

# Mindfulness Matters

In your private life,  
In your professional life,  
And in you DKG life.

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**(An Overview of Iceland DKG Presentation)**

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## **'O' Siem'**

**This song is composed by Susan Aglukark, an Inuk musician, born in Churchill, Manitoba, whose universal message of self-respect and strength she hopes will resonate with people of all cultural backgrounds.**

**"O' Siem" means welcome and is a welcome gesture of the Coast Salish First Nations of British Columbia**

- **O Siem we are family**
  - **O Siem we're all the same**
  - **O Siem the fires of freedom**
  - **Dance in the burning flame**
- 
- **Sing O Siem     All people rich and poor**
  - **Sing O Siem     Those who do and do not know**
  - **Sing O Siem     Take the hand of one close by**
  - **Sing O Siem     of those who know because they try**
    - **And watch the walls    come tumbling down**

(2)

(This song and others written by her can be found on Susan Aglukark's website.)

# What is Mindfulness?

Mindfulness:

“... is paying attention in a particular way,  
on purpose,  
in the present moment,  
non-judgementally.”

Jon Kabut-Zinn

Amy Saltzman, a medical doctor and educator, adds paying attention with kindness and curiosity.

Mindfulness involves the capacity to be aware, to be fully present to events and experiences as they unfold. (3)

# Many Kinds of Mindfulness:

Mindful listening – speech, music, environment

Mindful tasting – feeling the texture, etc.

Mindful walking , moving – sensations in body

Mindful smelling – aromas from food, flowers

Mindful touching – sensations felt

Mindful playing – instrumental, sports or general

Mindful Meditation – focussing on breathing, sound, candle, sound of a chime, etc.

## **Mindful Breathing**

1. Sit in a comfortable position
2. Rest your hands gently on your lap
3. Close your eyes.
4. Breathe in for 4 counts hold for 4 counts and out for 8 counts.
5. Focus on each breath.

(5)

# Effects of Mindful Meditation on the Brain

## Research says it:

- Can change the mental state and perceptions
- Can change the structure of the brain
- Can change the way brain cells interact
- Can increase grey matter in the hippocampus (emotions) and other areas of the brain
- Can generate new brain cells (neurons – neuroplasticity)
- Can make your brain bigger and stronger

Changes in grey matter are generally believed to result from **repeated activation** in these brain areas, which is what would be expected from mindfulness training.

## **Mindfulness Benefits our Health and our Lives**

**Research shows it:**

- **Helps to avoid stress, more relaxed**
- **Helps body function better**
- **Reduces illnesses, depression, anxiety, hostility**
- **Supports the immune system**
- **Provides peace of mind – de-stresses**
- **Enhances focus, compassion, empathy**
- **Self-regulates emotions**
- **Rebalances the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous system**
- **More positive self-representation, higher self esteem and higher acceptance of oneself. (7)**

# Incorporating Mindfulness into Our Lives

## Reconnecting our bodies with our minds:

1. Practice mindful breathing for 5 minutes every day. It is said that the consistent practice of mindful meditation will bring beneficial results to both the mind and body and interpersonal relationships.
2. Approach something as if it were your first time doing it e.g. drinking coffee, smelling a flower, etc.
3. Practice mindful gratitude – feeling grateful for what is happening right now. This changes anger, frustration, resentment and resistance into openness to accept the next step.
4. Practice mindful walking in nature. Focus on your movement, smells, sounds, heart beat, etc.



