



Living life easier is good for all of us, ADHD-minded or not. You do not have to have Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) to use what is shared here in the ADHD uPLifted Series to improve your quality of life. Do you want to find ways to work with your brainpower? Then you are in the right place. The ADHD uPLifted Series is a monthly publication written by me, Coach Cindy to offer you tested ways to lift up your chin and find your strengths from within. Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder is a different ability in mastering life. Whether you are diagnosed with ADHD, think you have ADHD, or just need ways to live easier than this is the place for you. Inside you will find inspiration packed full of helpful tools, tips, strategies, and fast facts to try out. I hope you find this information value-added.

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**FAST FACT**

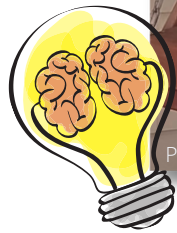
**Mindfulness**

According to recent meditation studies, **76.2%** of people turn to meditation for health.

16 Fascinating Mindfulness Statistics to Know in 2022  
(moderngentlemen.net)



Photo Courtesy of Cynthia North



## **About Coach Cindy**

Thank you for joining me. My name is Cynthia North, but people know me as Cindy. I am ACC Certified with the ICF as a Certified ADHD Life Coach (CALC) and a trained PQ Coach™ member with Positive Intelligence® devoted to partnering with clients to create self-success within ADHD and living life. I work with all ages having a special interest in how the brain affects the outcome. I help ADHDers and stuck people move from crippled in doubt to capable with clarity. I have expanded to offer personalized Mental Fitness Coaching through Shirzad Chamine's Positive Intelligence® Program. New possibilities bloom with deeper self-awareness and through the strength in your mental fitness. I have an innate desire to empower others no matter what difficulties they face with or without ADHD. I believe everyone is worthy of stepping forward *out of stuck*.

ADHD has touched me personally and professionally.

I know first-hand how ADHD symptoms and behavior can wreak havoc on family dynamics, school, and work success. I chose to become a Certified ADHD Life Coach as well as a member of Positive Intelligence® as a PQ Coach™ because I want others to discover their greatness within ADHD strengths while working with their executive functioning challenges through a positive mindset. I am where I am today because of my two dynamic ADHD children. They both teach me and open my mind to more each day. Their needs were beyond a hug, discipline, structure, or praise. So I sought professional help, ultimately finding a trained ADHD Life Coach. And here I am serving people who want different and deserve ease and flow.

Life experiences have made way for opportunity. I am on a journey to slay stigmas surrounding brain differences. Finding a Life Coach to empower my child led me to become a Certified ADHD Life Coach myself to serve others past their stuck ways and ADHD stigmas. Choosing to strengthen your inner-self is where Empower M3 starts. The work is an inside job where your "M3" begins. Connecting your heart and brain with a Coach creates empowerment opportunities. EmpowerM3 - is where the 3 connect to take flight.



*There is a more extraordinary tomorrow when the discovery starts today.*



# Mindfulness Meditation is for All Brain Styles

**-Yep, ADHD Minds, Too.**

Written By: Cynthia North, CALC, ACC  
May 1, 2022

Life pulls you like, Gumby in many directions. Suppose you have Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). In that case, you might feel like your brain is flaming with thoughts and ideas or worries and fears. Thought loops won't cease. Distractions endlessly pull you from your tasks. Nothing is getting completed. Sometimes nothing is getting started. You just think about it. Your body wants to move. Maybe your leg is ready for takeoff now. Your mind is racing the Indy 500, yet you should be writing a paper on the history of ink drying. Why is it so hard?

Were you ever told, "mind your manners?" Or maybe you've uttered these three words lecturing your kids from the rear-view mirror as you drive to Grandma's house. Or perhaps you glance over at the kids in the booth next to you, wishing for them not to disrupt your date night. All good, right? But what does it truly mean to "mind your manners" from a brain standpoint?

