

Non-routine daily mindfulness practices:

Mindfulness in serving others: Make an intention to do kind things for others, during your day. As your day unfolds, look out for opportunities to be of service. It does not have to be a difficult task. Eg, opening doors for others, picking up something that falls for someone else, helping someone who appears to be lost, going out of your way to give people directions, making a genuine complement toward a co-workers, getting someone who appears in distress a cup of coffee, asking someone who appears sad if they needed to talk to someone, volunteering to help a colleague finish a task, or offering to do an item on the to do list of a resident who is over-whelmed. These are just a few examples. Sometimes spending 5-10 extra minutes doing something kind will have a lasting effect the whole day.

Mindful reflections every morning and night: Set aside about 5 minutes each morning for reflection: Take 2-3 deep mindful breaths while exhaling through your mouth. This can be enhanced by reading an inspirational quote (apps available on smart phones for free). Think about your intention for that day and perhaps you can set a few goals for your day. Each night before going to bed, sit or lay down in a comfortable position. Take several deep mindful breaths, the number depends on how many you may need to bring your attention to the present moment. Scan your body from toes to head one by one to see if there are any sensations in any part of your body. Reflect on your day, and try to bring to mind any specific action that you would like to change or improve. This is not a time to judge yourself or ruminate about an incident. This exercise is meant more to list the actions you would like to change and to place an intention of working on this the following day. Perhaps you can stop by reading an inspirational quote prior to going to sleep or creating a name for the day that just passed.

Mindful Journaling: Take 2-3 deep mindful breaths while exhaling through your mouth. Take 5-10 minutes to write down something about your day. Perhaps something you did that made you happy or something that was upsetting to you. End this activity with a doodle or a drawing of your day. If you prefer instead of drawing you can create a name for that day.

Mindful Walk: Set aside 10-30 minutes for this activity. Take 2-3 deep mindful breaths while exhaling through your mouth. Start your walk/ hike. Bring your attention to the present moment by noticing your surroundings. Make it your intention to smile during your walk. Smile at passersby, smile at what seems pleasing to your vision. Perhaps a tree, a bird, a car with a shiny ornament, a statue, a construction site, etc. If you notice that your mind has wandered, bring your attention back to the present moment by noticing your surroundings or the sound of your steps..

Formal Mindfulness Meditation: Set aside 5 to 45 minutes for this type of activity. These formal meditation practices can be enhanced through using a smartphone app, a podcast, a CD or a website. If you pick this option please ask the course educator to provide you with a list of resources available for this activity.