

**Mindfulness: Our Anchor & Refuge**

**What is mindfulness?**

*Being in the present moment ~ non-judgmentally.*

**Benefits**

*Research shows it improves:*

*Concentration Anxiety Emotional Regulation*

*Depression Resilience Engagement*

*Blood Pressure Memory Sense of Well Being*

*Focus Positivity Immune Response*

*Creativity Reactivity Decision Making*

*Stress Job Satisfaction Pain Management*

**Awareness + Self Understanding = Lasting Change**

**Brain Fact #1**

*My brain and I work on autopilot more times than not.*

*Whatever we have done routinely in the past becomes our default response.*

*Our automatic default is our Trigger* *Response reaction.*

**Brain Fact #2**

*My brain and I assign an emotional tag to everything I experience:*

*positive…..negative…..or neutral*

*The most vivid emotion “wins” my attention…..and shapes my life.*

*Warning: My brain naturally gravitates to the* ***negative****!!*

**Brain Fact #3**

*My brain and I like storytelling. In an effort to save energy, our brain takes in information and creates a narrative. We believe our brain’s stories, yet our brain often gets the story wrong!*

**Attention:**

*What is happening both inside and outside of me?*

*Attention is our brain’s* *gatekeeper.*

*Where we place our attention determines our life.*

*Spotlight Theory of Attention: “Where is my spotlight?”*

* **Micro-Practice:**

 *Cultivating a Stable Attention ~ Helps to still self, self soothe, and focus*

 *“Just This” Breathe. Focus. Return & Rest*

* **Micro-Practice:**

 *Cultivating an Open Attention ~ gently facing brain tendencies*

 *“Mind Chatter” Notice. Label. Let Go*

**“Our lives change when our habits change.”** Mathew Kelly

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