Somehow, we have shifted away from believing or even trying to mind ourselves. I don't mean in the sense of minding our manners. I mean minding our mind. Growing up, we learned to mind our manners. We knew what to pay attention to. No burping at the table. Napkin in our lap. Don't interrupt. Keep the volume down. That one was hard! Say please and thank you. Manners were a learned skill and reminded. Being mindful of our manners was being mindful of our behavior and usually for a set timeframe. We were off the hook once we got back in the car. Burp...

Mindfulness is a practice, just as minding your manners was and likely still is. And yes, mindfulness is for all brain styles. Meditation is to concentrate and let go of thoughts. Living mindfully is having an awareness of the "now" moment.



Initially, almost all my clients dispute their ability to practice mindfulness or to be able to meditate. They come to me spinning in chaos, believing mindfulness practices and ADHD do not mix.

"I won't remember to do it."

"I tried that, and it didn't work."

"I can't sit still that long."

"I'm too busy for meditation."

"I can't get what I need done now."

"I never stop thinking long enough to be mindful."

"My mind races too fast to catch my thoughts."



Maybe you've tried a form of meditation and felt like the jack-in-the-box ready to pop from your butt pillow. What if I told you acts of mindfulness meditation could fit into your life differently than sitting cross-legged on a butt pillow? No offense if you are skilled to do so! More mindfulness to you!

Mindfulness comes in many practices and forms that are adaptable. This edition will explain mindfulness meditation practice, the science-backed health benefits, and three ways to easily add mindfulness to your daily life.

What if you could intercept your emotions? What if you had greater control of what was bouncing around in your head? What if you could control your response to the trigger? If you've answered yes, then keep reading. If you are on the fence, keep reading. If you are thinking, "I can't do it." Definitely keep reading because I know you can.



A study found meditation lessens aggression through direct reductions in motives to cause harm to others. (DeSteno et al., 2017)



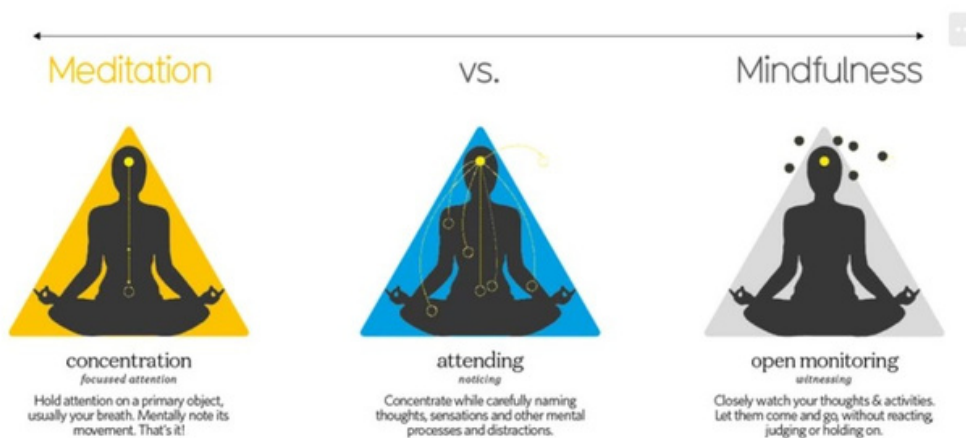
“If it’s out of your hands, it deserves freedom from your mind too.” – Ivan Nuru

### What's the difference?

Mindfulness is the practice of maintaining a nonjudgmental state of heightened or complete awareness of one's thoughts, emotions, or experiences on a moment-to-moment basis (1).

Meditation is a practice of concentrated focus upon a sound, object, visualization, the breath, movement, or attention itself to increase awareness of the present moment, reduce stress, promote relaxation, and enhance personal and spiritual growth (2).

I asked five people what they picture when they hear the word meditation. They all described some form of the image of a fat buddha man sitting in cloth. No wonder we don't believe we can meditate. With an ADHD brain style, you may think you can't be still enough to meditate. If your body isn't moving, your mind definitely is. Meditation is a practice and requires precisely that practice. You are not born naturally able to meditate. However, mindfulness is easier for young children because they are naturally more curious about their surroundings. Children have not learned to judge yet (3). Meditation is not what the brain is programmed to do. The brain is programmed to keep you alive.

