

# 12 MINDFULNESS FACTS

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## Reduce stress

Stress reduction is one of the most common reasons people try meditation. In an 8-week study, a meditation style called “mindfulness meditation” reduced the inflammation response caused by stress.

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## Control anxiety

Meditation can reduce stress levels, which translates to less anxiety. Also, one study found that 8 weeks of mindfulness meditation helped reduce anxiety symptoms in people with generalised anxiety disorder, along with increasing positive self-statements and improving stress reactivity and coping.

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## Promotes emotional health

Some forms of meditation can lead to improved self-image and a more positive outlook on life. For example, one review of treatments given to more than 3,500 adults found that mindfulness meditation improved symptoms of depression.

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## Enhances self-awareness

Some forms of meditation may help you develop a stronger understanding of yourself, helping you grow into your best self. For example, self-inquiry meditation explicitly aims to help you develop a greater understanding of yourself and how you relate to those around you.

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## Lengthens attention span

Focused-attention meditation is like weightlifting for your attention span. It helps increase the strength and endurance of your attention. Even meditating for a short period each day may benefit you. One study found that meditating for just 13 minutes daily enhanced attention and memory after 8 weeks.

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## May reduce age-related memory loss

Improvements in attention and clarity of thinking may help keep your mind young. In addition to fighting normal age-related memory loss, meditation can at least partially improve memory in patients with dementia. It can likewise help control stress and improve coping in those caring for family members with dementia.

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## Can generate kindness

Metta, a type of meditation also known as loving-kindness meditation, begins with developing kind thoughts and feelings toward yourself. Through practice, people learn to extend this kindness and forgiveness externally, first to friends, then acquaintances, and ultimately enemies.

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## May help fight addictions

The mental discipline you can develop through meditation may help you break dependencies by increasing your self-control and awareness of triggers for addictive behaviours.

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## Improves sleep

Nearly half of the population will struggle with insomnia at some point. One study compared mindfulness-based meditation programs and found that people who meditated stayed asleep longer and had improved insomnia severity, compared with those who had an unmedicated control condition.

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## Helps control pain

Your perception of pain is connected to your state of mind, and it can be elevated in stressful conditions.

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## Can decrease blood pressure

Meditation can also improve physical health by reducing strain on the heart. A meta-analysis of 12 studies enrolling nearly 1000 participants found that meditation helped reduce blood pressure.

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## Accessible anywhere

Focused-attention meditation. This style concentrates attention on a single object, thought, sound, or visualisation. It emphasises ridding your mind of distractions. Meditation may focus on breathing, a mantra, or calming sound. Open-monitoring meditation. This style encourages broadened awareness of all aspects of your environment, train of thought, and sense of self. It may include becoming aware of suppressed thoughts, feelings, or impulses.