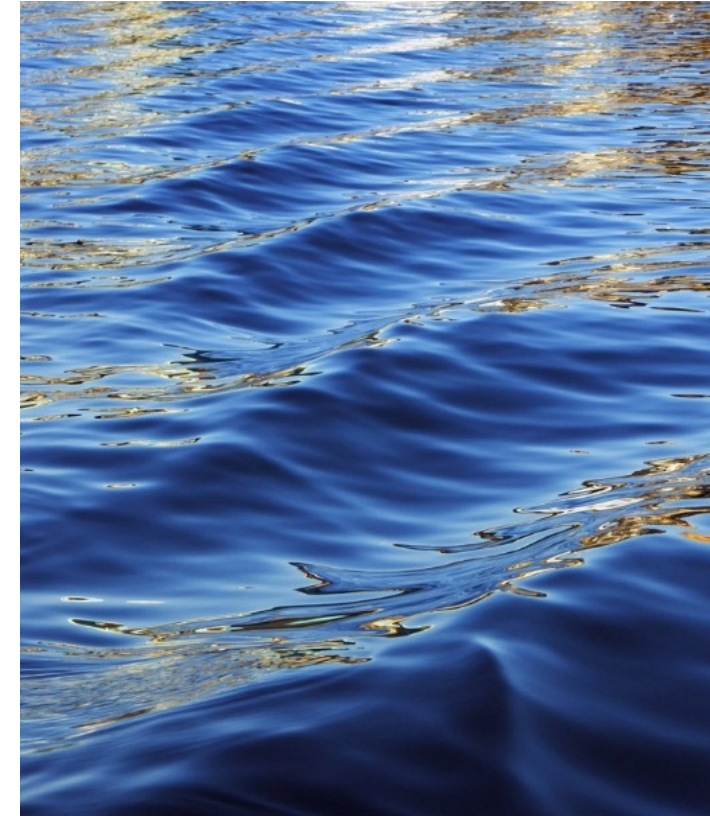
Proceed (from a place of wise and aware choice)

Perhaps you could choose a particular moment to practice, such as when you wash your hands, or some other routine task that's every day for you.

Practice S.T.O.P at least 3 times today.

By practicing S.T.O.P, we can increase our opportunity to make choices that are in line with our personal values and goals, instead of simply reacting out of habit.

21 day mindfulness and meditation challenge: Day 11



For 5 minutes of extra reading: **How meditation makes you more productive**

<https://www.doyouyoga.com/how-meditation-makes-you-more-productive-38492/>

21 day mindfulness and meditation challenge:

Day 12



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Mindfulness of thoughts meditation

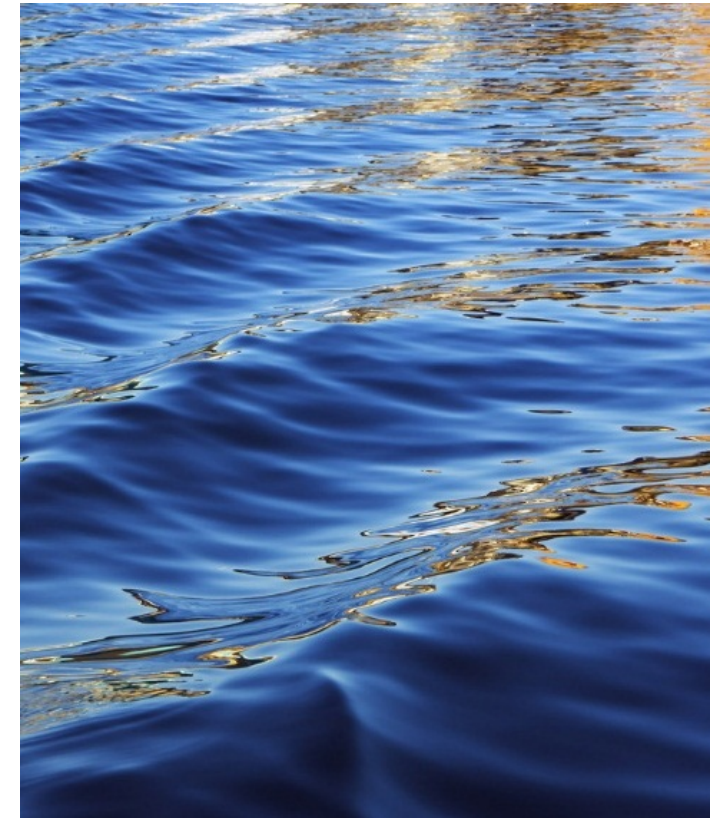
Most of us have internal struggles with our thoughts sometimes, which can generate a lot of stress, but our thoughts are just thoughts, and are not always true!