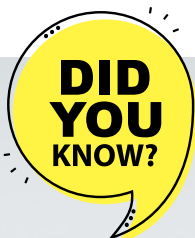


Design & Concept: David McCandless  
Research: Miriam Quick / v1.0 // FEB 2014

InformationIsBeautiful.net

sources: various studies  
data: [http://bit.ly/KIB\\_Mindfulness](http://bit.ly/KIB_Mindfulness)

([Imgur](#), 2015)



**“The mind is just like a muscle - the more you exercise it, the stronger it gets and the more it can expand.”**

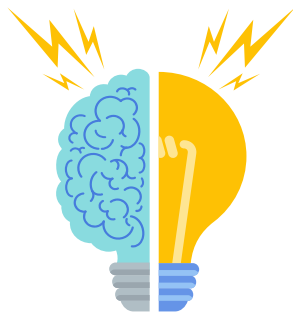
— Idowu Koyenikan, *Wealth for All: Living a Life of Success at the Edge of Your Ability*



According to a study cited in the Social Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience Journal, "Meditation training can enhance various cognitive processes, such as emotional regulation, executive control and attention, particularly sustained attention." (Team, 2017).

## What Does The Science Say?

How does this relate to those with ADHD? In a 2017 study, mindfulness meditation helped to improve several main symptoms of ADHD (4).



- Attention
- Decision Making
- The ability to shift between tasks
- Working memory
- Emotional dysregulation
- Self-control

In a 2002 study, researchers showed meditation to increase the level of dopamine in the prefrontal cortex region of the brain using 11C-raclopride PET scans (5).

In the article, The Science of Mindfulness, mindfulness practices have been scientifically proven to improve mood, self-confidence, mental clarity and focus, less mind wandering, and greater creativity (6).

A 2014 Study found that using fMRI scans, non-directive meditation, a form of meditation where you are not focusing on an object, shows activation in the default mode network and the related parts of the brain responsible for memory recall and emotional response.

For most, it seems a no-brainer to add meditation as a daily habit to combat the struggles of ADHD. It is easy to say, but often very hard to do when your mind is racing or lacking any go. The keyword is habit. Creating habits is the art of getting new practices into your life. The key is to remember to make the new habit sustainable and one you will do.

## What Do You Know

### Self-Assessment

Are you interested to know how you fall on the mindfulness scale? After completing this assessment you'll learn more about what mindfulness is, how much you currently practice it, and how you can promote more of it in your life. (Mindfulness Quiz, 2022)

[CLICK HERE](#)





## Is Meditation Good For Everyone?

You must consider the possible outcomes anytime you add in something new, whether a practice like mindfulness or meditation, a new medication, an over-the-counter herbal regimen, or even increasing your exercise. This understanding can help pre-empt the brain from noticing potential side effects and alert you to discontinue if something is not positively working for you.

Before we dive into practice and implementation, it is essential to note that for a very small percentage of people, Mindfulness and Meditation can have adverse effects:

"In May 2021, a study was published in Clinical Psychological Science examining some adverse experiences of mindfulness, 6% of participants who practiced mindfulness reported negative side effects, and 14% reported disruptive side effects that lasted for more than a month (7)."

In the article "Too Much Mindfulness Can Worsen Your Mental Health," Simon notes some of the adverse effects of mindfulness reported to include hypersensitivity, strong emotions, and dysregulation (8).



## Adverse Effects

- Dysregulated arousal (energy problems; disrupted sleep/wake cycles)
- Anxiety
- Signs of dissociation
- Emotional blunting (feeling emotionless)
- Flashbacks
- Compromised executive dysfunction (problems making decisions, memory lapses, cognitive impairments, etc.)
- Social withdrawal
- Perceptual hypersensitivity

(<https://www.facebook.com/verywell, 2021>)



**You can't live a positive life with a negative brain.**

**-Author Unknown**

Our brain is constantly filtering stimuli. We don't even fully engage all our senses most of the time. Creating deeper awareness of your surroundings could create discomfort and be less desirable.

