

# Mindfulness

**What is Mindfulness?** Paying attention in a new way by being in the present moment.

**Why practice Mindfulness?**

- Increase emotional control
- Lower levels of stress
- Improve emotional well-being

**How can you practice being Mindful?**

*Sit back and be an observer of your surroundings.*

*Take a few deep breaths and s-l-o-w down.*



1. Notice external experiences with your senses
  - a. Where are you? Notice your surroundings.
  - b. What are you and your child doing? Notice their actions and interactions with you.
  - c. What do you see/hear/touch/smell/taste?
2. Notice your internal experiences
  - a. What emotions or sensations are you feeling now? Remember, all emotions are okay!
  - b. What thoughts are you having while you play with your child?
3. Look for opportunities for gratitude
  - a. What is going well during play time?
  - b. What made you or your child smile today?

Remember, what you pay attention to and how you pay attention impacts your level of stress. If you notice strong or negative emotions, practice staying in the present moment by:

- Taking deep breaths
- Acknowledge and label the feeling
- Remember that feelings are temporary
- Look for things to be grateful for in the moment (*big or small*)

**Additional Resources**

- <https://news.vumc.org/2014/10/30/mindfulness-training-for-parents-of-children-with-asd-studied/>
- <https://www.autismparentingmagazine.com/using-mindfulness-conquer-parental-stress-now/>
- <https://www.cfha.net/blogpost/753286/294791/Mindfulness-for-Parents-of-Children-with-Autism-Spectrum-Disorder>