

Listen
to the
Star
within
yourself



By taming depression & improving
WELLNESS WITH MINDFULNESS

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 **WILD 5★ Wellness™**
Wellness Interventions for Life's Demands

KEEP AN OPEN MIND

To beginning your journey as a more mindful person

" Be happy in the moment, that's enough. Each moment is all we need, not more."

— Mother Teresa

Mindfulness – what does it mean?

Being mindful means being aware of your:

Thoughts

Feelings

Bodily sensations
in your daily life

An important aspect of mindfulness is acceptance. This means that you pay attention to your thoughts and feelings without judging them and doing your best to remember there is no "right" or "wrong" way to think or feel in any moment.

By taking a mental step back and becoming aware of your thoughts and feelings you can help yourself notice signs of stress or anxiety, which can eventually help you manage those feelings.

WHY YOU SHOULD PRACTICE MINDFULNESS:



good for the body: studies have shown that, after just eight weeks of practicing, mindful meditation boosts the immune system's ability to fight off illness.



good for the mind: studies have found that mindfulness increases positive emotions while reducing negative emotions and stress.



changes the brain: research has found that it increases density of grey matter in parts of the brain that are linked to learning, memory, emotional regulation, and empathy.



helps to focus: studies suggest that mindfulness helps us tune out distractions, while improving our memory and attention skills.

MIND FULL
OR MINDFUL?

Do you want to have a mind that is FULL or one that is MINDFUL? Take a moment right now to consider your own mind and how you are feeling. We encourage you to read on and learn how you can commit to starting your own mindfulness practice today.

GET TO THE HEART OF YOUR GREY MATTER

By combining Mindfulness Meditation with Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

"Mastering others is strength: mastering yourself is true power."

— Lao Tzu

If there has ever been a match made in heaven, it's Mindfulness Meditation and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy – otherwise known as Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT). MBCT is a relatively new form of help that combines Eastern philosophy and practice (Mindfulness) with Western philosophy and practice (Cognitive Therapy). It is designed to help people deal with multiple issues such as depression and anxiety, and can be used to treat symptoms, and to prevent problems from returning.



MEDITATE ON THIS!

A recent study of stressed individuals who practiced mindfulness for 8 weeks experienced a decrease in the size of their amygdala, the part of the brain that is responsible for fear and the many changes that it causes in the body. Excessive stress can cause fearful and worried feelings and the amygdala responds by becoming "hot" and over-active. The study showed that meditation appeared to "cool" down this important part of the brain.

We can't stress these facts enough!

Studies have shown that people who meditate respond to stress differently. When faced with stressful situations, their heart rate does not increase as much as those who don't meditate or who are new to meditation. In the long run, this is very good for the heart and the body!

Generally speaking, meditating and mindfulness will help you develop and maintain a more positive frame of mind by reducing your emotional reaction to stressful events, so read on and learn how to get your "Om" on...

EXERCISE YOUR MIND

*" You have brains in your head.
You have feet in your shoes.
You can steer yourself, any direction you choose."*

— Dr. Seuss



A Mindful Moment with a Raisin

(A mindful eating experience)

Slowly eat a raisin and use all of your senses, one after another, to observe the raisin in great detail, from the way it feels in your hand to the way its flavor bursts in your mouth. This exercise reminds us that eating a single raisin can be a truly mindful experience and offers us a glimpse into how often we go through life in a mindless haze. Don't like raisins? Don't worry – you can try this exercise with different foods like a piece of chocolate or a grape. Once done, be sure to congratulate yourself on completing a mindfulness exercise!

Now let's try a Cognitive (thought) exercise

Sometimes the automatic thoughts we have are inaccurate and cause us distress. Take a moment and read the description below. While doing so, imagine you are in the scenario.

Walking Down the Street Exercise:

- You're walking down the street
- On the other side of the street you see someone you know
- As they pass you on the street, you smile and wave
- The person does not wave back and keeps walking

While doing this exercise:

What thoughts did you have?

What feelings did you have?

What bodily sensations did you experience?

As you reflect on your answers above, if you had any negative thoughts, feelings, or bodily sensations, please consider this - is it possible that you misinterpreted the situation?

Let's do a Cognitive (thought) exercise together!

What if the person didn't see you waving to them or they didn't recognize you?

Or, what if they were preoccupied and not aware of their surroundings? Do you now see how automatic thoughts, feelings, and bodily sensations may not be 'accurate'? By using our cognitive thoughts, we can challenge these negative perceptions.

By understanding how you react to and interpret this scenario, you will have experienced a cognitive exercise.

Congratulations!