2 minutes: https://youtu.be/dz_nexLqY_8

You can use meditation to watch your thoughts arise and fall, and with practice become more skilled at choosing your reactions (or not reacting and simply allowing them to come and go!)

9 minutes <https://youtu.be/YW-TDOgstSE>

Practice this 9 minute meditation (*Mindfulness Meditation (part 1 of 2) Acceptance of thoughts and feelings*) **once today.**



For 5 minutes of extra reading: **4 Ways to mindfully prevent office burnout**

<http://www.mindful.org/4-ways-to-mindfully-prevent-office-burnout/>



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Guided imagery meditation

Guided imagery relaxation exercises may be helpful when you notice that your thoughts are racing, when you're having trouble unwinding after a stressful day, or perhaps are even having trouble falling asleep.

Guided meditation and visualization for stress relief: A forest walk (10 minutes)

https://youtu.be/lgSbF_xHgLU

Practice this meditation (or another 10 minute online guided imagery meditation) today.

(You may want to copy the links to do them at home. Alternatively, you can set a timer, and imagine your own nature scene.)

21 day mindfulness and meditation challenge:

Day 13



For 5 minutes of extra reading: **Guided visualizations - A way to relax, reduce stress and more**

<https://psychcentral.com/lib/guided-visualization-a-way-to-relax-reduce-stress-and-more/>



21 day mindfulness and meditation challenge:

Day 14



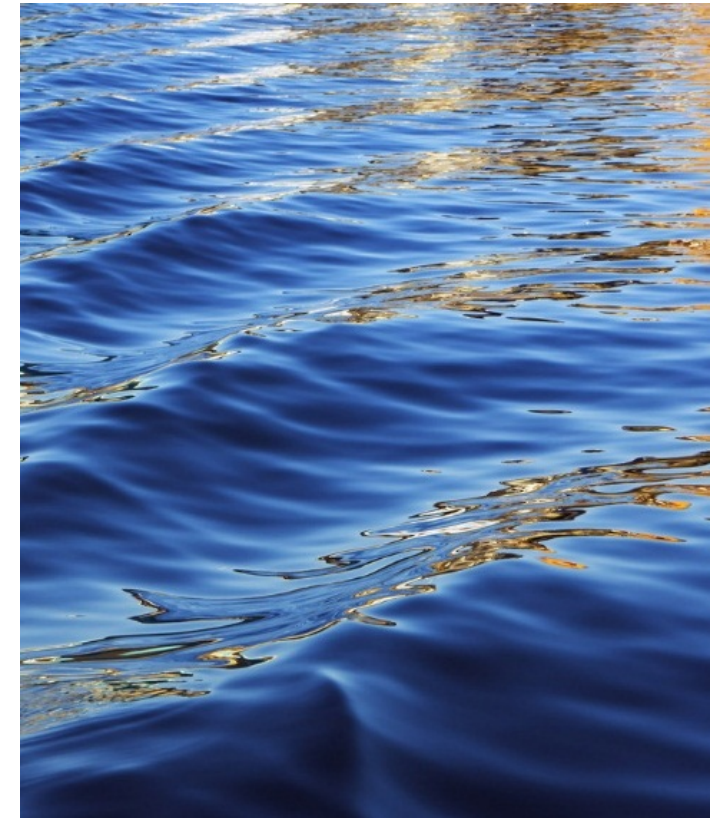
Leaves on a stream meditation

7 minutes <https://youtu.be/opzVAlm4FOE>

Our thoughts directly impact our stress level. We have a thought about a situation, we have an emotional reaction to that thought, and we have a physiological reaction based on we either like or dislike that feeling. In essence – we are stressed because of our own thinking!

With practice, we can let thoughts simply come and go as they arise – they are not permanent, and they may not even always be factual!

Practice this meditation once today.



For 5 minutes of extra reading: **I realized I don't have to believe my thoughts**

<https://www.tarabrach.com/i-realized-i-dont-have-to-believe-my-thoughts-4/>

21 day mindfulness and meditation challenge:

Day 15



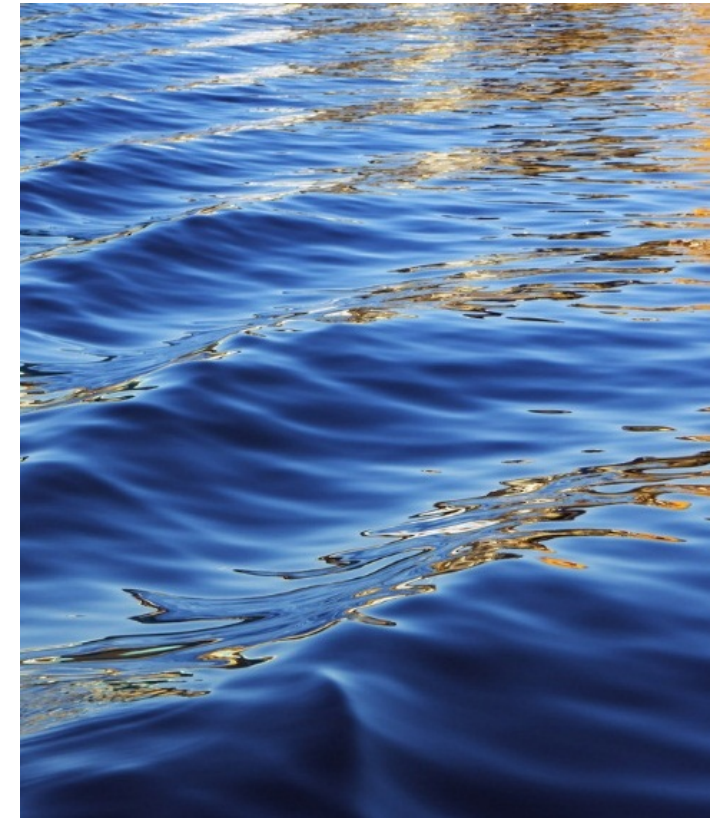
Just Like Me meditation

Offering forgiveness and compassion: <https://youtu.be/7rOyqczn2zw>

- This person wants to be happy, just like me
- This person loves and wants to spend time with their family, just like me
- This other person sometimes thinks before speaking, just like me
- This other person sometimes procrastinates, just like me
- This other person has felt unworthy or inadequate, just like me
- This person has thoughts, feelings, and emotions, just like me
- This person has longed for friendship, just like me
- This person wishes to be free from pain and suffering, just like me
- Because this person is a fellow human being, just like me.

Practice this meditation today picturing someone you love. As you continue to practice, move on to picturing an acquaintance, someone you don't know, and finally someone you find somewhat difficult.

The more you practice, the easier it is to bring it to mind in difficult situations when compassion can help defuse tension, and help you choose your response rather than react.



For 5 minutes of extra reading: **Want to Boost Your Well-Being at Work and Get More Done? Forgive Your Colleagues**
<http://www.mindful.org/want-boost-well-being-work-more-done-forgive-colleagues/>



Yoga Nidra for Deep Relaxation

A guided relaxation of 'awakened sleep,' yoga nidra pauses the stress of a tired or injured body by bringing the body into the neutrality of rest and digest.

Follow the practice here when you have about 15 minutes for deep relaxation today:

<https://soundcloud.com/user-219883183/welcoming-impressions-a-yoga-nidra-practice>

21 day mindfulness and meditation challenge: Day 16



For 5 minutes of extra reading: **Neutralizing the Body**

<http://www.defineme.ca/neutralizing-body-experience-self-love-body-hatred-everything/>



21 day mindfulness and meditation challenge:

Day 17

Filling Up to Share Out Meditation

Does it feel like you spend your life taking care of everyone else, and have nothing left for yourself?

