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Mindfulness and “IF” Techniques — to Help You Manage the “If’s” of Life

Mindfulness: Paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally, to the unfolding of experience moment to moment.

(Jon Kabat-Zinn, founder of Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction.)

The research is overwhelmingly positive: the practice of taking a few minutes to consciously breathe, be still, and focus on the ‘now moment,’ you will experience benefits such as:

- Enhanced Creativity;
- Improved Relationships;
- Stronger Focus and Concentration;
- Reduced Stress;
- Slowed Aging;
- Increased optimism and resilience;
- Better cognitive skills and problem solving;
- Improved immune system and energy level.

We’ve taken it a step further, by refining the definition and creating two aspects of mindfulness:

- **eMindfulness**, which focuses on the **experience** of your connection with the outer world, and
- **iMindfulness**, which focuses on the **inspiration** of your connection with your Higher Self.

It is our mindful inspirations and mindful experiences that help us achieve the unself-consciousness that leads to Self-consciousness.

(Bil & Cher Holton, Straight Talk About Spiritual Stuff, Vol. 2)

We’ve created a new process: **IF** techniques. **IF** stands for Inner focus ... and it involves a combination of eMindfulness with iMindfulness, to handle all those “iffy” moments in life. By quieting the mind and relaxing the body, IF practitioners experience deep states of inner peace, mental clarity, relaxation, and ultimately higher states of awareness. This “mental muscle” allows practitioners to access their higher mental faculties which connect them with what neuroscientists call the “deeper self” and which we refer to as the ‘Extraordinary You.’



Feelings come and go like clouds in a windy sky. Conscious breathing is my anchor.
(Thich Nhat Hanh)

As disciplined mindfulness and meditation strategies have become more well-known in the West, scientists have begun to quantify its physical, mental, and emotional benefits in thousands of studies. Researchers have discovered that it's not just one particular method that is the definitive practice in and of itself. Benefits have been shown in a wide variety of techniques. The following list is a partial list of the significant mental, emotional, and health benefits of disciplined inner focus (what we call: IF).

Health and Productivity Benefits of Disciplined Inner Focus (IF)

- In a study of health insurance statistics, IF practitioners had 87% fewer hospitalizations for heart disease, 55% fewer for benign and malignant tumors, 30% fewer for infectious diseases, and 50% fewer doctor visits than those who were not experienced in inner focus techniques.¹
- Disciplined inner focus (IF) lowers blood pressure to levels comparable to prescription drugs for those who are normal to moderately hypertensive.²
- Disciplined inner focus (IF) increases circulation in beginning IF practitioners by 30%, and in experienced IF practitioners by as much as 65%.³
- Inner Focus techniques have been endorsed by NIH as effective for the relief of chronic pain. Chronic pain sufferers experience a reduction in symptoms of 50% or more.⁴
- 75% of long-term insomniacs who have been trained in relaxation techniques, inner awareness methods, and simple lifestyle changes tend to fall asleep within 20 minutes of going to bed.⁵
- Disciplined inner focus (IF) lowers blood sugar levels in diabetics.⁶
- A group of inner-city residents suffering from chronic pain, anxiety, depression, diabetes, and hypertension trained in IF techniques experienced a 50% reduction in overall psychiatric symptoms, a 70% decrease in anxiety, and a 44% reduction in medical symptoms.⁷
- Brain scans show that disciplined inner focus (IF) shifts activity in the prefrontal cortex (behind the forehead) from the right hemisphere to the left. People who have negative dispositions tend to be right-prefrontal oriented; left-prefrontals are usually more enthusiastic, have more interests, relax more, and tend to be happier.⁸
- Researchers tested novice IF practitioners on a button-pressing task requiring speed and concentration. Performance was greater at 40 minutes of inner work than after a 40-minute nap.⁹
- Disciplined inner focus (IF) helps chronically depressed patients by reducing their relapse rate in half.¹⁰
- Disciplined inner focus (IF) practitioners notice more of their surroundings, but react more calmly than those who have little to no inner awareness experience to emotionally arousing stimuli.¹¹
- Those with smoking, alcohol, and eating addictions who have been trained in disciplined inner focus (IF) break their addictions with significantly lower relapse rates than those receiving standard therapies.¹²
- Hourly employees who practice IF techniques show improved work habits and attendance.¹³
- Brain scans of IF practitioners show increased thickness in regions of the cortex associated with higher functions like memory and decision making.¹⁴
- Disciplined inner focus (IF) appears to slow aging. Those disciplined in inner focus (IF) techniques for twenty years or more were 12 years younger than their chronological age.¹⁵

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Excerpted from *Freedom from Stress*, David and Karen Gamow, Glenbridge Publishing (2006).

In this moment, there is infinite possibility. (Victoria Moran, Younger by the Day: 365 Ways to Rejuvenate Your Body and Revitalize Your Spirit)