

A graphic with a light blue background. In the center is a white speech bubble with a dark blue outline. Inside the bubble, the word "Mindfulness" is written in a dark blue, handwritten-style font. Below it is a horizontal blue line, and further down, the words "Mental Health Matters" are written in a smaller, dark blue, sans-serif font. The background is decorated with several clusters of small white plus signs: a large cluster in the top-left corner, a smaller one in the top-right corner, and another in the bottom-right corner. In the bottom-left corner, there are several dark blue horizontal wavy lines. In the top-right corner, there are two larger 'X' marks, one dark blue and one white.

# Mindfulness

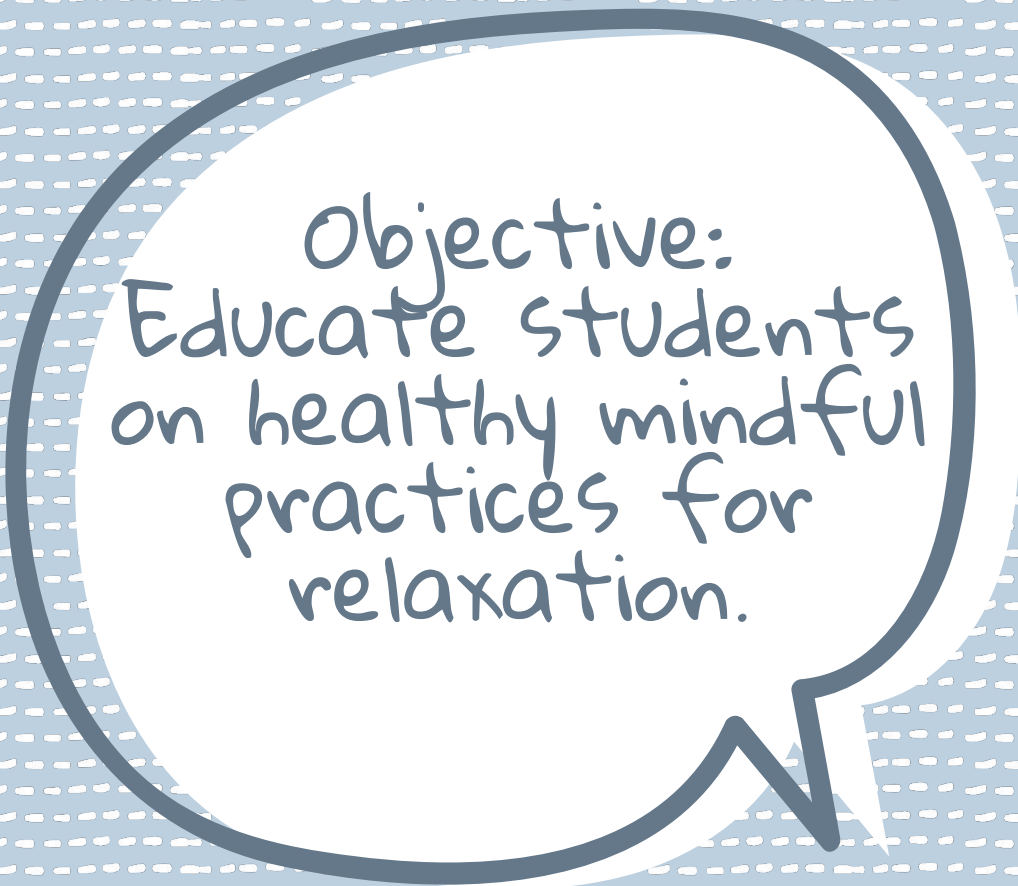
Mental Health Matters

# Before we start...



1. Do you currently  
use any  
mindfulness  
practices?

2. When do you feel  
relaxed?



Objective:  
Educate students  
on healthy mindful  
practices for  
relaxation.

# What is mindfulness?

Mindfulness is the basic human ability to be fully present, aware of where we are and what we're doing, and not overly reactive or overwhelmed by what's going on around us.

Mindfulness is a quality that every human being already possesses, it's not something you have to conjure up, you just have to learn how to access it.

Mindfulness is not all about your thoughts, it is about your entire body as a whole.



# How can you practice mindfulness?

Ways to practice mindfulness:

- Yoga
- Meditation
- Journaling
- Focused breathing
- Take in your surroundings



DISCUSSION:  
What do students do  
to be relaxed?

# ⇒ Yoga Activity

Take this time to participate in a yoga activity. I have included some resources but feel free to find your own.



30 Minute Relaxing Yoga For Mental Health | All Levels - Slow Seated Flow  
[https://youtu.be/COp7BR\\_Dvps](https://youtu.be/COp7BR_Dvps)



Yoga for Anxiety and Stress- 20 Minute Flow  
<https://youtu.be/3AIYBmjKjac>

# Journaling Activity

When worries and anxious thoughts creep into your mind, they are hard to sweep away again. One small concern leads to a larger one and then another and another... and soon, you are surrounded by stressful thoughts.

Once your worries take over, it's difficult to get back on track. At best, you become distracted and irritable; at worst, you are plagued with self-doubt and other negative emotions. When you face moments like these, turn to journaling to recenter yourself, assuage your fears and calm your mind.

Like any other mindfulness practice, mindful journaling is intended to bring more of your awareness to the present moment. Simply put, it's the act of conscious writing. It can be particularly helpful for anyone that struggles with meditation because you go the extra step of taking the thoughts from your mind and making them tangible by writing them down.



# Worry-Busting Journal Activities

The next time you feel anxious, stressed or scattered, set aside a few minutes of journaling time. Kickstart your pen with one of these quick journal prompts, and return to your day more focused and relaxed.

1. Do a worry purge in the pages of your journal. Without stopping, write down everything that is churning around in your mind. Once it is out of your head, give yourself permission to leave it in your journal and come back to it later with a clearer head.
2. Finish the sentence, "Right now, I am..." Then finish the sentence, "I want to be..."
3. Write a list of the day's accomplishments and victories, no matter how small. Celebrate each one individually.
4. Sit quietly for a few minutes, just breathing and listening to your body before you start journaling. What is it telling you? Where do you feel strong, healthy, energetic, relaxed? Where do you feel tense, worried, uncomfortable, tired? What is asking for more attention?
5. Have a heart-to-heart talk with your inner critic. If your critic has been extra vocal today, take this opportunity to dismiss opinions and tell your critic to hit the road. If your critic has been telling you all the things you are doing wrong, reply with all the things you are doing right.

## Worry-Busting Journal Activities

6. Pick a single positive word that you want to focus on today – such as *joy*, *gratitude*, *love* or *courage*. Journal about all the ways you have experienced this word lately and all the ways you want to.
7. Choose one problem that has been causing you anxiety lately, and ask yourself questions about it, the way a close friend would. Ask supportive and encouraging questions, and answer them with complete honesty. Try looking at the situation from new angles, and be open to possible solutions that come up.
8. Journal about a habit or activity you do that improves your mood or stress level without fail. Describe how you transform when you are engaged in this practice. How do you feel? How can you do this more often?
9. Tell a story in which you made a positive difference in someone's life. How did you change them for the better? How did it change you? What does this reflect about you as a person?
10. Think about how you would spend a day doing only the things that make you feel excited, happy, engaged or fulfilled. Free-write a list of everything you would include in this day, from the time you wake up until you head to bed at night. Reread your list and choose at least one item to incorporate into your schedule today.

# To close...

1. Do you find these mindful practices helpful?

2. Would you try these practices on your own time?