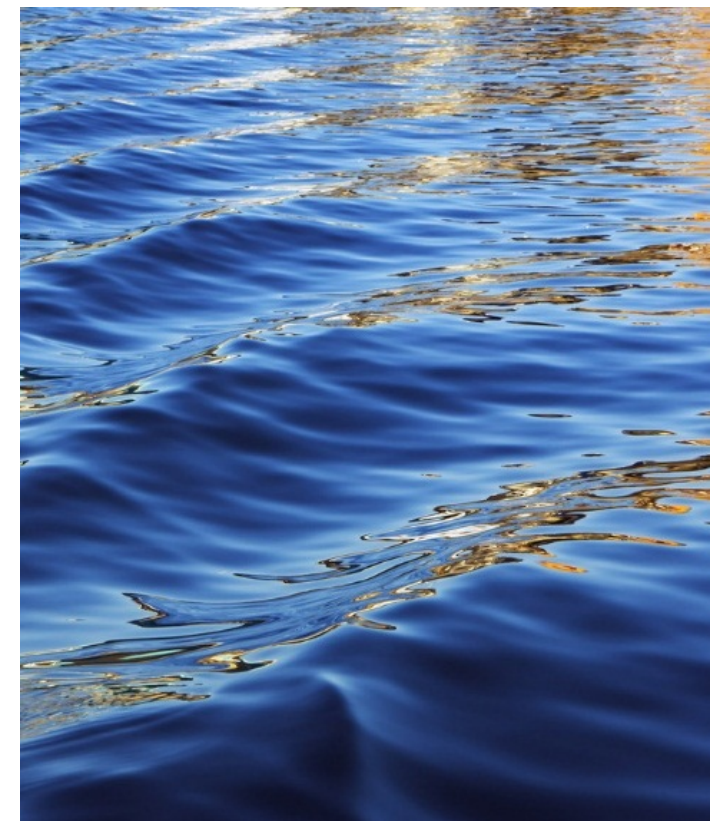
Good self-care is vital for strong and healthy relationships. In order to be of service to anyone, you must first take care of yourself.

Fill your cup with this guided meditation from Anna Guest-Jelley: (7 mins)

<https://soundcloud.com/curvyoga/filling-up-to-share-out-meditation>

For 5 minutes of extra reading: **Service is the Expression of the Awakened Heart**

<https://jackkornfield.com/service-is-the-expression-of-the-awakened-heart/>





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Mindful listening:

Tune into yourself to tune into others

10 to 15 minutes

Choose one conversation today to practice mindful listening.

1. Check inside. "How am I feeling just now? Is there anything getting in the way of being present for the other person?" If something is in the way, decide if it needs to be addressed first or can wait till later.
2. Feeling your own sense of presence, extend it to the other person with the intention to listen fully and openly, with interest, empathy, and mindfulness.
3. Silently note your own reactions as they arise—thoughts, feelings, judgments, memories. Then return your full attention to the speaker.
4. Reflect back what you are hearing, using the speaker's own words when possible, paraphrasing or summarizing the main point. Help the other person feel heard.
5. Use friendly, open-ended questions to clarify your understanding and probe for more. Affirm before you differ. Acknowledge the other person's point of view—acknowledging is not agreeing!—before introducing your own ideas, feelings, or requests.

From: <http://www.mindful.org/tuning-in/>

21 day mindfulness and meditation challenge:

Day 18





21 day mindfulness and meditation challenge:

Day 19

There is Room for You in the World Meditation

12 minutes: <https://soundcloud.com/lisamachac/there-is-room-for-you-in-the-world>

It is not always easy to speak up, knowing that what you have to offer is of value.

