

What is it? Mindfulness is "the basic human ability to be fully present, aware of where we are and what we're doing, and not be overly reactive or overwhelmed by what's going on around us. We know that mindfulness is a great tool for adults to be more relaxed, beat stress, and improve their overall quality of life; but does this hold true for children as well?

Mindfulness for Kids

Mindfulness expert David Gelles defines it as "the simple practice of bringing a gentle, accepting attitude to the present moment." Children should find it easy to understand what mindfulness is based on this definition, but you might need to discuss it with them to make sure they have a good grasp on it—especially if they are very young.

How Can We Best Teach Mindfulness?

As is the case for most traits, habits, and skills, the best way to instill mindfulness is to start early. Mindful children grow to be mindful teenagers, mindful adolescents, and mindful adults. In addition to getting started early, it's important to note that the best way to teach mindfulness to your children is to practice it yourself and model it for them.

What are the Benefits?

- Improving physical health.
- Improving mental health (e.g. helping to address stress, anxiety, and depression, and improving sleep).
- Enhancing important social and emotional skills (e.g. the ability to feel in control, to make and maintain meaningful relationships, to accept reality, to manage difficult feelings, and to be calmer, more resilient, more compassionate, and more empathetic).
- Increasing intellect.
- Improved cognitive outcomes (e.g. better attention and focus, higher grades).
- Improved social-emotional skills (e.g. emotion regulation, better behaviour in school, higher empathy and perspective-taking, and better social skills).
- Greater well-being (e.g. lower test anxiety, lower stress, fewer post-traumatic symptoms, and reduced depression).

This YOGA DAY, Let's Celebrate Mindfulness

Rather than focusing on what has happened or what might happen, mindfulness teaches us to respond to whatever shows up in our present experience, be it good or bad



Be Mindful... Try these

1. JENGA

Have you ever played Jenga? If so, you know that it can be a lot of fun but that it also requires concentrated attention and awareness. Take advantage of this fact and use Jenga to build your mindfulness.



2. PLAY A PENNY GAME

This game is good for children 3 and up and can be played one-on-one or with a group. All you'll need to play is a penny for each player and a basket.

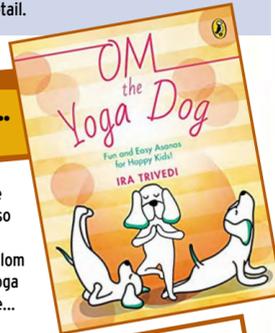
Here's how to play:

- Give everyone a penny and allow them one minute to study it, focusing on the details.
- Put all the pennies in the basket.
- Have each player pick their penny from the basket.
- Once a player chooses their penny from the basket, have them explain how they knew it was their penny.
- The penny game can be played with other objects too; the important part is that the children playing are able to focus on something and pay attention to detail.



OM THE YOGA DOG... COMING SOON

This book teaches asanas with the help of step-by-step illustrations so that you can develop flexibility, strength and mindfulness. Try Anulom Vilom with Prana (the frog) and Yoga Nidra with Moksha (elephant) here...



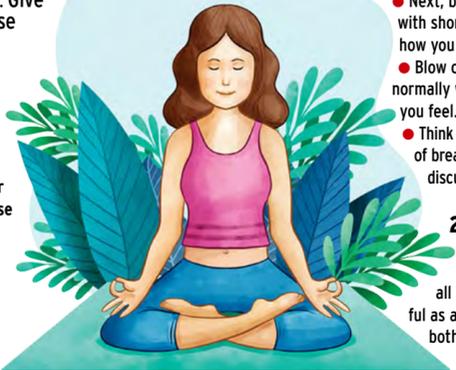
MINDFULNESS ACTIVITIES

Breathing exercises are a great way to introduce yourself to mindfulness practice. Give one or all of these three breathing exercises a try...

1. Breathe with a Pinwheel

First, grab two pinwheels—one for yourself and one for your child. Next, follow these five steps:

- Sit with your backs straight and your bodies relaxed.
- Blow on your pinwheels together using long, deep



breaths. Notice how you feel—calm and relaxed? Having trouble sitting still?

- Next, blow on your pinwheels with short, quick breaths. Notice how you feel again.
- Blow on the pinwheels as you normally would. Again, notice how you feel.
- Think about the different types of breathing you are engaged in; discuss how it made you feel.

2. Square Breath

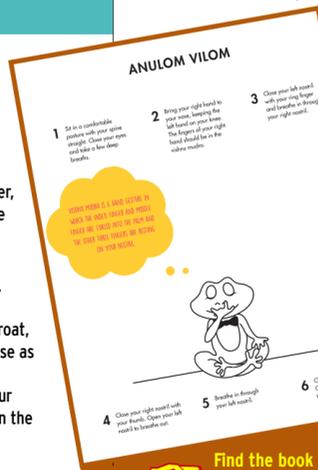
A square breath is a breath that is even on all sides, and it can be useful as a mindfulness exercise for both you and your child.

Here's what to do:

- Breathe in, to the count of four.
- Hold the breath for four seconds.
- Breathe out to the count of four.
- To help keep track, draw a square in the air with your finger, taking four seconds on each side

3. Darth Vader Breath

- Breathe in through your nose.
- Keep your mouth closed and exhale from the back of your throat, making a 'Darth Vader' style noise as you do.
- This will help you focus on your breath and stay fully anchored in the present!



ANULOM VILOM

- 1 Sit in a comfortable position with your spine straight. Close your eyes and take a few deep breaths.
- 2 Bring your right hand to your nose, keeping the left hand on your knee. The top of your right hand should be to the right nostril.
- 3 Close your left nostril with your ring finger and breathe in through your right nostril.
- 4 Close your right nostril with your thumb. Open your left nostril to breathe out.
- 5 Breathe in through your left nostril.
- 6 Open your right nostril to breathe out.



YOGA NIDRA

- 1 Lie down in savasana. Spend a few moments paying attention to your breathing and relaxing your body and mind.
- 2 Then focus on each part of your body, starting with your toes and moving up to your head.

Find the book here:
<https://www.amazon.in/Om-Yoga-Dog-Asanas-Happy/dp/0143448293>



Excited about Father's Day on June 21, Sunday? Here are a few posters and greeting card cut-outs that you could gift your dad! Take a print, cut out the edges, fill it with colour and glitter... we are good to go!

Also did you know... author AA Milne created Winnie the Pooh for his son, Christopher Robin. Pooh was based on Robin's teddy bear, Edward, a gift Christopher had received for his first birthday...

Tell us how you celebrated with dad on timesnie175@gmail.com

Happy Father's Day



ROALD DAHL My Dad is FANTASTIC



For more activities and cut outs log in to <https://www.penguin.co.uk>