

Mindfulness

Path to Better Sleep - Quiet Your Mind

How does mindfulness help your insomnia? Mindfulness can help to lower your overall level of stress by increasing your ability to just let thoughts come and go. Mindfulness keeps you from getting “hooked” on thought content and pulled away from the present moment. If you are constantly focused on the past or have anxiety about the future, you cannot relax into the serenity that may be present in this very moment. Being relaxed helps to promote sleep onset. Beyond just promoting relaxation, mindfulness can help you pay attention to signs of sleepiness. In the past, you probably had little difficulty knowing if you were sleepy. But, if you have been struggling with insomnia for a long while, you may have forgotten how to notice the normal signs of sleepiness. Instead you may rely on the clock to tell you when you will attempt sleep and when you will get out of bed. Mindfulness can help you to tune into your body’s natural cycles of wakefulness and sleepiness again, as you might have done when you were a child. You can then use these cues to determine when your body is in need of sleep and when it is not. So, mindfulness can help to stabilize the mind throughout the day, and can also help when you are trying to fall asleep.

When it comes to mindfulness, there is no “one size fits all.” You will need to try different techniques until you find that works best for you. Below are different mediums and techniques available for mindfulness practice.



Mobile Phone Apps:

- The VA has an app called the Mindfulness Coach. The app has nine guided exercises to practice the core concepts of mindfulness. The app is located at: <https://mobile.va.gov/app/mindfulness-coach>
- If you like using apps, there are hundreds of mindfulness apps available that you can try. Do a search for mindfulness apps and browse the results until you find one that fits you.

Websites:

There are numerous websites that center on mindfulness such as:

- www.mindful.org
- www.headspace.com
- www.pocketmindfulness.com/6-mindfulness-exercises-you-can-try-today/

If you prefer using your computer versus apps, there are thousands of sites that offer a variety of mindfulness techniques. Do a search for mindfulness techniques until you find one that fits you.

Videos:

The web is filled with thousands of mindfulness videos. Videos offer guided meditation and lead you by either audio or visual stimulation.

Go to YouTube.com and do a search for mindfulness exercises or do a general web search for mindfulness videos to explore the thousands of videos available.

Explore various ways to practice mindfulness and find what helps you learn to quiet your mind.