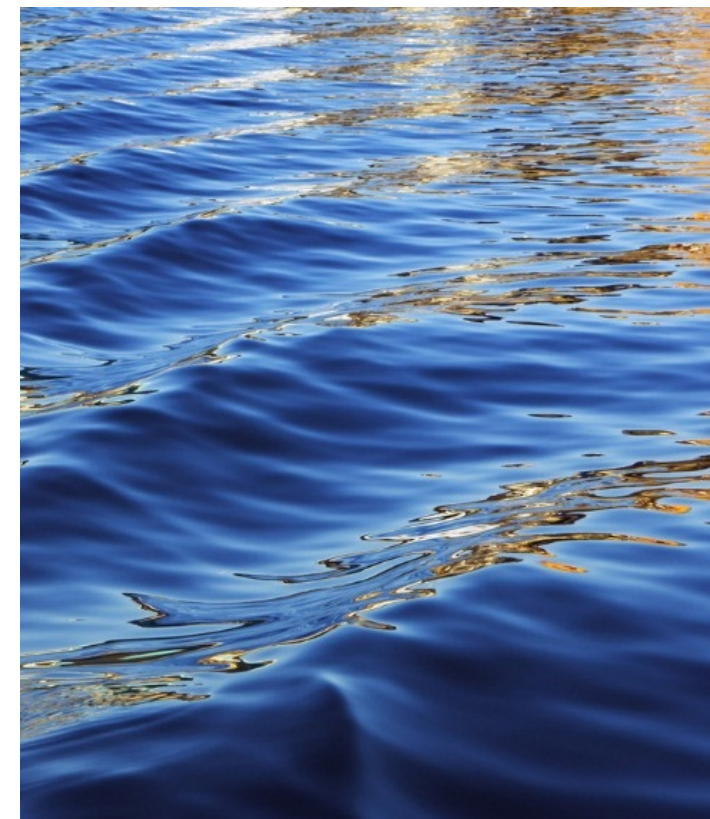
Sometimes anxiety keeps you from speaking up at work in meetings, or from sharing ideas with your team.

For those whom identify as introverts, this can lead to an internal spiral of worries and shame.

This meditation empowers you to share your voice.

Practice this meditation once today.

For 5 minutes of extra reading: **Mindfulness for Introverts**
<https://kripalu.org/resources/mindfulness-introverts>





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Bringing It Home

As the challenge draws to its close, it is time to begin taking stock of mindfulness and meditation can truly be of benefit to you.

This includes honing your ability to notice without judgment, cultivating a new relationship with yourself as well as those around you.

Practice this meditation:

<http://tinybuddha.com/blog/transform-body-coming-love-instead-fear/> once today.

The video will share how to transform your body by coming from love instead of fear.

21 day mindfulness and meditation challenge: Day 20





21 day mindfulness and meditation challenge:

