Who Are We?

PLAY’s mission is to serve as Arizona’s leading provider of wellness and educational programs and training through the integration of yoga, mindfulness, and art. PLAY develops and delivers fun, safe, and effective curriculum focused on enhancing peace of mind, self-awareness, and a mind-body connection. We believe wellness and peace of mind should be available to everyone, regardless of ethnicity, gender, or socio-economic class. We employ highly educated professionals – most holding Master’s degrees, and you can trust that our programs are high-quality and support you and your family. **We would love to share with you two easy mindfulness techniques**, which can be used in the classroom, workplace, or at home!

Harvard Health recommends these two common practices to increase your resilience to stress: **deep belly breathing** and **affirmations**. Use these tools anytime and anywhere you have a moment to be mindful!

**Forbes** has identified the following benefits of mindfulness:

1. Reduces anxiety
2. Reduces implicit age and rage bias
3. May prevent and treat depression
4. Increase body satisfaction
5. Improves cognition

Mindfulness has been shown to enhance self-insight, morality, intuition and fear modulation, and functions associated with the brain’s middle prefrontal lobe area. Evidence also suggests that mindfulness has numerous health benefits helping with pain, anxiety, depression, insomnia, and immune functioning.

“Be happy in the moment, that’s enough. Each moment is all we need, not more.”

Marin Teresa
Mindful Breathing

Mindful breathing is also referred to as deep breathing, diaphragmatic breathing, or belly breathing. When you breathe deeply, the air coming in through your nose fully fills your lungs, and the lower belly rises. For many of us, deep breathing seems unnatural, as we get accustomed to how shallow breathing limits the diaphragm’s range of motion. Mindful breathing encourages full oxygen exchange, which can lead to a slower heartbeat, lowered blood pressure, and a decreased sense of anxiety or stress. Try out box breathing, illustrated below:

![Box Breathing Diagram]

Affirmations

Affirmations are positive statements that can help one overcome negative thoughts or beliefs. Research supports the notion that practicing affirmations leads to positive changes in an individual’s self-regulation skills, motivation, behaviors, coping skills, and an overall increase in wellbeing. How can such a simple activity accomplish such a wide range of benefits? Affirmations activate the ventral striatum, the part of the brain responsible for neural reward pathways. There is also an increase in activity within key regions of the brain’s self-processing and valuation systems. The very act of self-affirmations are rewarding to the brain, which may in part be why they lead to positive (further rewarding) changes!

Anatomy of Affirmations

1. Choose a positive intention you would like to create for yourself and for your life - what positive aspects do you want to create for your life? How would you like to feel?
2. Try starting your affirmation with “I am” or “My.” This statement is about you, after all!
3. Keep it in the present tense. Write as though you’re experiencing what you desire RIGHT NOW, not in the future.
4. Leave out the “I wants” and “I needs.” Rather, write your affirmation as an expression of being grateful for what you are and have already.
5. Make sure your affirmations are positive statements! Words to leave out: don’t, am not, can’t doesn’t, not, am stopping.

Example Affirmations

I am in charge of how I feel today, and I choose to feel happy.
I am powerful.
I choose to see the good in situations.
Peace begins with me.