

You are receiving this because you are a participant in the RADD Lab Colorado Coronavirus Coping Study, and you are a member of the **Daily Mindfulness** group.

As you know, here in spring 2020, our community is navigating a major public health stressor (the pandemic COVID-19). We know that your lives are being deeply impacted by school closures, changes in your social life social activities, and family risks – and we know that these impacts may be highly stressful.

From previous scientific research, we know that daily wellness strategies can help protect individuals from the negative consequences of stress. But, because COVID-19 is a new and unusual stressor, there is a lot that we still don't know about what will help people cope during this time. That's why we are doing this study: (1) to understand how the public health stressor COVID-19 is affecting people, and (2) to understand whether, and what types, of daily wellness strategies might buffer you from this public health stressor and help keep you well.



We are asking our participants to try to engage in at least one daily wellness strategy for every day of the next eight weeks. As a member of the **Daily Mindfulness** group, we are asking you to commit to engage in at least one mindfulness practice every day during your participation in this research.

Mindfulness practices are activities that allow you to pay attention to the present moment, on purpose, and without judgement. In some practices, this means being aware of your body and breathing. In other practices, this means being aware of your emotions or thoughts, and – as best we can – trying to accept the emotions or thoughts without fighting them or labeling them as good or bad. Finally, some practices include building a sense of kindness and compassion for yourself or others. Together, by helping develop the skills of present-moment awareness and acceptance, mindfulness practices help us to feel balanced.

From a scientific perspective, mindfulness practices don't just help you feel balanced – they also help balance your mental and physical health. When you engage in mindfulness practices, that state of mindful awareness corresponds with communication among brain regions that are involved in introspection and emotion. We are still learning what this means, but one theory is that engaging in mindfulness practices may help strengthen brain networks that also help you respond in healthy ways to strong emotions.

In this study, in your daily microsurvey, we will ask you to pick out one or more mindfulness practices from the list below (and/or write in your own mindfulness practice) that you plan to do in the next 24 hours. (Below the practices are described in detail for you to read carefully; on the microsurvey, the list will have a brief description, but you can refer back to this as a reference at any time). When planning your next mindfulness practice, please plan something that feels engaging and do-able for YOU.

We will also ask you to tell us about what mindfulness practice(s) you did in the past 24 hours, and how focused or centered you felt. Don't worry if you didn't do the mindfulness practice that you had planned – we just want to know how the practices are going for you.

Please do not hesitate to contact our team with any questions about your daily mindfulness practice, or the study as a whole: raddlab@colorado.edu

Mindfulness Practices:

Grounded Body

1. Sit in a comfortable position, with your back straight, chest open, and your body relaxed.
2. Close your eyes, and take ten slow, deep, full breaths. With each exhale, imagine that you are breathing out stress and care, and with each inhale imagine that you are breathing in strength and balance.
3. Continuing to breathe deeply, concentrate on feeling your feet. Simply see if you can feel the sensations in your toes... the bottom of your feet... your feet as a whole. Noticing the sensations in your feet, take ten slow breaths.
4. Still breathing slow steady breaths, bring awareness up your body to your legs... your torso.... your arms.... your hands....
5. Now see if you can feel the sensations in your whole body. Let your awareness cover your entire body at once. Feel yourself breathing. Do this for ten more breaths

Compassion

1. Sit (or stand) in a comfortable position, with your back straight and body relaxed.
2. Wrap your arms around yourself to hug your body. Close your eyes if you like.
3. Take a few deep breaths. Notice your own emotions and any stress.
4. Offer yourself understanding, saying to yourself “this is really stressful” or “I am feeling stress”.
5. Offer yourself compassion, saying to yourself “may I accept myself just as I am” or “may I treat myself with kindness” or another phrase that helps you hold yourself with warmth and compassion.

Attention to Emotions

1. Sit (or stand) in a comfortable position, with your back straight and body relaxed.
1. Close your eyes, and turn your attention to your emotions with an attitude of curiosity and acceptance of whatever is there.
2. It's ok if you do not have a precise name for your emotions. It's ok to guess about your emotions. It's ok to have more than one emotion mixed up together.
3. Once you observe an emotion, notice how the emotion is happening in your body – pressure, tension, heaviness, lightness, twisting, or any other sensations.
4. Once you observe how emotions are happening in your body, try to let the body sensation happen with acceptance and without judging it.
5. Notice any judgment thoughts that try to come up and label the emotion as good or bad, or that try to figure out where the emotion came from. Notice those thoughts and let them go.
6. Just be with the emotions as you take ten more breaths.

Walking Meditation

1. Stand tall, with your back straight and body relaxed. Feel the balance of your body over your feet.
2. Bring awareness to the sensation of your feet on the ground. Allow your gaze to rest in the space on the ground in front of you.
3. Begin walking. Allow your gaze to move with your body.
4. Notice each part of the steps you take. The lifting (picking up your foot)... the floating (moving your foot forward)... the lowering (lowering your foot down)... the pushing (pushing off with your foot on the ground, as the other foot lifts)
5. Become aware of the physical sensations that are happening with each step, in your feet or other parts of your body.

Stress Visualization

1. Sit in a comfortable position, with your back straight, chest open, and your body relaxed.
2. Close your eyes, and take ten slow, deep, full breaths. Bring awareness to the body.
3. Allow noticing of tightness, tension, or other experiences of stress in the body. Gently bring awareness to the body sensations.
4. Take another slow, deep breath. As you inhale, imagine soothing warmth or light entering your body and steadily traveling to the place(s) of tension or stress in the body.
5. As you exhale, visualize the tension or stress being carried away and out of the body to harmlessly disperse in the air.
6. Repeat this visualization with each breath, filling spaces of darkness or tension in the body with light and soothing warmth – and letting go of tension or stress.

Other _____ (you choose a mindfulness practice that is engaging for YOU!)

