



THE CDC estimates in 2015 that approximately 9.5% of children under 18 and 4% of adults over 18 in the United States have the diagnosis of ADHD. While the symptoms of ADHD are varied they include an inability to focus, restlessness, difficulty organizing things and tasks, difficulty listening to instructions and remembering details, or trouble with completing tasks. These symptoms can range from mild to severe and can affect performance and relationships at home, school, and work. As a result, many also suffer from low self-esteem and a feeling of shame at not being able to do what those without ADHD are able to do. While it may seem that mindfulness meditation would be very challenging for people with ADHD, research has shown that training adapted for ADHD can help significantly with concentration and other symptoms. This encouraging research also shows that the benefits can be seen relatively soon and can help with self-regulation and focus.

for this to be done as a slow walking practice. Because many with ADHD are visual learners the program also incorporates visual aids and guided visualizations to teach concepts like awareness and acceptance.

A Few Techniques to Incorporate Mindful Awareness

1. Start with short breath awareness practice. This can be done either sitting in a chair or cushion or balance ball, lying down or if you feel too restless by walking very slowly while gazing down at the floor in front of you. Breathe normally and use the breath as a focal point or anchor for your awareness. When your mind wanders simply and gently come back to your breath. Start with a few minutes a day and gradually increase. This practice will help settle the body and begin to improve concentration. Most likely the mind will wander off many times but as you begin to catch it wandering the awareness comes from remembering to return to the breath. If this is too difficult at first, Zylowski suggests keeping most of the attention in the foreground and letting the busy thoughts move to the background.
2. Check in with yourself throughout the day by taking short breathing breaks while noticing how you are feeling physically, emotionally and mentally. This will help you become more present in your life. There are many apps you can use as timers to remember to take a mindfulness break. The Mindfulness Bell App is free and will ring periodically throughout the day based on how you set it up.
3. Mindfulness is a way to develop compassion and patience for yourself and others. Repeating a phrase such as "May I be patient," "May I be calm," or "May I be free from self criticism" can help calm the mind and refocus you from habitual negative thought patterns.

While these studies were done with teens and adults, there are new programs being developed for younger children with ADHD. For more information and additional resources about ADHD, Mindfulness or ADHD Coaching please join me for a free one-hour webinar on Wednesday March 23rd at 6pm or feel free to email me at lizbrowncoaching@gmail.com .

If you would like to see how coaching can benefit you or a family member, call me to set up a complimentary one-hour session in person or on the phone. I also offer workshops and webinars and am available to speak to your group. I look forward to hearing from you!