## Reconnecting our bodies with our minds (cont'd)

- 1. Practice singing, humming, chanting, and toning to calm your breathing and calm both mind and body.**
- 2. Incorporate yoga, tai chi, swaying, dance, and any mindful movement.**
- 3. Surround yourself with beautiful things and find a quiet place to center yourself.**

## Connecting in your Personal and Professional Lives

1. **Make yourself as healthy as you can:**
  - **Smile**
  - **Practice gratitude**
  - **Exercise**
  - **Eat nutritious food**
2. **Be mindful of your own needs and those of others.**
3. **Decide *what* to pay attention to**
4. **Commit to practice mindfulness meditation everyday**
5. **Your standards are not others' standards**
6. **Realize there is potential in each day**
7. **Reach out to others – do mindful acts of kindness**

## Being Mindful of the Power of NOW

- **Our voice is the audible expression of the unique light and energy inside each one of us.**
- **Be mindful of your own gifts – we have all been given gifts – now we must use them**
- **Meditation is a natural medication!**

**“Interdependence is and ought to be as much the ideal of man as self-sufficiency. Man is a social being.”**

**Mahatma Gandhi**

**To go fast – go alone.  
To go far – go together.**

**Mindful Cooperation is the key.**



# Resources for Mindfulness Matters:

- **Books:**

- ‘Mindsight’ by Dan Siegel; Bantam Books, NY, 2010
- The Mindful Brain: Reflection and Attunement in the Cultivation of Well-Being. Daniel Siegel, W.W. Norton & Co., 2007
- **This is Your Brain on Music: The Science of a Human Obsession by Dr. Daniel Levitin, Penguin Books, USA, 2006**
- **The Mozart Effect: Tapping the Power of Music to Heal the Body, Strengthen the Mind, and Unlock the Creative Spirit by Don Campbell, Avon Books 1997**
- **MindUp Curriculum Grade 3 – 5; Brain-Focused Strategies for Learning and Living. The Hawn foundation, (Scholastic), 2011**
- **Mindfulness: A Guide for Teachers by Dr. Amy Saltzman – (see Ingibjorg Jonasdottir)**
- **Urban Mindfulness: Cultivating Peace and Purpose in the Middle of It All, Jonathan S. Kaplan, PhD, Harlinger Publishing, 2010**
- **Meditation: Easy Techniques to help you relax and focus by Jan Purser, Raincoast Books, Vancouver, 2000**

# Resources for Mindfulness Matters:

- **Books:**

- The Power of Now by Eckhart Tolle, New World Library, Novato, CA, 1999
- The Three Minute Meditator by David Harp, minds i press, 2007
- Making the Brain Body Connection: A Playful Guide to Releasing Mental, Physical, and Emotional Blocks to Success– by Sharon Promislow, Enhanced Learning and Integration Inc., (revised 2005)
- Meditation for Everyday Living by Stephen Austen, Barron’s Educational Series, 2002.
- Teaching Meditation to Children: Simple Steps to Relaxation and Well-Being by David Fontana, Thorsons, London, 2002
- Loving Kindness, Amy Saltzman (Ted Talks); Still Quiet Place
- Wherever You Go, There You Are by Jon Kabat-Zinn, Hyperion NY, 2005
- Mindfulness for Life by Dr. Craig Hassek and Dr. Richard Chambers, Exisle, Australia, 2012. [www.mindfullearning.com.au](http://www.mindfullearning.com.au)
- Slim, Sexy Yoga: 210 Proven Yoga Moves for Mind/Body Bliss by Tara Stiles, Rodale, 2010
- Conscious Calm: Keys to Freedom from Stress and Worry by Laura Maciuika, EdD. Tap into Freedom Publishing, Oakland, CA
- Mindfulness on the Go: How to Meditate While You’re On the Move by David Harp, New Harbinger Publications, Inc. 2011
- Journey into Mindfulness: Gentle ways to let go of stress and live in the moment, by Dr. Patrizia Collard, An Hachette, IK Co., 2013 (includes yoga)

# Resources for Mindfulness Matters:

- **Websites:**

- Deepak Chopra: <http://www.chopra.com/ccl/the-neuroscience-of-mindfulness-meditation#sthash.B3eBwFMB.dpuf>  
<mailto:mailer@sparkpeople.com>
- [www.Mercola.com](http://www.Mercola.com) Natural Health Website on nutrition, exercise and mental fitness