

**“Mindfulness Meditation-  
choosing to be present.”**

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# What is mindfulness?

- Mindfulness is paying attention, noticing, being aware of our present moment experience.
- It is choosing to be present and being present.
- It is non-judgemental, reflexive awareness of our thoughts, body sense, feeling tone, impulses and intuition.
- It is patient presence.

# Two Aspects of Mind

- Thinking mind- words and pictures, goal-oriented problem-solving mechanism
- Aware mind- silent, non-judgemental, clear-seeing

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“The intuitive mind is a sacred gift, the rational mind is its faithful servant. We have created a society that honours the servant and has forgotten the gift.”

-Albert Einstein

# The Stress Response

- Triggered by the perception of a threat, a challenge or a pressing task.
- The threat, challenge or demand can be real or imagined.

“There were many catastrophes in my life and some of them actually happened.” -Mark Twain

# Chronic Low-grade Stress

The conscious and unconscious habits of craving and aversion, running towards and running away from, problem- saturation and the “more” syndrome create chronic low-grade stress.

There is constantly a threat, challenge or demand.

The stress response becomes a lifestyle and a source of identity..... “stimulation addiction”.

# Chronic Low-grade Stress

- Hyperactive “threat detector” (amygdala)
- Hyper vigilance
- Narrow-focus of attention
- Excessive thinking
- Projection in time and space
- Ineffective digesting, nourishing, detoxifying, healing
- “More syndrome”
- Problem saturation

# The Relaxation Response

- Triggered by the perception of safety and choice
- Presence
- Open, inclusive awareness
- Monitoring self, other, needs, feelings, instinct, integrity
- Grounding and centering
- Improves digestion, nourishing, detoxification, healing
- ‘Space for grace’

# Choosing to be Present

- Breath awareness- the mysterious relationship
  - the breath of life
  - receiving/ letting go
  - making space for new life
- Body awareness
  - sensing/ experiential reality
  - grounding
  - tuning in/ listening
- Emotional awareness- centering: feelings, needs, intuition
  - compassion
  - ownership/responsibility
  - MYOB