A simple example is when someone points out a sound, "Do you hear that? I can't sleep listening to that." "Well, I hear the faucet dripping now. Thanks! Now we're both awake. I was just fine before you pointed that out."

Maybe there is a noise you can't unhear in your environment, a feeling in your clothing you can't get away from, or a smell that prevents you from getting to a calm mental state. Again, this is crucial information required to set yourself up for success.

### **Define Your "Normal"**

Knowing your "normal" is vital when choosing to try something new. Where are you best able to find a calm state? Are you inside or outside, in a chair, or lying on a bed or the floor? Still or moving?

Have you seen a person pacing the floor as they talk on the phone or when they are practicing for a speech? Some individuals need movement to find calmness. For others, certain sensations are too intense.

Take note of when you experience the feeling of neutral- when you are not up nor down. Your neutral doesn't mean you will necessarily be calm. Some people are always running in second gear, whereas others can't shift out of neutral. Knowing your "normal" will help you identify what is working and what is not.



**Wherever I go, there I am.**





*"Mindfulness isn't difficult, we just need to remember to do it."*

*-Sharon Salzberg*

## Fitting in Mindfulness

Too often, the experience of life passes us by even as we are in it. We do not notice the coolness of our breath as we inhale, the pressure of our feet on the floor while we are standing or the sound of our exhales. Practicing presence to the present shifts attention from brain chatter and motion toward our sensations.

The Harvard Gazette shares the meaning of mindfulness practice well.

"Our mind wanders all the time, either reviewing the past or planning for the future," said Westbrook, who, before retiring last June, was an internal-medicine doctor caring for Harvard students. "Mindfulness teaches you the skill of paying attention to the present by noticing when your mind wanders off. Come back to your breath. It's a place where we can rest and settle our minds." (9)

Being mindful of our space and how we are feeling doesn't sound that hard. But the brain does not do it naturally. The sole purpose of our brain is to keep us alive. That is why your fight or flight response can be so intense. We can have a strong sense of solving problems leading to thought rumination or getting paralyzed with emotion. Having strong self-command towards shifting attention to the present can bring the brain and body back to your neutral state. With mindfulness practices, you may even improve your "neutral" state. You may be less stressed, less triggered, quieter-minded.



## Getting Started

By tweaking three activities you already do you can add mindfulness to your day. You can get out of your head and into your body.



### **Mindful Walking (kinhin)**

Mindful Walking is a way of getting both the benefits of moving the body and centering the mind. This form of meditation originates from a Buddhist tradition. The experience of walking is your focal point while keeping your eyes open (10).

Try other [Mindfulness Moves](#) led by Thich Nhat Hanh that you can do in your home or office during a brain break.



### **Mindful Eating**

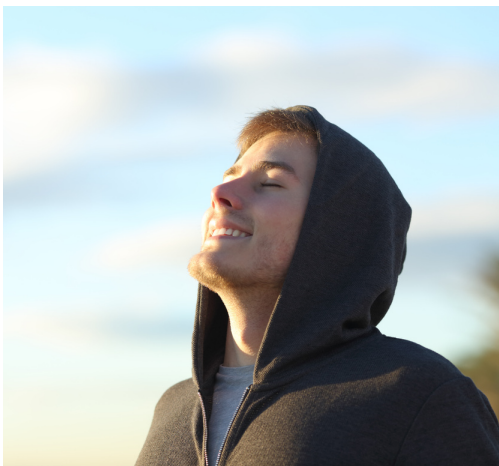
This mindful practice focuses on using all of your senses to take note of all the information. Eating is one activity we all do regularly that involves all five senses. You can see the food. Take in the color, texture, and depth. You can smell it. You can taste it as you slowly chew on both sides of your mouth and move the food over your tongue. You hear the crunch as you chew and the sound of

swallowing. Depending on the food type, you can feel it with your hands and mouth. Using your senses to eat is a rare practice in our time of fast food and on the go living. Slowly savoring each bite is a way to add mindfulness to your day (11). Mindful eating is a great practice to add to family dinner time. You can teach your kids as they explore new foods. Studies have also shown Mindful Eating improves BMI and curbs binge eating (12).

