

## GYE Mindfulness recordings

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As @ChaimMod posted in a neighboring thread, our new hotline (646-GYE-6600) now has a new tremendous resource - a collection of mindfulness recordings, that have been prepared for GYE *al taharas hakodesh*. The mindfulness recordings have been reviewed by Rabbi Avrohom Union from RCC Vaad and unlike many other audios available online there are 100% pure and have no hints of anything problematic c"v.

Mindfulness can help us in 3 ways:

1. It can help us handle stress in a healthy way, instead of using P&M to escape it. Stress and other painful emotions are often the underlying issues behind P&M struggles.
2. It can help us experience and "surf" urges without acting on them.
3. It can help us avoid relapse after reaching a good streak.

The following audio sessions have been written and recorded to suit the experience of everyone from a beginner to an expert.

## What is mindfulness?

Mindfulness is a natural human practice that many of us have forgotten or moved away from over time. Have you ever noticed how you can do the same task, like brushing your teeth so many times, that you no longer think about how you're doing it? Saying large parts of davening while thinking about something else? Or what about walking or driving along your daily route and being lost in thought instead of paying attention to where you are going or even what is happening around you?

These are examples of being mindless.

Being mindful - the opposite of mindlessness - involves being more curious about your external world, that is your environment and during your daily routines - noticing what happens as if they are new to you every time.

Being mindful is also about noticing your internal world - your thoughts, emotions and bodily sensations as they happen moment by moment.

Mindfulness helps you to expand your awareness of the things that drive you, motivate you, get in your way, trip you up, and keep you stuck in old habits and behaviors that you may want to change.

Although mindfulness is a natural thing to do - it does take some practice to notice your thoughts, feelings and sensations - which is why we have produced this series of recorded mindfulness exercises for you to practice.

### Practical tips for mindfulness

To get the most out of these mindfulness audios, there are some practical things you can do to improve your experience:

- Set aside regular time to practice - preferably daily, or weekly.
- Starting with short periods of mindfulness can work better than occasional long ones.
- Make sure you are comfortable - sitting in your favorite chair can help.
- Take it slowly. You don't need to set ambitious goals or put pressure on yourself.
- Remember, you're learning a new skill that will take time to develop.
- Don't worry about whether you're doing it right or not - just do it the best you can.
- You don't need any special equipment for the exercises.
- Do every session at least once.

### Tips for starting a mindfulness practice

Once you have sampled the mindfulness audios you may decide to start a mindfulness practice, so here are a few tips to help you do this successfully.

- **Create a mindfulness space.** Find a space in your home or office where you can practice mindfulness without being interrupted and where you feel comfortable.
- **Practice at the same time every day.** Routine is the foundation of any practice, so if possible choose a time that you know works for you most days and add it to your schedule. Lots of people choose first thing in the morning, before they start their day, as

it helps them have a more positive and productive day.

- **Repetition is key.** The mindfulness audios we have provided for you are a great way of starting your practice. You can practice the same sessions for a week at a time and then move on to a new session to keep things interesting.
- **Target your needs.** If you notice you are struggling with an issue such as stress, anxious thoughts or poor focus, choose a mindfulness session that will help you - such as a breathing practice - and add it to your existing schedule.
- **Take your time.** There have been many studies that show the brain region called the PFC (Prefrontal cortex) which is associated with higher-order brain functions such as awareness, concentration and decision-making – is improved after just 8-weeks of practice. This is based on 10 - minutes a day - every day of mindfulness practice.
- **Cultivate Mindfulness throughout the day.** When you start your personal practice you will find there are occasions when you cannot sit for 10-minutes to practice. This doesn't have to prevent you from cultivating mindfulness. If this is the case, then you can practice noticing your breath as you brush your teeth, drive to work or even while sitting in a boring meeting. The idea of mindfulness is that wherever you go, you can be mindful.

## The Mindfulness Audios

There are six Mindfulness audio series that has been organized as follows:

Series 1. Beginners Mindfulness (6 recordings)

Series 2. Mindful Breathing exercises (this series currently only has 1 recording - there are more on the way)

Series 3. Mindfulness for Relaxation (8 recordings)

Series 4. Thoughts & Feelings (4 recordings)

Series 5. Urge Surfing exercises (8 recordings)

Series 6. Relapse Prevention exercises (4 recordings)

(To listen to these, call 646-GYE-6600 extension 18. Then press the number of the series you'd like to listen to.)

The Beginners Mindfulness sessions will introduce the basic techniques of mindfulness such as using your five senses, increasing awareness, and mindful breathing.

In series 2, you will find more mindful breathing exercises that you can learn and practice anywhere at any time (not while driving or operating machinery), as a tool for lowering stress and increasing your awareness.

Next, in series 3, you will be introduced to a series of relaxation exercises that when done mindfully will help you to relax your mind and body.

Series 4, addresses the thoughts and emotions often associated with P&M. In this series you will practice how to stop the judgment mindfully and learn how to increase awareness of your negative thoughts around P&M.

Series 5, is the Urge Surfing collection of mindfulness practices and you will be introduced to a variety of techniques for managing, and overcoming cravings and urges.

Finally, series 6, The Relapse prevention series is focused on helping you to become more mindful of your actions, environment, and any cues or triggers, with a view to helping you quit P&M.

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