

Why Bother with Mindfulness?

By Doug MacLean EdD

In the [Mindful Yoga](#) and [Mindful Meditation](#) classes that I teach at Flowing Yogi Studio, I hope to encourage each person to develop a capacity for mindfulness. Mindfulness itself is a human capacity for awareness, from moment to moment without judgment.

You might say that you are already aware. That may be true, however, [mindfulness](#) is bringing a special quality of awareness that comes about from paying attention, in a sustained manner, over a period of time to one's moment-to-moment experience. It is a turning inward where one observes and also experiences physical sensations, thoughts, emotions and perceptions. It is not intended to be considered "navel gazing" or "narcissistic", rather a gentle look at one's experience while engaging in an activity. In many ways, it provides a way to learn about the way your mind works and the forces that are housed within.

For example, in a [Mindful Yoga](#) class, participants are encouraged to maintain a focus and awareness on their breath while practicing the asanas. The quality of the breath will often reveal the amount of effort we are expending. A short and shallow breath or holding our breath would mirror putting out too much effort, and we may not even be aware of it until we notice the breath. As a result, the knowing of the breath can allow us the opportunity to adjust our effort and practice from a place of inner balance.

In a [Mindful Meditation](#) class, it is also common to use the breath as an object of focus and awareness. By turning our attention over and over to the breath, a capacity for concentration of the mind is sustained. Concentration on one object gives the body and mind an opportunity to calm down and relax. Check this out for yourself. Simply sit down and take a couple of moments to observe how many things are on your mind in any given moment. If you practice [mindfulness meditation](#), it will help you to recognize when you have too many things on your mind and it will give you a way to concentrate on one thing.

Come on out and see for yourself on [Thursday mornings](#). The Mindful Yoga class runs from 9:15 am to 10:30 am. The Mindful Meditation class runs from 10:45 am to Noon. Special drop in rate for 50 plus is \$12 per class.

Have a terrific summer!

Doug

For more information on Doug's teachings see his website: www.practicalwellbeing.ca