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Hello, I m Manisha Ranade at Santa Fe College  
in Gainesville, Florida. Today's topic is

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How do we reduce stress through mindfulness?  
I will be presenting with my group my mindfulness

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cohort.  
So, the question is, what is mindfulness and

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how does it help? In the simplest terms mindfulness  
means to be fully present in the moment, not

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dwelling on the past and not thinking or planning  
for the future, staying right here right now.

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Mindfulness has many benefits it reduces stress  
by removing negative talk. it improves physical

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health as well and recent research shows that  
it rewires the brain.

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So, from the theory of yoga therapy, origin  
of disease is in the mind and we're talking

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about diseases based on stressful lifestyle,  
not diseases from injuries or from germs. The disease

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starts in the mind level. Mind is restless, busy  
with thoughts it creates a disturbance at

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the Prana level or the energy level, so it  
upsets the stomach, digestion is disturbed

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breath rate is disturbed it affects sleep  
negatively and when that disturbance remains

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for a long time it percolates to the body level.  
The weakest organ gets the disease

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for some it might be a stomach upset, for some it might be a cold, it could be a back ache,

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So really, what is stress? Stress is the response to a demanding situation it is not a difficult

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situation but it is how we respond to it.

Our involuntary system or the autonomic nervous

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system has two parts the sympathetic nervous system and the parasympathetic nervous system.

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The sympathetic nervous system is often referred to as the fight or flight that comes into

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play when there is danger when there is a threat, so our blood pressure rises, blood sugar

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rises, pupils dilate, the body is on high alert.

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On the other hand the parasympathetic nervous system is also referred to as the rest and digest

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that comes into play when we're relaxing, when we are resting, when we are sleeping.

The fight or flight response is necessary

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but what happens when there is too much of it when when we are constantly in that panic

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state that's the problem that's when then the stress can cause some disease so how does

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mindfulness, come into play? mindfulness essentially enhances the parasympathetic nervous system

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it improves the relaxation response that's the key

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Hello, I'm Beatriz Gonzalez, some myths of mindfulness is that it is a religious practice, it can be associated with some religions but it is not

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necessary per say a religion, that it is time consuming and that

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in order to practice it you must be doing it 24/7

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So how do we form and sustain a self care group?

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The first thing you wanna do is reach out to people  
the people that you know are gonna be interested and set up a time you can  
meet, we do it over zoom  
regularly once a month is the ideal.

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You can can agree how you are going to carry  
out your meetings but really it's a zone of

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no judgement where everybody can feel free  
to express their opinions and and support

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each other and in between meetings you'll support each other with email,  
text, calling each other etc.

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So some of the other things that are important  
in making sure that the cohort works

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together is creating a shared journal where  
you guys can keep each other accountable that

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you really look to practice in your own way  
and encourage each other regularly during

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those monthly meetings and just as you experience well being from  
that practice that you share

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that with each other and with people around you  
to encourage you to keep going.

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So we come to the part of the practice itself. In each of our monthly meetings we also devote a little

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bit of time to a practice. The mindfulness practice maybe a short one, just five minutes maybe

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even one minute. So, I'm going to demonstrate just a short one minute practice that you can do anytime.

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You're going to start with just gently stretching, you can roll your shoulders your neck

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If you want to stretch your arms and bend to one side and the other. And also twist

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just gentle twists, just so that your body can relax and loosen all the tension

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and then all we are going to do is breathe in for 4 counts and breathe out for six counts.

So, it just takes 10 seconds

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if you do that 6 times it is a minute. And that's going to refresh so let's do this short practice

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let's breathe in, 2, 3, 4 breathe out, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 breathe in, 2, 3, 4 out, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 continue

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when you inhale, completely breathe in, and when you exhale, fully let go the whole breath.

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Inhale is energizing, exhale is relaxing

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keeping a gentle smile, you can rub your palms and place over your eyes, with blinks you can open.

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Even a simple one minute practice is going to make a difference but there are many ways of doing it.

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So, I'm an assistant professor at Santa Fe college and I will talk about my own reflections

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after being in this group. I began the practice more rigorously since we started this mindfulness

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cohort. I found more time available for important stuff. Not only that, I was able to distinguish

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the boundary between work and home life. Prior to practicing I used to have the temptation

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to keep checking my email every hour in the evening hours or night, so I was able to just

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be in the moment and not, and be able to resist the temptation. I have had physical health

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benefits such as lessening of my arm pain, my eye strain, even back ache because I was

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more mindful how I sat, how I moved and just being more aware of myself.

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Beatriz Gonzalez, I'm a professor of biology at Santa Fe College in Gainesville, FL.

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I did not do any mindfulness really. I've been doing it for less than a year and it was mostly when we started our mindfulness group that I became serious

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about being mindful about being mindful. Usually I mostly do yoga few times a week but I find

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that my nightly sessions also have led me to be more patient and less stressed overall

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and he has improved the way I communicate with my family.

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Sheela Vemu is another member of our group she is a professor Waubonsee community college outside of Chicago she teaches microbiology and biology.

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She has been practicing meditation and mindfulness for many years but once you join the group and we formed

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our group she became much more conscious about it she does different ways of doing it and

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again we will do it in our own personal way whatever works for us and she has seen lots of benefits physical and emotional.

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Kusali Gamage is an adjunct professor at Austin Community College in Texas in the field

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of geology and she has been incorporating mindful walking in her practices which has

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been very beneficial she has also started feeling more calm and focused with less inner chat.

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And I'm Mikel Gibson, I work in Student services admissions in Black Hawk College in

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Illinois and I'm fairly new to practice but some of the things that I have incorporated

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are that I only spend a short time 5 to 10 minutes in the morning and the evening I've

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started to do some walking meditation as well. It was really helpful to me to know that I didn't

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have to be perfect and there's not a perfect way of doing it and then I can kind of learn

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as I went. It's definitely made me more patient and more able to kind of connect

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my thoughts on the days that I am using my mindfulness practice.

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so here are some suggestions for cultivating a daily practice. You can do one of several things.

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You could do mindful eating of one meal - what you're eating how you're eating what is the taste, the texture,

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who cooked that meal, who provided the meal this could be done daily, it could be once a week,

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as per your schedule, you can have a sitting practice 10 to 20 minutes you can always observe the mind

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before you react just before you're about to react you can observe, and that's that little

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moment that helps. Also another favorite of mine is practicing gratitude for three things this

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could be done at night, it could be done in the morning and all these little actions

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that you can take do help you overall. And here are some reference materials you can look

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through these - there are some books, some links

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and a whole list of articles these are based on Stem classroom mindfulness

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And finally here is our contact if you want to contact us for anything about this mindfulness or forming a group.