

MINDFUL MAY

WEEK 5 CHALLENGE

MINDFULNESS PRACTICE:
MEDITATION



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Intentions to Actions Leadership



WEEK 1 - THE WEEK OF NOTICING

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Noticing in a non-judgmental way is an essential part of practicing mindfulness. It is a conscious act of paying attention in the present moment to what is showing up in our minds.

The benefits of noticing builds our mental alertness to paying attention in the present moment. When we do this we benefit both in how we care for ourselves and in how we respond to others.

Noticing is a skill that can be cultivated but is one that needs to be put to practice on a regular basis. Our minds work very quickly in a very automatic way. In our world today the conditions are rarely aligned for our minds to be able to settle in the present moment making noticing even more challenging.

This week is centered around the act of simply noticing and taking in our senses in an intentional way. Each day follow the calendar prompts to center attention for several moments on the sense that is called out. If possible try to practice noticing and taking in each of the senses multiple times each day.

REFLECTIONS TO CONSIDER THROUGHOUT THE WEEK:

1. What surprises if any that you found when focusing on one particular sense?

2. How challenging did you find making the time to be intentional with a practice with noticing?

3. What other ways can you play with noticing other moments in your day to day?



"The thinking mind doesn't hold
a candle to the feeling body"
Judson Brewer

Interoceptive awareness is the act of sensing into the feeling body. It is the practice of not explaining or defining a feeling in the body but sensing in and experiencing the body.

Everything we experience throughout the day both in the average moments of life and when we are going full force at something our body is activated and responding. It does so most often without conscious awareness, and this is very useful. If we have to stop every moment to think and activate a body response of action, we would hardly be functional let alone productive.

Practicing sensing into the body though is a very useful act as it builds our mental awareness of how to be with difficulty both mentally and physically in a more timely and efficient way. It is a core skill in resilience as it works our mental muscle of awareness to be with something rather than to deny or ignore what is showing up. It also provides a very useful roadmap to care for ourselves. Clenching of the jaw is a common place we hold tension in the body. When one practices noticing and sensing into this part of the body, they often find they can release tension much quicker before it turns into more, deeper pain such as TMJ, headaches, or earache.

REFLECTIONS TO CONSIDER THROUGHOUT THE WEEK:

1. What difficulties if any did you have with sensing into the feeling of the body?

2. When you were sensing in did you find yourself going to the thinking mind state of explaining or defining the feeling rather than being with the feeling?

3. As you practiced the full body scan did you notice distractions or discomfort? If so were you able to notice and come back to the full practice without judgement?



WEEK 3 - EXPLORING OUR HABIT LOOPS

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Day to day life is filled with countless moments and actions that we take with little conscious awareness. This is very useful and part of the beauty of our mind. We learn a skill or behavior, practice it often, see it as useful and our mind seemingly masters it so that it now can respond for us with little conscious thought. Think brushing teeth or making the bed and how often do you need to stop and step by step reflect on the actions to take.

Habit loops of the mind for day -to -day functionality can be very useful but often habit loops of the mind can be very reactive particularly when it comes to habits around our response to feelings or emotions.

Taking time to notice and be with some of our day-to-day habit loops builds our mental muscle to pay attention with more awareness to the habit loops of mind that often can cause us suffering or pain. Being with the day to do habit loops is not done slow us down or judge them but with the intention to build our curiosity muscle. When we do this our mind can support us at a higher level when needed,

REFLECTIONS TO CONSIDER THROUGHOUT THE WEEK:

1. What stories of the mind did you notice while investigating and being with your daily habit loops?

2. Did staying fully present to the daily habit loop you were investigating come easily or did distractions or desire to move more quickly kick in?

3. What challenges and or benefits if any did you find having a full day of paying attention?



WEEK 4 - THE WEEK MINDFUL MOMENTS

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This week is a week of fun mindful moments. Mindfulness so often is shared as something to do when one is in a challenging moment but the greatest way to build presence and establish a habit of mindfulness is cultivating the presence in the fun and enjoyable moments.

An essential understanding and powerful lesson in mindfulness is that all moments pass both good and bad. We can often know this conceptually but when a moment is hard and challenging our conceptual understanding means little to nothing to what we are feeling.

Doing the practice of being mindful in the good moments lets one really experience the moment fully and taking in all the joy of it. The practice equips us with a stronger mental mind state when the difficult moments come. We can see with more clarity that we can be with these difficult moments but we don't have to be defined by them and that they also have an ending point. This end point can come with greater lightness and speed.

