

Mindfulness is a skill to help us slow things down and be in the here and now. Mindfulness can also help us balance facts and emotions to come up with the solution that best meets our needs and goals. It can help us avoid worrying about things that are not within our control. It means being 100% focused on what is happening in the present moment and focusing on that experience with openness and interest.

Mindfulness helps us to stay in a balanced frame of mind, able to notice our emotions without becoming overwhelmed by them. By being present in the here and now, we are able to accurately understand what is happening around us and within us.

### **Mindfulness Skills**

*Observe* the situation using your 5 senses. Be sure to focus on what is around you and also what is happening within you, e.g. thoughts and feelings.

*Describe* the situation by putting words to the experience. Be specific and do not use labels.

*Be Non-judgmental.* It is important not to judge ourselves for our thoughts or feelings.

*Participate* in what's happening. Genuinely and whole-heartedly engage with what you are doing.

As with any new skill, being mindful takes practice. Even just a few moments a day where you focus on observing, describing and participating in a non-judgmental way can change your experience of that day. As you go on practicing, it will become more natural and automatic. Be patient with yourself and remember that change is often small and gradual.

## Daily tracking

### *Example*

Today I was mindful and non-judgmental of: *cooking dinner*

Observe: *I made soup from scratch in my kitchen. It took about an hour. I smelled, tasted, saw, touched, and heard each ingredient as I prepared it.*

Describe: *The vegetables were a little old, but still firm, and their colours were bright. The meat was hard to cut. I used more broth than the recipe called for.*

Participate: *I smelled each ingredient as I added it, and thought about the flavours they would bring to the soup. When I was cutting the vegetables and meat, I paid attention to the sound the knife made going through the ingredient, and the sensation of each cut. When I tasted the soup to see if it was ready, I paid attention to the heat coming from the pot, the smell of the soup, and the weight of the spoon in my hand.*

### **Today I was mindful and non-judgmental of:**

1.

Observe:

Describe:

Participate:

2.

Observe:

Describe:

Participate:

3.

Observe:

Describe:

Participate:

4.

Observe:

Describe:

Participate: