



STEAM - The Science of Mindfulness

Pillar: STEAM

Utilize your own thoughts to appreciate yourself, your surroundings, and those around you.

This month we focus on healthy living. Mindfulness is the human ability to be fully present, aware of where we are and what we are doing and not react or be overwhelmed by it. This involves meditation/being grounded—exploring the present moment as it is. When we meditate, we venture into the workings of our mind: our sensations, our emotions, and our thoughts. It means paying full attention to something. It means slowing down and really noticing what you are doing. There is no rush or multi-tasking. Why do we need mindfulness? It helps us: pay attention better, be less distracted, learn more, stay calm under stress, avoid getting upset about things, listen better, feel happier and enjoy things more.

Try one or more of these techniques below.

1. Find out about mindfulness? (Discover)
 - a. What is mindfulness? Have you ever heard someone say, “Take a deep breath?”
 - b. Learn more about it here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8rp5bpFIUpg>

2. Learn and practice mindful breathing. (Discover)
 - a. Learn breathing techniques
 1. With this exercise, you focus your attention on breathing. You want to pay attention to your breath in an easy way — on purpose, but not forced.
 2. Sit up in a comfortable way. Notice your posture. Are your shoulders droopy? Roll your shoulders and close your eyes.
 3. Notice your breathing as you inhale and exhale normally. Just pay attention to your breath as it goes in and out. Can you feel the place where the air tickles your nostrils?
 4. Pay attention to how the breath gently moves your body. Can you notice your belly or your chest moving as you breathe?
 5. Sit for a few minutes, just paying attention to your gentle breathing. See how relaxed you can feel just sitting, breathing in and out.
 6. When your mind starts to wander and think about something else, gently guide your attention back to your breathing.
 - b. Learn about square breathing: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YFdZXwE6fRE>

3. Notice and name the body sensations, thoughts, and emotions (Discover, Connect, Take Action)
 - a. Ask girls to stand up with their feet hips-width apart and their eyes closed, and bodies relaxed. Now, ask girls to focus only on their middle toe. It may feel weird at first but encourage girls to stay focused and not to giggle. If girls keep focusing on only their middle toe, soon enough they will feel physically “grounded” to the floor. Explain that this is an example of mindfulness: focusing into ourselves and our bodies so much that we are able to let everything else around us go and feel “grounded” to the floor.
Ask girls how they are feeling as you do this exercise. Talk through their thoughts and emotions. How does relaxed feel? How can they use mindfulness to help them calm down during a stressful day?
 - b. Share a long hug with a family member (3-4 breaths)
 1. Relax the shoulders, relax the muscles as you breath in each hug breathe.



2. Share a long hug with someone from your household who could use a calming hug or just because you love them.
- c. Move and stretch your body (Discover, Connect)
 1. Meditation is about helping you become aware and getting a healthy perspective. You will learn to observe them and turn off your thoughts or feelings.
 2. Yoga is a popular form of meditation. Check out our community partner for yoga classes. Here are the partner links:
 - a. Lisa Murphy: <https://www.gsksmo.org/en/events-repository/2050/CP-lisaMurphy.html>
 - b. Zen Friends Yoga: <https://www.gsksmo.org/en/events-repository/2050/CP-zen-friends-yoga.html>
 - c. Yoga with Chandler: <https://www.gsksmo.org/en/events-repository/2050/CP-yogaChandler.html>
 - d. Jennifer Martin: <https://www.gsksmo.org/en/events-repository/2050/CP-jennifer-martin.html>
4. Mindful eating: Share a mindful snack with your family/troop (Discover/Connect/Take Action)

You can do this with an orange, an apple, a banana, a bunch of grapes or any snack. The idea is to really pay attention to what you are eating. Let's say you decide to do mindful eating with grapes. Your job is to eat each grape slowly, without rushing. You can do this mindful eating exercise with your eyes open or closed.

- a. Start by holding your grape. Roll it in your hand. Notice how it feels.
- b. Hold the grape near your nose. What does it smell like? Take a whiff of the peel. You can cut it in half and see if it has a smell.
- c. If you have your eyes open, notice how the grape looks. Pay attention to whether the skin is smooth or bumpy. Is it squishy, juicy, green, red, purple?
- d. Is your mouth watering? Go ahead and taste your grape. Notice how it feels on your tongue, and against your teeth. Notice the flavor, the texture, and the juiciness as you chew each piece slowly. Take your time as you chew, taste, smell, and feel each bite of your grape.

Are you loving these STEAM activities? Do you want more to extend your learning? Check out our Pinterest Boards at https://www.pinterest.com/gprograms/_created/.



Girl Scout programs like Girl Scouts Virtual are funded in part by Daisy's Circle. Juliette Gordon Low, known to her friends and family as Daisy, committed her time and personal funds to the founding of the Girl Scout Movement. Named for our founder, Daisy's Circle is our council's monthly giving program. Learn more about Daisy's Circle and become our newest member now at www.gsksmo.org/daisycircle.