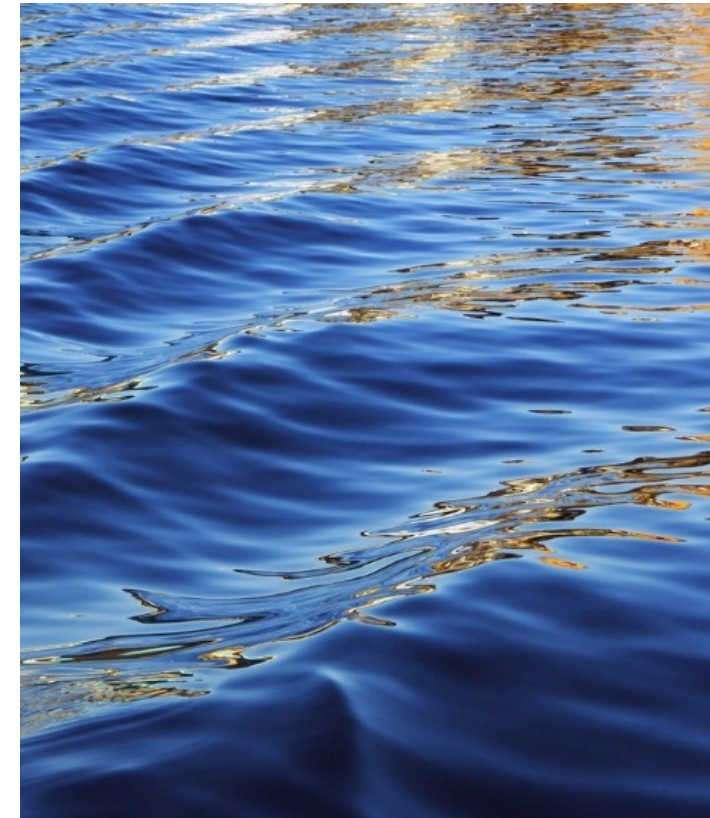
Day 21



Meaningful & Mindful Goal Setting

- 1. Desire and aspire.** What are you ultimately aiming for? Where do you feel passion or energy within your heart?
- 2. Purpose.** What is your intention for this goal? Will this goal help you be happier and have more of what is important to you?
- 3. Mindset.** Who do you need to be to achieve this goal? Once you step into BE-ing, then you will DO the actions and you will HAVE the results.
- 4. Action.** Break down your goals into small actions, and your actions into steps. Follow up on these regularly.
- 5. Timeframe.** Craft a clear deadline for each action. Allow flexibility for unforeseen challenges.
- 6. Self-Awareness.** What obstacles, fears, or limiting beliefs stand in your way? Shine a light on each. In this way you may be prepared and stay in charge of your goals and dreams.

Adapted from Daily Greatness Yoga Journal: Your MasterPlan For A Beautifully Conscious Life



Final activity - Set your sights: how can you cultivate mindfulness in your life from this point forward? Write down some ideas using the points outlined above.

FHS employees who complete the challenge, can mark their participation on the 2018 scheduled wellness event calendar located under Wellness on the Main Menu of the intranet and earn four wellness points.

[21 Day Mindful Meditation Challenge Links and Resources](#)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w1EZ_hpnhDM

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/05/13/meditation-in-action-5-tips-to-be-mindful_n_3253336.html?utm_hp_ref=gps-for-the-soul&ir=GPS%20for%20the%20Soul

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<https://www.doyouyoga.com/cant-do-seated-meditation-try-these-meditation-alternatives-84816/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YXh2C2L3wKw>

<https://www.art-is-fun.com/free-adult-coloring-pages/>

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/coloring-benefits-meditation_us_55b7c9c1e4b0074ba5a6724f

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=41GqbdgYAmE&t=4s>

<http://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management/in-depth/relaxation-technique/art-20045368?pg=2>

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<https://www.doyouyoga.com/10-yoga-exercises-to-undo-damage-of-a-desk-job-99571/>

<https://youtu.be/AXicKBI8C5g>

<https://www.doyouyoga.com/how-meditation-makes-you-more-productive-38492/>

https://youtu.be/dz_nexLqY_8

<https://youtu.be/YW-TDOgstSE>

<http://www.mindful.org/4-ways-to-mindfully-prevent-office-burnout/>

<https://youtu.be/UpPp4ZPTd8U>

https://youtu.be/lgSbF_xH9LU

<https://psychcentral.com/lib/guided-visualization-a-way-to-relax-reduce-stress-and-more/>

<https://youtu.be/0pzVAlm4FOE>

<https://www.tarabrach.com/i-realized-i-dont-have-to-believe-my-thoughts-4/>

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<http://www.mindful.org/want-boost-well-being-work-more-done-forgive-colleagues/>

<https://soundcloud.com/user-219883183/welcoming-impressions-a-yoga-nidra-practice>

<http://www.define.me.ca/neutralizing-body-experience-self-love-body-hatred-everything/>

[21 Day Mindful Meditation Challenge Links and Resources](#)

<https://jackkornfield.com/service-is-the-expression-of-the-awakened-heart/>

<http://www.mindful.org/tuning-in/>

<https://intentionalworkplace.com/2013/03/14/5-practices-for-mindful-communication/>

<https://insighttimer.com/youaregenuine/guided-meditations/feel>

<https://kripalu.org/resources/mindfulness-introverts>

<https://insighttimer.com/drmelodymoore/guided-meditations/developing-a-witness-mind>

<http://tinybuddha.com/blog/transform-body-coming-love-instead-fear/>