

MINDFULNESS THERAPY

A Quick Counseling Toolkit by
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What is Mindfulness Therapy?

- Mindfulness therapy is a counseling approach that helps clients become more aware of their thoughts, emotions, physical sensations, and surroundings without judgment.

Mindfulness can be incorporated into many counseling approaches, including:

- Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)
- Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT)
- Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)
- Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT)

Primary Goal: Help clients become present, respond rather than react, and develop greater emotional awareness and self-regulation.

Remember: Thoughts are mental events, not facts.

Core Principles



Present-Moment Awareness

Focus on what is happening right now instead of dwelling on the past or worrying about the future.

Thoughts Are Not Facts

Notice thoughts without automatically believing or acting on them.

Acceptance Without Judgment

Allow emotions and experiences to exist without labeling them as good or bad.

Observing Instead of Reacting

Pause, breathe, and notice your experience before responding.

When Can Counselors Use Mindfulness Therapy?

Mindfulness can be helpful for clients experiencing:

- Anxiety
- Stress
- Depression
- Burnout
- Emotional dysregulation
- Rumination (overthinking)
- Difficulty focusing

School Counseling Examples

- Test anxiety
- Peer conflict
- Returning to class after emotional dysregulation
- Academic stress
- Emotional regulation
- Building self-awareness



"You can't stop the waves, but you can learn to surf." ~Jon Kabat-Zinn

Helpful Counselor Prompts

- "What are you noticing right now?"
- "What thoughts are showing up for you?"
- "What sensations do you notice in your body?"
- "Can you sit with that feeling for a moment without trying to change it?"
- "Let's take one slow breath together."

Key Takeaways

- Thoughts are not facts.
- Emotions don't have to control our actions.
- Mindfulness creates space between emotions and reactions.
- Small, consistent mindfulness practices can improve focus, resilience, and emotional regulation.
- Mindfulness is a skill that becomes stronger with practice.

References

Kabat-Zinn, J. (1990). Full catastrophe living: Using the wisdom of your body and mind to face stress, pain, and illness. Delacorte Press.
Segal, Z. V., Williams, J. M. G., & Teasdale, J. D. (2018). Mindfulness-based cognitive therapy for depression (2nd ed.). Guilford Press.