HOW CAN ‘MINDFULNESS’ HELP ME DURING COVID-19?

Whether we like to agree to it or not, as human beings, we love the idea of certainty and normalcy. Hence, when a global pandemic changes everything we ever knew in our life, all we are left to feel is constant anxiety and stress. We don’t know what lies ahead in our future and we can’t control anything that is happening now. So, how do we preserve our mental health in midst of this uncertainty? How do we focus our mind to the ‘here and now’ instead of worrying about the unknown future?

Some of the most beneficial exercises we can use to tranquilize our mind during this crisis are mindfulness techniques. Mindfulness allows one to have full awareness of the present moment without being judgmental or resistant toward the moment. There are many different ways to practice mindfulness, and they can be done at anytime, anywhere, and while doing anything. Therefore, at Mindfulness Matters, we have handpicked some useful methods that you can use to help you manage stress and anxiety during these difficult times of COVID-19.

MENTAL HEALTH 101:
Mental health is pertinent at every stage of life. It includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects our ability to think, feel, and act.

WORD OF THE DAY:
*HEALTH*

“State of complete physical, mental, and social wellbeing, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity” (WHO, 2006, p. 1).

MINFULNESS HELPS
ADDRESS:
- Pain
- Anxiety
- Self-regulation
- Sleep
- Quality of Life
EFFECTIVE MINDFULNESS TECHNIQUES:

01
Breathing Exercise

Please click the link below for an in-depth demonstration of deep breathing exercise.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sUffw7Ygz2I

02
Mindful Handwashing

Please click the link below to watch a demonstration of how to engage in mindful handwashing.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J34Hp6H36ek

03
Visualization

Please click the link below for an in-depth demonstration of visualization exercise.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ULjWzZWqM2c

04
Gratitude Journal

Keeping a gratitude journal increases positivity, reduces stress, and makes you feel happier. Click the link for a sample template of a gratitude journal.

According to the Mindfulness & Meditation program at Harvard University (2014):

- Studies have shown great benefits from mindfulness-based meditation against both physical and mental conditions including:
  - Stress
  - Anxiety
  - Depression
  - Pain
  - And so much more
- Participant’s MRI scans demonstrated a decrease in the activation of the amygdala when performing mindfulness meditation vs doing everyday tasks
  - Amygdala is a structure in the brain and is best known for its role for evoking fear responses

For more information, visit:

https://wellness.huhs.harvard.edu/Mindfulness

If you are feeling distressed and need further support, please refer to these resources:
- The Crisis Text Line by texting TALK to 741741
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK.
“Mindfulness is a way of befriending ourselves and our experience.”

- Jon Kabat-Zinn

A Test of Your Skill!
Managing Mental Health & Mindfulness

ACROSS
2. Try this technique by closing your eyes and imagining your happy place
4. Brain structure that is involved with experiencing emotions, especially fear
6. This tool helps keep track of the good things in life by writing it down
7. This practice can help prevent the spread of the virus
8. State of complete physical, mental, and social well being
9. This form of health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well being

DOWN
1. This practice is aimed to increase one's sense of being in the present without being judgmental or rejecting toward the moment
3. We focus our minds to the 'here and -'
5. Mental health professionals recommend this exercise because it is the best way to lower stress in the body

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