

## Mental Health Daily Tips & Tricks

### • Practice Mindfulness

• Q: What is that?

• A: Mindfulness is the act of staying in the present moment utilizing a therapeutic technique such as focusing on one's breathing. In doing so, while we are quietly aware of our thoughts, feelings, and physical sensations, we choose to allow them to simply "pass by".

• Q: How do I do that?

• A: Mindfulness can be practiced in many forms, though the most commonly used technique is paying attention to one's breathing pattern. To do this, simply find a quiet place, sit comfortably, breath easily, and stay focused on your inhalations and exhalations. If your mind wanders, and naturally it will, simply return your focus to your breathing.

• Q: How long should I do this each day?

• A: The benefits of practicing mindfulness can be felt after as little as a few minutes each day. Feel free to use a few minutes as a starting point and progress/extend from there! Our ultimate goal is to develop the skill to be fully aware in all that we do in daily life, so as to truly live in each moment.

### • Reframe Situations

• Q: What does that mean?

• A: Reframing a situation means thinking about something in a different manner than our initial perception.

• Q: How can I do that?

• A: Strive to find at least one positive thought about the situation, and then apply it. For example, in our current COVID-19 world, while each of us has suffered losses (our sports season, various school events, etc.), what opportunities have also presented themselves?

### • Practice Gratefulness

• Q: How can I do this right now?

• A: In times like these, it is sometimes hard to be grateful, but know that we are all struggling in some way and that a way to get through is to focus on things we are grateful for no matter how small they may seem. For example, we can be grateful for the people around us, our health, our ability to find ways to help others in this time, friends, family, pets, etc.

### • Practice Relaxation Techniques

• Q: What are some examples?

• A: Different people use different relaxation techniques in different situations, so explore a bunch to see what works for you! Examples include breathing exercises, going for a walk, yoga, meditating with music, and much more. For more ideas, please consider going to: <https://www.wellspan.org/health-library/Document.aspx?id=uz2209>.

## Key Things to Remember

- Our mind-body connection is inseparable. In fact, how our mind works (i.e. how we think) affects our whole body, including how we feel and function.
- Even though sports seasons have been cancelled/postponed, you can still find alternative ways to be part of your team. These ways include setting up regular video chat sessions with teammates, finding ways to stay competitive with group workout challenges and/or virtual game nights, planning a future end-of-summer get together to look forward to, and much more.