



# 4-H MINDFULNESS PROJECT



Mindfulness is the practice of paying attention in the present moment and accepting it without judgement. Being mindful is to experience moments with openness and to be aware of the present.

There are many benefits to mindfulness, such as:

- Reduced stress.
- Better concentration.
- Less depression and anxiety.
- Better immune system.

## 4-H THRIVE

Help youth:

### Light Their Spark

A spark is something youth are passionate about; it really fires them up and gives them joy and energy. Help youth find how this project excites them.

### Flex Their Brain

The brain grows stronger when we try new things and master new skills. Encourage youth effort and persistence to help them reach higher levels of success.

### Reach Their Goals

Help youth use the GPS system to achieve their goals.

**Goal Selection:** Choose one meaningful, realistic and demanding goal.

**Pursue Strategies:** Create a step-by-step plan to make daily choices that support your goal.

**Shift Gears:** Change strategies if you're having difficulties reaching your goal. Seek help from others. What are youth going to do when things get in their way?

### Reflect

Ask project members how they can use their passion for this project to be more confident, competent and caring. Discuss ways they can use their skills to make a contribution in the community, improve their character or establish connections.

#### Starting Out *Beginner*

- Attend the Mindfulness Retreat.
- Read suggested books on mindfulness.
- Identify safe locations to engage in mindful meditation.
- Learn basic yoga poses.
- Practice with a guided meditation.

#### Learning More *Intermediate*

- Develop a plan for stress management practices.
- Practice yoga.
- Keep a journal of goals and intentions.
- Learn how to go on listening walks.
- Practice mindful eating by paying attention to the features of your food.
- Practice breathe exercises.

#### Exploring Depth *Advanced*

- Serve as a Healthy Living Officer in your club.
- Be a junior or teen Leader for a mindfulness project.
- Teach other youth and adults in the community about the benefits of mindfulness and mindfulness practices.
- Help someone else develop a personal plan for mindfulness.

The activities above are ideas to inspire further project development. This is not a complete list.



# Expand Your Experiences!

## Healthy Living

- Attend the Mindfulness Retreat (See: <http://4h.ucanr.edu/Projects/HealthyLiving/Mindfulness/>).
- Create a portfolio of favorite places that help you feel relaxed.
- Create a gratitude journal, documenting things you are grateful for.

## Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics

- Research how the mind and body are connected.
- Explore food using all five senses—develop a chart that documents how food is experienced.
- Design and create an exhibit that features the impact of stress and mindfulness practices on the brain.

## Citizenship

- Present information about the benefits of mindfulness to your community.
- Promote a “Random Acts of Kindness” day.
- Host a self reflective, nature walk in your community.

## Leadership

- Become a Healthy Living Officer.
- Be a Junior or Teen Leader for a mindfulness project.
- Plan and prepare a mindfulness exercise for a community club meeting.

## Resources

- California 4-H Mindfulness <http://4h.ucanr.edu/Projects/HealthyLiving/Mindfulness/>
- UCLA Mindfulness Awareness Research Center <http://marc.ucla.edu/body.cfm?id=16>
- The Greater Good <http://greatergood.berkeley.edu/topic/mindfulness/definition>
- American Mindful Research Association <https://goamra.org/>

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### Connections & Events

#### Mindfulness Retreat

Learn about mindfulness techniques to develop skills in leading a healthy lifestyle and being a health advocate in your community.

**Presentation Days** – Share what you’ve learned with others through a presentation.

Contact your UC Cooperative Extension office to determine additional opportunities available, such as a field day.

### Curriculum

- *Mindful Me: A Primary Member Curriculum*; contact the State 4-H Healthy Living Academic Coordinator to use this curriculum
- See suggested books at <http://4h.ucanr.edu/files/267083.pdf>
  - *The Mindful Teen* by Dzung X. Vo
  - *Have You Filled a Bucket Today?* by Carol McCloud
  - *Moody Cow Meditates* by Kerry Lee MacLean

### 4-H Record Book

4-H Record Books give members an opportunity to record events and reflect on their experiences. For each project, members document their experiences, learning and development.

4-H Record Books also teach members record management skills and encourage them to set goals and develop a plan to meet those goals.

To access the 4-H Record Book online, visit <http://ucanr.edu/orb/>





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