



WELCOME ALL PEER SUPPORTERS



Before the Holidays Begin....

Hello Peer Supporters! Welcome to our November edition of the Peer Support Newsletter. We hope this newsletter finds you well and can be of some support/assistance as we enter the busy holiday season. We know that for some, the holidays are a wonderful time. For others, it can be the hardest time. We want you to know that Peer Support is here for you! We wish you all a safe and happy holiday season!

Don't
Forget!

Allow yourself to feel your feelings. Recognizing how you feel is a huge step when it comes to processing and healing. The stigma is to hide your feelings and don't let them show. Allow yourself to feel how you feel. That doesn't mean you have to unpack and stay there, but grant yourself the time to feel how you truly are feeling.

Quarterly Article

Each newsletter will have an article that will pertain to overall self care and how to help others. This month's article is about mindfulness and being present. Kristina Romero, MA., LMHC explains ways we can all practice to be more mindful in our daily lives. Please view this article on the following pages. Enjoy!

2025
Peer Support Classes

Basic

Advanced

December 15th-18th



visit www.pspg-nm.com
To Register

How To Cultivate Mindfulness and Presence

Kristina Romero, MA., LMHC

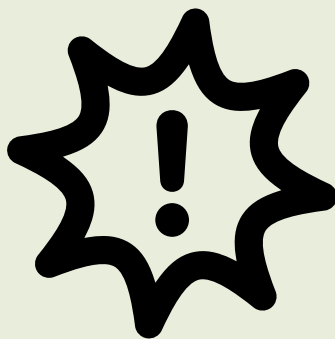
Cultivating mindfulness means developing a skill that enables you to be aware and fully present. The U.S. Army introduced the term "soft skills" in 1972 to describe abilities that aren't tied to tools or technology, but instead relate to how we lead, respond to pressure, handle chaos, and cope with trauma. These skills are interpersonal, emotional, and adaptive, unlike "hard skills," which we can teach and measure.

Although you can research personal and knowledge-based skills endlessly, the challenge is learning how to access and apply them. We take in so much information, but how do we use it? **What does being present actually mean?** Does it mean acknowledging a full mind, or does it simply mean being there for others when they need you? True mindfulness goes beyond the literal—it's **about focusing your awareness in the current moment, regardless of distractions or disruptions.**

We choose what we pay attention to—touch, smell, sound, taste, and the things we see. Often, we don't engage our senses intentionally; instead, we let distractions and devices, like smartphones and earbuds, capture our focus. We crave immediate rewards and drama, which means we rarely just enjoy the moment. When we constantly respond to the demands of family, work, and technology, we lose the opportunity to be present.

If you can keep track of your work tasks, plan dinner, and remember date night or your latest dietary goals, you can also check in with yourself and pay attention to what your mind, body, and soul need. People often notice when someone isn't present—sometimes a partner or child says, "You're always on your phone." Our common retort is, "I'm here, I come home every day, I hear you, we watch movies and eat together." Yet, our devices behave like new family members, demanding attention and diminishing our presence.

We have internal tools to navigate life and be present, but many of us struggle to access them. Criticism and self-doubt often block our attempts, making us believe we can't succeed, so we don't even start. Life's challenges—including fear, panic, and anxiety—can further prevent us from connecting with what we naturally possess.



Have you ever heard, "You're present but not present?" Your body might be in the room, but your mind wanders to worries about work, drifts through cyberspace, or escapes to imagined destinations. This is "mind full," not mindful. Fortunately, you can learn and practice skills to increase mindfulness—just like Yoda, you can become one with yourself and your environment.

Start with something simple: breathe. While breathing happens automatically, intentional, focused, and natural breathing cultivates mindfulness. First responders and busy professionals should remember there's no quick fix—repetitive and conscious practice builds muscle memory and strengthens the skill of being present.

Tools....Slow down that nervous system. Patrick McGowen's "Oxygen Cure" is a great starting point and resource ya'll can relate to. If you can't afford audible or Barnes and Noble, or fancy equipment, try a few other things I'm going to suggest.

Easier to listen than read and practice:

Mindfulness Meditation 5 minutes- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ff8kwrXMD38>
Feeling Safe within my body meditation- <https://youtu.be/0s6flkqWoXQ?si=cxv34txNjeLoT263>
Box Breathing- <https://health.clevelandclinic.org/box-breathing-benefits>

Grounding Tools:

Progressive Muscle Relaxation

<https://www.therapistaid.com/worksheets/progressive-muscle-relaxation-script>

5 Senses- <https://www.therapistaid.com/worksheets/grounding-techniques>

Earthing

(tap into those 5 senses-sight, touch, sound, smell, taste and just notice)

- Walking outside barefoot in the dirt or the grass
- Laying on the ground
- Going swimming, taking a bath, feet in river/lake/ocean
- Gardening
- Using grounding mats, blankets, patches, and socks

Wishing you love, wellness, and prosperity in your pursuit of happiness!



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