REFLECTIONS TO CONSIDER THROUGHOUT THE WEEK:

1. Did you feel any different about any of the experiences this week when you worked to take them in fully mindful?

2. Did you experience any powerful moments of discovery during any of the mindful moments?

2. How comfortable or uncomfortable were you with mindful rest?



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Doing a mindfulness of heart and compassion practice regular has shown in most studies to have the greatest impact on improved resilience, lessened anxiety and lower depression over all other forms of meditation.

Mindfulness of the heart and compassion can also be one of the most difficult to establish. It can have the perceived story or judgement that it is soft and not useful, and it can be uncomfortable. One phrase I share often is “hokey works” when we see something as being soft or silly. It is a gentle reminder to the mind to settle into something that might be uncomfortable and allow a lighter approach.

Our minds work to protect us all the time. The muscle scans for things in the environment at a rate we cannot even conceptualize. It looks for cues and stimuli we send to the muscle and has put action into motion most often before we even take in all information. This is important to know and understand because that means the muscle of the mind isn't looking for positive and happiness all the time unless we train it that this is useful. It is too busy looking for threats or perceived threats. This week you are working the muscle to be consciously present with moments of the heart so that the mind can see that is useful and helpful.

REFLECTIONS TO CONSIDER THROUGHOUT THE WEEK:

1. What moments this week if any were most difficult to find and or be with?

2. How was noticing awe? Did it have to be something defined, was it found in the mind, how comfortable was the experience of being with awe?

3. How did you feel throughout the week as you took in more moments of the heart?



THE BASICS



ESTABLISH A DAILY PRACTICE

Meditation takes practice and time to learn in order for the full benefits to be experienced, so consistency is important



CHOOSE A LOCATION AND TIME

Teachers recommend you find a comfortable spot in your home when you won't be disturbed, which allows you to focus and feel safe.



LEARN PROPER POSTURE

The goal is to remain upright, tall and balanced in an erect posture with your back straight, which allows you to breathe deeply.



TRY TO DROP ANY JUDGMENT

When meditating, one of the goals is to keep yourself from getting frustrated, overwhelmed or disappointed with your wandering mind.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. SET YOUR INTENTION

Your intention sets the stage for what is possible during your meditation and what beliefs you take away.

2. TAKE TIME TO RELAX THE BODY

Pay attention to the areas where you likely hold some tension including your jaw eyebrows around the eyes forehead chest belly and the neck.

3. PAY CLOSE ATTENTION TO YOUR SENSES

Focusing on your body's sensation settles the wandering mind and helps "ground you."

4. INVESTIGATE WHAT YOU'RE FEELING

Ask yourself if anything feels and pleasant painful or difficult or reminds you of any past events that stick

5. KEEP COMING BACK TO THE BODY

Keep coming back to the body and breath sensations while you work on decency gauging from the what is popping into your mind.

about

Pam is the principle owner of Intentions to Actions Leadership. A Mindfulness based leadership company that centers around helping individuals and organizations identify their desired leadership intentions in both personal and professional life. With the structure of utilizing traditional leadership development model combined with the foundations of mindfulness Pam helps to guide a roadmap with actions that align to those intentions.

Pam comes to the space of mindful leadership coaching after spending 25 plus years as a senior corporate executive with various large fortune 500 companies. During her final years in her previous career path Pam began her own personal journey of mindfulness. Pam is now fully certified coach of mPEAK a highly recognized mindful performance enhancement program.



Pam Markuski

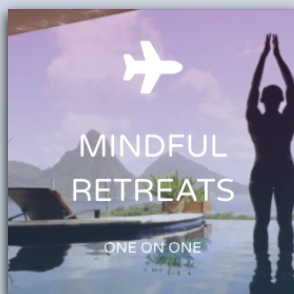
Pam while progressing in her career, moving throughout the country always had her greatest source of pride with her, her son Casey. Raising Casey alone but always supported by family and deep personal friends Pam gives gratitude reflection daily for the gifts of those she has in her life. Pam now lives in San Diego with her son who when not traveling for work is cooking for mom and happily beating mom in a game of chess.

learn more

INTENTIONS TO ACTIONS LEADERSHIP

Mindful Leadership individually and as an organization to be authentic and sustainable must be INTENTIONAL in the goals and objectives and the ACTIONS need to align and support those intentions...the smaller the GAP the greater the reward...let's work to close the GAP together!

services



courses



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