

Mindfulness Skills

What is Mindfulness?

Mindfulness skills involve the *ability to be aware of your thoughts, emotions, physical sensations, and actions—in the present moment—without judging or criticizing yourself or your experience.*

~ Jon Kabat-Zinn

Mindfulness is:

- Mindfulness is deliberately paying attention, non-judgmentally.
- Mindfulness encompasses both internal processes and external environments.
- Mindfulness is being aware of what is present for you mentally, emotionally, and physically *in each moment*...not in the past, not in the future.
- With practice, mindfulness may help you free yourself of reactive, habitual patterns of thinking, feeling and acting.
- Mindfulness promotes balance, choice, wisdom and acceptance of what is.

Why Does This Matter?

- In order to be fully aware of your experiences in the present moment, it's necessary to do so without criticizing yourself, your situation, or other people. This is called "*radical acceptance*." It means tolerating something without judging it or trying to change it.
- This is important because if you're judging yourself, your situation, or someone else in the present moment, then you're not really paying attention to what's happening in that moment.
 - For example, many people spend a lot of time worrying about mistakes they're made in the past or worrying about mistakes that they might make in the future.
 - But while they're doing this, their focus is no longer on what is happening to them *now*; their thoughts are somewhere else. As a result, they live in a painful past or future, and life feels very difficult. Mindfulness skills are about undoing this habit.