

PREPARING FOR HOLIDAY STRESS WITH MINDFULNESS

By Clara Wicoff



If you turn on the radio, you may hear that “it’s the most wonderful time of the year.” But the holiday season can bring with it many stressors, from trying to have flawless decorations to making the perfect holiday meal and more. In addition to preventing you from living in the moment and enjoying time with family and friends, this stress can also affect the body and present as physical pain (such as a headache). One practice which can help you live in the present moment this holiday season is mindfulness.



If you find yourself facing stress this holiday season, remember to STOP: Slow down; Take a breath; Observe bodily feelings, thoughts, and possibilities; and Proceed, considering multiple possibilities. This mnemonic device can help you remember an easy way to practice being mindful this holiday season.

Other beginning mindfulness exercises include mindful relaxation and mindful breathing. To achieve mindful relaxation, consider setting aside a specific amount of time each day to practice a mindful meditation.

This could be as little as five minutes. During this time, find a quiet place and a comfortable body position. Focus on your breathing. Deep breathing can slow your heart rate and lower your blood pressure.

To learn more about incorporating mindfulness into your everyday life and practicing mindfulness this holiday season, consider attending an “Everyday Mindfulness” educational program offered by the Southwind Extension District! This free program will be offered twice in December, including an in-person offering at the Lola Public Library on December 13th at 1 PM and a virtual offering via Zoom on December 15th at 5:30 PM. To register for the Zoom link, visit bit.ly/SouthwindMindfulness. Attend the offering which best fits your schedule!

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