



HOW TO PRACTICE MINDFULNESS WHEN STRESSED OR OVERWHELMED - 06/07/2020

Notes

This session was run by Flo Scanlon from the Network of Wellbeing.

“Mindfulness is awareness that arises through paying attention, on purpose, in the present moment, non-judgementally.” Jon Kabat-Zinn Flo

Mindfulness can be really difficult when you're stressed and overwhelmed, Flo is a big believer that you can't pour from an empty cup. Recognise that this has been a stressful time, with lots of change.

It can be really useful to build a regular mindfulness practice to learn how you're feeling and when things are getting too much. A regular check in is useful and some of the tools shared today should help.

Flo has a morning mindfulness practice, she also practices simple mindful activities throughout the day. These can embed the idea of paying attention. Small and regular can be more effective than adding a larger practice to your to do list.

Part of her mindfulness practice is remembering to notice the difference. How do you feel before/ after practice? Don't expect miracles, you may still feel stressed, this is ok.

Network of Wellbeing

The Network of Wellbeing are online and offline when possible. You can find out more about them here - <https://networkofwellbeing.org/>

They have these events which you may find interesting;

[Lessons from Lockdown- self care and wellbeing: A Listening Space](#)
[Creativity for Health and Wellbeing](#)
[Webinars](#)

Mindfulness Techniques

- Counting breaths – A very simple technique that brings you into the moment and calms you down. Breathe in and out = 1 breath. Repeat to 10.
- Mindful eating & drinking – Really enjoy the moment, tune into your senses. Feels strange at first, but those moments throughout the day can be very calming for your nervous system, which can help when you feel overwhelmed.
- Mindful movements – e.g. If you feel stress in your shoulders – roll them
- Notice 5 things that are beautiful in the world around you – Things of beauty and things to be grateful for. There are many benefits to gratitude, a common practice can be to make a daily gratitude list. This can counteract negative cycle of thoughts when you're in a stressed state of mind.

Practice Self Compassion

Kristin Neff – an American author suggests treating yourself as a good friend can be a mindful first step when experiencing a moment of challenge.

Common humanity – It's ok to feel this way, you are not alone, others are struggling. Combine with self kindness, be conscious of your inner dialogue. Check out Kristin's work- link by clicking the link in her name above.

RAIN technique

- Recognise – what is happening
- Allow – life to be just as it is
- Investigate – with a gentle curious intention. What does it feel like? Bring in nurturing and self-kindness
- Nurture – with loving presence.
- A good resource for this is by Tara Brach [here](#).

Some types of practice will resonate for you, some won't. Find what works for you. It can be good to recognise the value of connection, our personal happiness can be shared with our collective wellbeing.

Kindness can come from mindfulness. There may be an interrelationship between the way you care for your world and the quality of presence and care in the activism work that you do.