



MINDFULNESS AND MEDITATION PRACTICE TOOLKIT

with Angela from Be You Living



MAKE
ME
ICONIC

hello *FRIENDS,*

Being a parent is meaningful, rewarding, wouldn't-trade-it-for-the-world work – but these days it seems even more demanding as we try to fill so many different roles for our children. Our advice is to take care of yourself and keep your cup full otherwise you have nothing left to share with others. Simple tasks such as taking a few minutes to do some deep breathing and get in a good head space before the start of the day or the end of the day can make a real difference to your well being.

We have teamed up with a beautiful human called Angela Chaousis from *Be You Living* to provide you with some tips on being mindful. We are not experts in mindfulness but Angela is and she has written an incredible list of simple tips for you. Angela generously shares with us her *Mindfulness & Meditation Resources Tool Kit* that you can practice at home when in time of stress and anxiety. For her full Resource Kit, please visit her at www.beyouliving.com.au

Natasha xx

Founder, Make Me Iconic


I am extending a heartfelt invitation to support you with your health and wellbeing by sharing some mindfulness and meditation tools, strategies and practices with you. I believe as human beings we can evolve to make wise and healthy choices so we can live the full expression of ourselves and uplift each other.

We can either choose to focus on chaos and fear or we can choose to connect and support one another to serve the awakening of our hearts. Loving conscious presence is contagious, as is kindness, compassion, curiosity, creativity and connection. As a collective, this is our opportunity to PAUSE and practice self awareness by being mindful of our thoughts, the words we speak, what we choose to focus on, who we choose to spend time with and what actions we choose to take.

I have put together a *Be You Living Wellbeing & Mindfulness Toolkit* for you to access when you are feeling stressed, experiencing big emotions or when you feel like 'time in to tune in', self soothe and practice self awareness and self love so you can flourish. Please take care of yourselves and each other.
with gratitude,

Angela Chaousis

Mindfulness Educator and Holistic Counsellor, Be You Living

A baby wearing a floral dress and a straw hat sits on a rocky ground. To the left are several woven picnic baskets. In the background, a small tent is set up with colorful bunting flags strung across the scene. The setting is a wooded area with bare trees.

**THERE ARE TWO LASTING
BEQUESTS WE CAN HOPE
TO GIVE OUR CHILDREN.
ONE OF THESE IS ROOTS,
THE OTHER, WINGS.**

— Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

No. 1

POSITIVE MINDFUL TURNAROUNDS

Remember to PAUSE and practice self awareness by being mindful of your thoughts, the words you speak, what you choose to focus on, who you choose to spend time with and what actions you choose to take.

Use Positive Mindful Turnarounds because what we think determines how we feel, our behaviours and reality.

Wise words from Danielle La Porte.

*I'm not in the midst of a pandemic,
I'm contributing to world wellness.*

*We are not in lock-down or quarantine,
we are retreating for wellness.*

*I'm not in fear,
I'm in my power.*

*I'm not in isolation,
I'm protecting my health.*

*I'm not socially distancing,
I'm physically distancing.*

*I'm acting in faith
and I'm backing my faith with positive action
of retreating for wellness.*

*It's not that we will get through this,
it's we are getting through this.*

No.2

SELF HONOUR TUNE-IN

The way we care for ourselves has a profound impact on our health and wellbeing. We all have different mind-body-soul types so caring for ourselves is unique for each of us as we have individual needs at different times in our lives.

Although self care can mean different things for different people, the usual focus can be following a checklist making sure we are eating nourishing foods, resting, staying hydrated, doing our nails, having a massage, exercising, taking time out etc.

Whilst self care is essential to good health, tuning into the mind and body, making healthy choices regarding our mental, emotional and physical health are the building blocks to a deeper connection to ourselves and life.

Throughout my own “self care” journey, which will be a work in progress for the rest of my life, I discovered that real self care is about truly honouring myself. This can lead to living a joy-filled life or discovering your life purpose and doing things to pursue that purpose. It can empower us to design a life of endless possibilities.

Honouring yourself starts with self awareness. We can learn to be more self-aware by practicing tuning into our senses and non-judgmentally observing what we are thinking and feeling, physically and emotionally, so we are able to respond to life in healthy ways versus in an unhealthy reactive way. This is the essence of mindfulness.