[Click Here](#) to try out these Mindful Eating Scripts (13).

**“You can't stop the waves, but you can learn to surf.”**

**Jon Kabat-Zinn**



## **Take a Mindful Minute**

Pay attention to the here and now for one minute. That's it. It is that simple. But will you stop for just one minute? Taking control to stop what you are doing and being aware is the key to this mindfulness practice. With technology readily available, you can set reminders or alarms to remind you to take a break. Unfortunately, most of us don't remember to take a break. I know I had the habit of plowing

through until I was hungry, mentally exhausted, and grumpy. Adding a cue helped me. A cue could be a transition from one space to another. Research in 2019 suggests that regular meditation of short duration can have similar health benefits as meditations of longer duration and higher intensity (14).

[Click Here](#) for a sample list and guided mindfulness practice (15).

## **Take Away**

Mindfulness practice helps you downshift and get back to the present state in your body and brain. Mindfulness may open space for ease and flow for ADHD-minded folks and individuals living with high-stress levels. Stress is proven to affect the brain's executive functioning ability with harmful effects on a person's health. Mindfulness can drastically improve overall health and wellness. Adding mindfulness is a no-brainer. However, knowing there may be adverse side effects, it is crucial to be keenly aware of your body. Methods that work for one may not work for another. Use your exceptional traits to creatively tweak resources that will work for you to live life with ease and flow. Your brain is always ready and waiting to keep you alive. Live mindfully.

A stylized signature logo for Cindy. It features a yellow star with a yellow arrow pointing upwards and to the right, followed by the name "Cindy" written in a blue, cursive script.

*“Distractions are everywhere. Notice what takes your attention, acknowledge it, and then let it go.”*

*-@Headspace, #mindfulmoments*

# SPOTLIGHT



Insight Timer -  
Meditation App 12+  
Meditation for Sleep & Anxiety

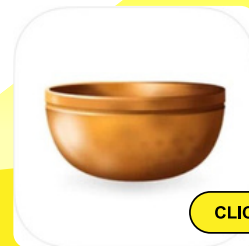
Insight Network Inc

Designed for iPad

#76 in Health & Fitness

4.9 · 362.9K Ratings

Free / Offers In-App Purchases up to \$59.99/yr



CLICK HERE

The number 1 free meditation app. Guided meditations and talks led by the world's top meditation and mindfulness experts, neuroscientists, psychologists and teachers from Stanford, Harvard, the University of Oxford and more. Music tracks from world-renowned artists. Join millions learning to meditate on Insight Timer to help calm the mind, reduce anxiety, manage stress, sleep deeply and improve happiness.

([Insight Network Inc, 2009](#))

## CALMING TECHNIQUE- BOX BREATHING

Breathe in specific counts while visualizing a box. I like to add a star shooting out :)

1. Inhale to the count of 4 as you visualize the top edge of a box.
2. Hold your breath for a count of 4, as you go down along the right side.
3. Exhale for a count of 4, moving from right to left along the bottom edge.
4. Hold for another count of 4, going up along the left side, back to the top.
5. Repeat for several cycles for at least 1 minute.



