



TIPS for Managing Stressful Times related to COVID 19: *Healthcare Workers*

Topic 7: **Practice Mindfulness to Increase Your Resilience**

Mindfulness is simply paying attention to what is happening in the present moment with openness, curiosity, and a willingness to be with what is. Being aware of the body and breath naturally cuts a lot of the chatter in the brain, giving you a moment of calm. It reduces rumination, which in turn reduces errors and increases performance, which is something we all need in times of high job demands. It also helps bring about the relaxation response, physically relaxing the body during stressful situations. And finally it helps us adopt an attitude of openness and non-judgment towards ourselves and others that brings ease and enhances our connection.

You can practice mindfulness anywhere, anytime, by taking a brief pause and tuning in to the sensations in your body, just noticing the felt-sense of the body as you sit or stand. You might quickly scan your body, noticing any tightness or holding, accepting that is the way it is right now, but inviting release. If you like, you can take a brief pause to notice your breathing, feeling the sensations of the in-breath and the out-breath. Letting all else go, and just coming home to the breath. If your mind wanders, notice that with kindness, and when you can, gently return your attention to the breath in the body.

The next time you approach a patient's room for a non-emergent need, take just a moment to practice the mindfulness exercise above. Maybe you do this while you put on your mask or as you place your hand on the handle. Become aware of the sensations in yourself and what you are bringing into that patient's safe space.

An example where frontline staff implemented mindfulness into practice was when a nurse became aware of the large number of masks, gloves, and gowns being used just to address beeping IV pumps. As a solution to this issue extension tubing was added so the pumps could reach the threshold of the room and the IV pumps could be accessed without having to use additional personal protective equipment. This represents mindfulness in that the nurses were able to expand their awareness of multiple issues and offer realistic solutions.



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[What is mindfulness?](#)

[How to practice a more formal mindfulness meditation](#)

[How mindfulness works with some guided meditations to try](#)

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