Honouring ourselves is not just ticking things off a self care list. It is a way of living and being with ourselves that is deeply caring, it's respecting, accepting and appreciating ourselves. It's a process of exploration. In this reflective space of exploration we can practice being self-compassionate by honouring the moment we are in and giving ourselves permission to BE with ourselves, especially when it's uncomfortable.



**WHILE MEDITATING,
TUNE IN TO YOUR BODY AND ASK —**

“What can I do to deeply honour myself now?”

“How does my body feel after eating certain foods?”

“Which relationships really feed my soul?”

“What kind of movement feels good for my body?”

“What lights me up?”

**MAKE TIME FOR ENJOYING A CUP OF
TEA IN A BEAUTIFUL CUP AND
ENJOY EVERY SIP.**

**FOLD THE EDGE OF YOUR DOONA BACK
AS A WAY OF INVITING YOURSELF INTO
A COMFY BED EACH NIGHT.**

WEAR A BEAUTIFUL NIGHTIE TO BED.

**SIT IN NATURE AND LISTEN.
TAKE ONE SLOW DEEP BREATH.**



It's important to deeply care and honour ourselves during these times of change as it's easy to self soothe and seek comfort with unhealthy habits when we feel uncertainty in our lives.

I have put together a few self honouring practices focussing on different areas of your life and have re-named a "Self Care Checklist" a "Self Honour Tune-In". I have also added mindful, holistic and self loving practices to the "Tune-In's" to support you on your self honour journey helping you build self love, love for others and joy in your life.

SELF HONOUR TUNE-IN'S

PHYSICAL

Sleep
Nourishing food
Hydrate
Stretching
Walking
Physical release
Dance
Good personal hygiene
Yoga
Mindful movement
Rest

SOCIAL

Boundaries
Support systems
Positive social media
Communication
Time together
Ask for help
Surround yourself with people who uplift you

PERSONAL

Do things that bring you joy
Hobbies
Presence
Creativity
Knowing yourself
Personal Identity
Honouring your true self
Fun and laughter

EMOTIONAL

Love yourself and others
Emotional intelligence
Stress management
Forgiveness
Compassion
Kindness
Acceptance

SPIRITUAL

Time alone
Meditation
Mindfulness
Yoga
Connection
Nature
Journalling
Social space
Rituals

SPACE

Safety
Healthy living environment
security and stability
Organised space
Surround yourself with things you love

No.3

BREATHING TECHNIQUES: A. DIAPHRAGMATIC BREATHING (BELLY BREATHING)

From the moment we take our first breath, we are all born with the knowledge of how to fully engage the diaphragm to take deep breaths. Babies and young children naturally use their abdominal muscles to pull the diaphragm down for breathing. As we grow older and due to the stresses of life we can get out of the habit of taking deep refreshing breaths. Most people take short, shallow breaths into their chest and it can make you feel anxious and zap your energy.

Diaphragmatic breathing, also known as “abdominal breathing” and “belly breathing” is a breathing technique that encourages full oxygen exchange - the trade of incoming oxygen and outgoing carbon dioxide. When you breathe in the diaphragm, a dome-shaped muscle at the base of the lungs contracts and moves downward. This creates more space in your chest cavity, allowing your lungs to expand. Your diaphragm relaxes and moves upward in the chest cavity.

Relearning how to breathe from the Diaphragm is beneficial to our health as it activates our parasympathetic nervous system. Taking deeper breaths allows your body to slow down and heal by switching off fight, flight, freeze response in the body (stress response) and activating relaxation response in the body by slowing down your heartbeat and lowering and stabilising your blood pressure.

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No.3

BREATHING TECHNIQUES: A. DIAPHRAGMATIC BREATHING (BELLY BREATHING) CONTINUED..

Here's how to do it —

01.

Get comfortable and set the intention of “bringing you to you” and your breath. You can lie on your back in bed or on the floor with a pillow under your head and knees. Or you can sit in a chair making sure your back is straight with your shoulders, head, and neck supported against the back of the chair.

02.

Gently close your eyes and place one hand on your upper chest (your heart) and the other on your belly, just below your rib cage.

03.

Breathe in gently through your nose feeling the cool sensation of the breath, letting the air in deeply towards your lower belly. The hand on your chest should remain still, while the one on your belly should rise as you expand your belly.

Pause for a second.

04.

Tighten your abdominal muscles and let them fall inward as you exhale through your nose feeling the warm sensation of the breath.

05.