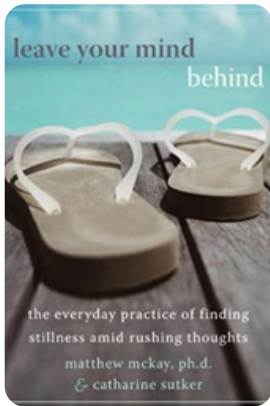
If you'd like to try a guided demonstration, view the video

**Box Breathing – 1 minute in length** by Conscious Works on YouTube.

([Lamoreux, 2021](#))



# READERS *Corner*



**Leave Your Mind Behind**  
– **November 1, 2007**  
by Matthew McKay (Author), Catharine Sutker (Author)  
4.4 out of 5 stars 37 ratings

Available Formats: Paperback/ Kindle



Leave Your Mind Behind offers a collection of light-hearted practices readers can use to learn to observe their thoughts without getting caught up in them...—these activities don't seek to stop or control problematic thinking. Instead, they work to show readers how to observe thoughts without judgment and learn to live with the confounding and marvelous word-making, story-telling machine that is the human mind.

(Leave Your Mind Behind: Matthew McKay, Catharine Sutker: 9781572245341: Amazon.com: Books, 2022).

*"This book has come into my life twice. It is packed full of ways to growing your awareness and mindfulness. It started my journey in understanding the power of my stories. I am now able to hear my silent thinking and catch it." CC*



## 6. LISTENING TO NOW

*"You too, can grow mindfulness into your lifestyle. I loved that she affirmed that thoughts will come and keep coming. And it is okay!"*



**EP. 50: Meditation That Even You Can Do**  
(Especially if You're Inattentive or Have RSD) with  
ADHD Life Coach, Diann Wingert  
Runtime: 1 hr 3 minutes



"You have to listen to this episode because it completely changed my beliefs about what meditation is and how it will work for my ADHD brain. And she made it stupidly simple. Even I can do it! Bottom line, Diann knows ADHD and she knows meditation for the ADHD brain and with her guidance, even I was successful." Tracy Otsuka (Otsuka, 2019).

# THE CHOCOLATE MIND

*Who knew I could eat one chocolate and feel so good. I prefer dark chocolate. It has a slightly bitter taste and is said to be "good" for my health. Now I enjoy it mindfully.*



## Steps to Mindfully Eating Chocolate

Use one chocolate kiss or a mini candy bar.

1. Notice the weight of a piece of chocolate in your hand. Look at it closely.
2. Observe the shape and color. Use at least three words to describe it to yourself.
3. As you unwrap it, listen closely to the crinkle of the foil or paper.
4. Bring the chocolate up to your nose, and inhale deeply. Notice what thoughts come to your mind as you do this. The smell of chocolate can bring up some powerful feelings and memories. Deeply Inhale.
5. Do any critical thoughts come up like, "I shouldn't eat this"? If so, let the thoughts come and go as if you are letting go of a balloon.
6. Place the chocolate in your mouth. Notice the flavor, richness, and texture. Pay attention to how the sensations change as it melts and molds to your mouth.
7. Follow the sensations as the chocolate slips down your throat into your stomach.

This is how you can eat chocolate mindfully. Again, it takes practice. Notice how different this is from popping pieces of chocolate mindlessly into your mouth.

(Mindfully Eating Chocolate, 2017)

### WHEN???



I know it's hard to believe that you will have time. Try adding mindful moments in these slices of time:

- While sitting in traffic or at a stoplight, traffic lights are always over a minute!
- When waiting... on hold on the phone, in the grocery store line, waiting at the pharmacy.
- In the shower or bath. (this is a perfect intentional place to practice mindfulness.)
- When walking outside. Feel the temperature change on your face as you go out the door.
- Washing the dishes. Yeah, I know it's often a dreaded chore but what can you sense while doing it?
- Gamify It- "Beat the Heat". Be mindful as you fold warm laundry. This accomplishes two things, timely folded laundry that is less wrinkly and you are building mental strength by noticing the feeling of the clothing and the motion of your hands to fold it.
- When can you add a mindful moment? Share @empowerM3.cn

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**Resources Continued****TECHNIQUE**

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**BOOK**

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**PODCAST**

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- Photo of Coach Cindy North photographed by and provided by EmpowerM3 LLC
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# My Notes



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