TAKE ADVANTAGE OF MINDFULNESS RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO YOU

You may be feeling a bit lost and not know where to begin, but trust us when we say you have lots of options! We recommend that you have a look to see what's available – you'll be pleasantly surprised at all the resources you find.

MINDFULNESS PROGRAMS

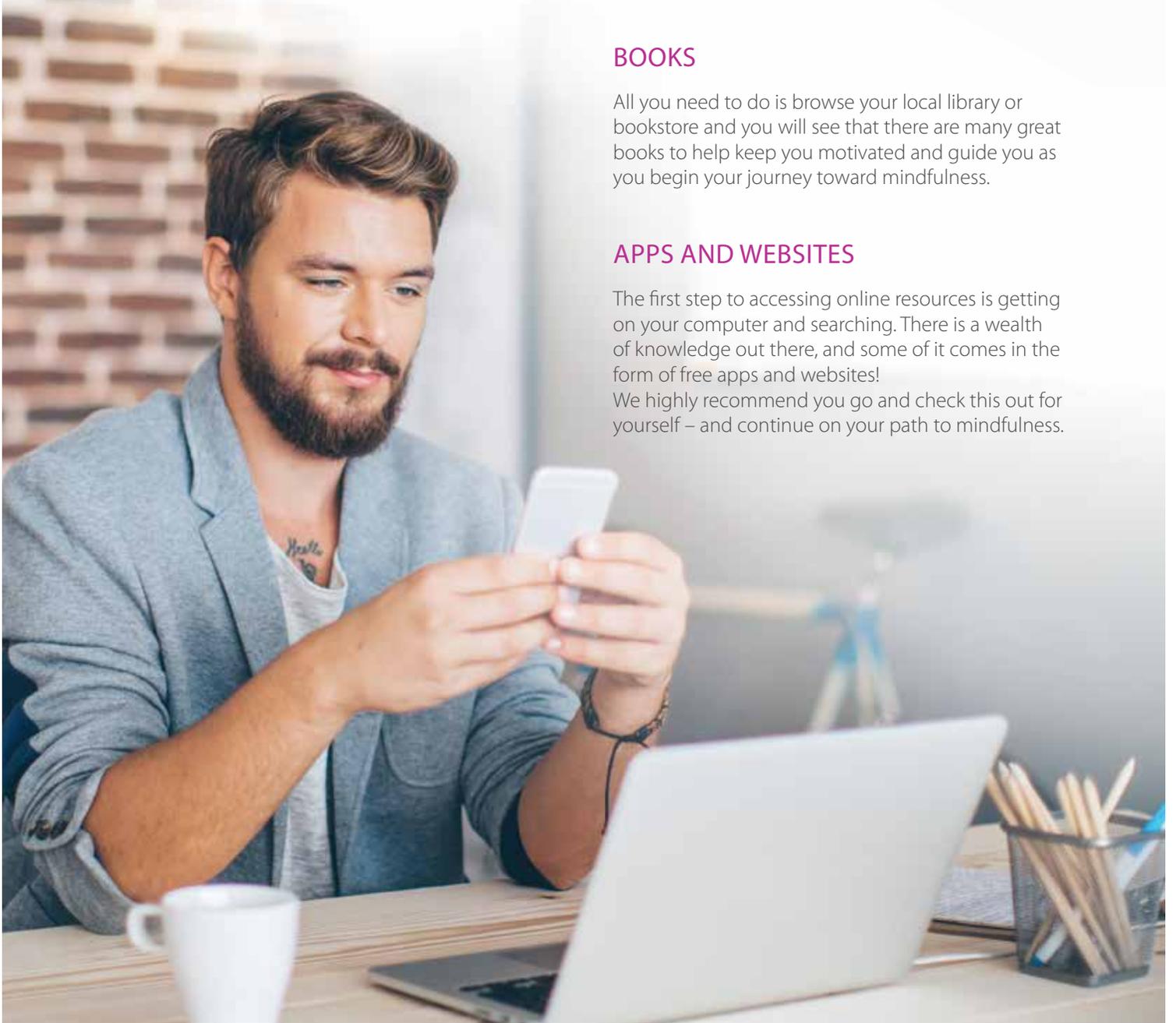
You may want to consider locating an MBCT 8-week class in your area to help you get started. If attending a class in person isn't an option, there are also programs available online.

