

**Mindfulness is both a practice & a way of being present in the world that helps to transform our suffering into joy and peace.**

In the world we live in today, we are in “continuous partial attention.” In fact, we are taught to splinter our attention by focusing on many things at one time. Just look around you. Notice people walking and texting or eating while driving and talking on the phone. Mindfulness is both a practice and a way of being present in the world that helps to transform our suffering into joy and peace. It provides a way of being in a wiser relationship with one’s experience and it can help you muster inner resources to take better care of yourself.

Take a few moments each day to notice what is happening in the moment, anytime, anywhere, using all your senses: brushing your teeth, washing dishes, driving, etc. Be fully immersed in the moment because it is the only moment you have.

We all know how important it is to help take care of others and for most of us, it comes naturally. But do you realize that it is even more important to take care of yourself first? After all, if you do not take care of you, how good will you be to anyone else? You must take care of yourself first, so that you can share your strengths with others. Everyone has a different idea of what self-care means to them. We each have different things that are important to our self-care, different ways of keeping ourselves happy, and different activities that bring us joy. There is no right or wrong way to take care of you – it is up to you to determine what that means and how to best achieve it.

## **WHY SELF-CARE IS SO IMPORTANT**

- Self-care prevents “overload burnout.” We’ve all been there; you push yourself to the point that you can’t take anymore so you just give up. Self-care helps you avoid getting to that point.
- Self-care reduces the negative effects of stress: A small amount of stress can serve a purpose, but after a while, it just breaks down your mind and body. Taking care of yourself means keeping your stress from taking over so you can function at full capacity.
- Self-care helps you refocus: When I was stuck on a complicated math problem in school, my teacher would suggest walking away and coming back. Breaks are the epitome of self-care, and studies show they’re great for helping you perform better.

## **WHAT CAN YOU DO TO TAKE CARE OF YOU?**

Some ideas: Take a nap, take a walk, play with your pet, read a good book, watch a funny movie, sit quietly and do nothing, take a long bath, go running, bake, visit a friend, paint your nails, eat your favorite food. Anything that brings you joy.