Take three more full, deep breaths. Breathe fully into your belly as it rises and falls with your breath. You can practice this for five to ten minutes, several times or whenever you need to pause and “re-set” when you feel the need to calm down and relax.



JUST BREATHE

— Angela Chaousis

No.3

BREATHING TECHNIQUES: B. FOUR SQUARE BREATHING

4 square breathing, also known as box breathing is a paced breathing technique that follows a rhythm when taking slow deep breaths. It can heighten performance and concentration while also being a powerful stress reliever. In this exercise, you'll match how long you breathe in with how long you breathe out. Over time, you can increase how long you're able to breathe in and out at a time.

01. Sit comfortably on the floor or in a chair, making sure your back is straight.

02. Gently breathe in through your nose. As you breathe in, count to four.

03. Pause for the count of four.

04. Gently breathe out through your nose to the count of four.

05. Repeat several times.

06. Once you feel comfortable with breaths that last for four counts, increase how long you breathe in and breathe out. You can work up to breaths that last up to 10 counts.

No.4

MEDITATION TECHNIQUES

A. FIVE SENSES MEDITATION

The 5 Senses - Seeing, Hearing, Smelling, Touching and Taste - represent our earliest sensory experiences. More often than not we don't tune into what these senses are telling us. We can become dulled by the constant distractions in life. The 5 Senses meditation is an effective practice for calming the mind and grounding yourself by tuning into your senses and your body in the present. This practice can be used to calm the anxious and stressed mind, or simply as a means of appreciating the here and now. Take a few gentle deep breaths to relax.

01. SEE

Identify five things you can see. Look around you and become aware of your environment. Try to choose something you don't usually notice. Pause.

02. HEAR

Identify four things you can hear. Listen for sounds surrounding you inside and outside. Pause.

03. FEEL

Identify three things you can feel. Bring your attention to what you are feeling in emotionally and within your body. Feel the texture of your clothing or your skin. Pause.

04. SMELL

Identify two things you can smell. Bring your attention to the scents in around you, inside and outside. nose to the count of four. Pause.

05. TASTE

Identify one thing you can taste. Notice the taste in your mouth.

No.4

MEDITATION TECHNIQUES: B. PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION MEDITATION

Progressive muscle relaxation meditation is a practice that helps you release the tension you're holding in your body so you feel more relaxed and calm. In this technique, you move through one muscle group at a time breathing in as you tense a muscle group and breathing out as you release it.

01. Lie comfortably on the floor or sit in a chair.
02. Take a few deep breaths to relax.
03. Breathe in.
Tense the muscles of your feet.
04. Breathe out.
Release the tension in your feet.
05. Breathe in.
Tense your calf muscles.
06. Breathe out.
Release the tension in your calves.
06. Breathe out.
Release the tension in your calves.
07. Work your way up your body.
Tense each muscle group.



**STOP. TAKE A BREATH.
OBSERVE WHAT YOU ARE
THINKING AND FEELING.
PROCEED WITH KINDNESS
AND COMPASSION TOWARDS
YOURSELF AND OTHERS**

— Angela Chaousis

No.5

THE BE YOU LIVING ESSENTIALS PLAYLIST SPOTIFY

Music heals the soul and can be extremely powerful. It can change your mood by simply listening for a few minutes. Take some time out and find some space and listen to a few of these suggested tracks. Or you can play some music before you go to sleep with a timer to switch off.

Below you will find a link to a curation of our favourite mindfulness and meditation tracks.

Note that this playlist will work once you have logged into your Spotify account.

Click [here](#) to open the playlist >

I hope that Angela's mindfulness and meditation tips have helped you to prioritize taking care of yourself and keeping your cup full. You might be in a situation where your children need you to be a playmate rather than an audience right now. Take a moment out to just be "with" your kids and get into their world. It might make for an opportunity for you and your child to tune in together.. take a break and embrace your inner 6 year old.

with love, Natasha xx

We would love to see your mindfulness adventure!
Tag @makemeiconic in your mindfulness-through-play posts.



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**Melbourne based Mindfulness and Meditation Educator and Holistic Counsellor,
supporting individuals on their journey of self discovery.**

She is offering our readers a free no obligation "discovery chat", and offers sessions online and in person.
Visit Be You Living [here](https://beyouliving.com.au) if you would like to book a 1:1 Mindfulness and Meditation session with her.

Visit beyouliving.com.au and follow Angela on Instagram @beyouliving





take a look at
OUR *LIFE* AND *PLAY* BLOG..
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