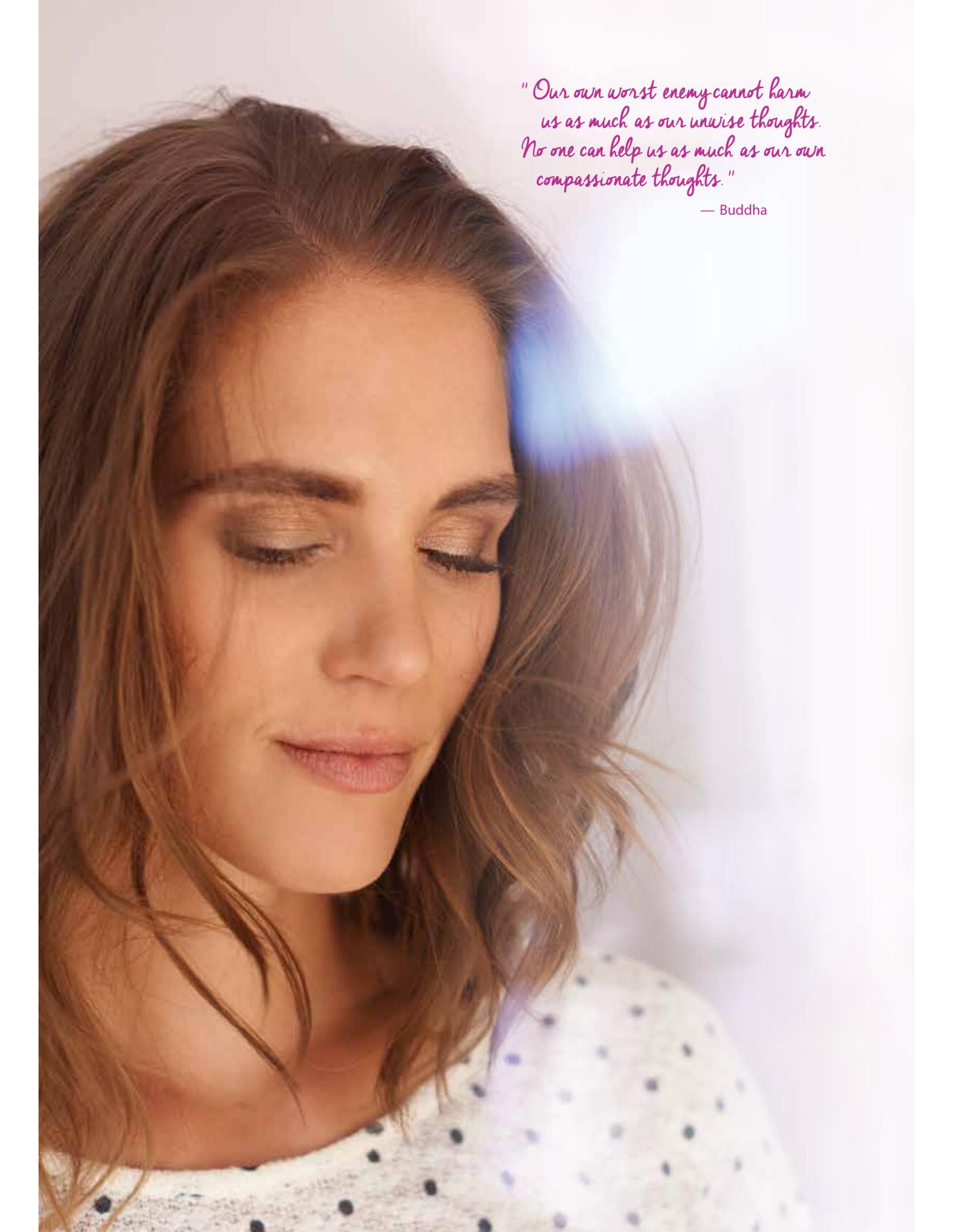
BOOKS

All you need to do is browse your local library or bookstore and you will see that there are many great books to help keep you motivated and guide you as you begin your journey toward mindfulness.

APPS AND WEBSITES

The first step to accessing online resources is getting on your computer and searching. There is a wealth of knowledge out there, and some of it comes in the form of free apps and websites! We highly recommend you go and check this out for yourself – and continue on your path to mindfulness.





*" Our own worst enemy cannot harm
us as much as our unwise thoughts.
No one can help us as much as our own
compassionate thoughts. "*

— Buddha

MY ACTION PLAN

Please fill out your action plan and take it with you to your next appointment, so you and your healthcare provider can create a game plan to strengthen your mindfulness practice.

1. MY CURRENT MINDFULNESS PRACTICE:

2. IN TERMS OF EMOTIONAL REACTION, I AM A LOW, MODERATE, OR HIGHLY REACTIVE PERSON:

3. ROADBLOCKS TO STARTING MY MINDFULNESS PRACTICE:

4. ROADBLOCKS TO MAINTAINING MY MINDFULNESS PRACTICE:

5. MY ACTION PLAN TO DEVELOP A MINDFULNESS PRACTICE: