



A Calm Oasis: Mindfulness

PAID PROMOTIONAL FEATURE

If you've ever wanted to catch your breath and clear your head, mindfulness can help. Mindfulness techniques ground us and help us become more resilient to life's challenges.

Amy Roberts, LCSW and Mindfulness Meditation Teacher at the Robert Boissoneault Oncology Institute, says that developing a beginner's mind is key. "It's living in the moment and being aware of the

moment you're in," she explains. "Being aware of your reactions, your thoughts, your body, but in a way that's patient and trusting. A childlike curiosity."

Being non-judgmental is central to mindfulness. "You're noticing you're having some reactions or some feelings, and going, 'Huh. That's interesting,'" Roberts says. "Not judging it as right or wrong, or good or bad, but being curious about your

feelings, emotions, or responses. It's really extending a kindness inward, but also to those around you."

Speaking recently at RBOI's "We Can Week," a virtual event for cancer survivors and their supporters, Roberts points to studies showing that mindfulness improves memory and concentration. Mindfulness can also decrease stress, anxiety, and depression, while improving quality of life and one's ability to cope. Cancer

centers have increasingly introduced mindfulness-based stress programs.

The benefits are far-reaching. Citing an American Society of Clinical Oncology study, Roberts says, "After an 8-week course, these concepts, tools, and mindset that you're learning stay with you. The skills you learn show long-term improvement. It's not just a temporary release."

To learn more about mindfulness programs at RBOI, call Amy Roberts at 352-732-0277.

Tune In, Grow Joy, Give Thanks

The Body Scan slows down the nervous system, eases the mind, and helps us tune into our senses. You can access Amy Roberts' body scan video at any time on RBOI's guided meditation page, RBOI.com, under the "Cancer Support" tab.

Growing a Positive Experience expands our daily moments of happiness. These moments can include a child's greeting, sounds in nature, a stranger holding a door open, and more. Growing them means using all our senses to absorb the experience. "This is something you're doing anyway throughout the day," Roberts says. "But instead of pushing it aside, you're learning to let it in and let it really resonate with you."

Keeping a Gratitude Journal helps provide balance for when times are tough. "Every morning or evening,

3x

Increase in meditation by U.S. adults between 2012 and 2017

40%

Americans who meditate weekly

33,061

Attendees of the largest online meditation lesson (held on Aug. 8, 2014)

90% and 94%

Men and women, respectively, who find meditation to be helpful



write down a few things that happened that day or that you have that day that you're grateful for," Roberts says. It can be something simple like, "I really love my hair color today," or, "I have a roof over my head." Then think about why you are grateful for those things and what they mean to you. Gratitude doesn't mean ignoring what is difficult in life. Rather, it can help provide an emotional anchor for when life feels overwhelming.

Patience and empathy are key. "If you decide you want to start a practice and you forget a day or a week, just start again," Roberts advises. "Every time you restart, you're rewiring your brain and you're practicing it all over again. So just be really sweet and kind to yourself."

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