

Lead a series of youth workshops – *Lesson 3: Mindful Movement*

Being mindful can apply to the way our bodies move and feel. In between movement, the body gains benefits by focusing on the pauses or rest.

What You Need

- Electronic devices for each participant or one with a larger screen that can be seen by all
- Internet connection
- Foam mat, blanket or soft area for mindful movement practice

Step 1: Check In – Chiller Challenge

Chillers are quick, helpful messages about how to slow down and step back from stress. Ask for volunteers to share with the group the Chillers they developed or started. Give everyone who wants to an opportunity to show or talk about what they've done.

Step 2: What is Mindful Movement?

Mindful movement means slowing down. Being present in what we are doing at any one time. With movement, so many times we are rushing through to complete an activity, that we can easily get distracted by the movement or the outcome of the movement. We can get caught up in how we are moving, or thought of what we should or could accomplish. By practicing mindful movement we can slow down to hear or discover what we are thinking and feeling. The movement then becomes the purpose.

By being mindful in our movement, instead of avoiding the feelings or thoughts that arise, we can now pay attention to the feelings and observing how they affect us. We can feel more centered and more at ease, even during emotional turbulence. Slow mindful movement means doing something really different – taking attention to the sensations of a state between frantic activity and stopping. We can then allow that pause to help us decide what to do with the feelings or thoughts.

Step 3: Practice

The mindful movement sequences offered here can be done on their own or joined in a sequence, depending on time. Explain to the group that each room offers a sequence for a part of the day, which can be done anywhere teens feel comfortable.

- The **kitchen** sequence focuses on building energy, awakening and warmth. This sequence is great for when teens have just awoken, are feeling sluggish or just need a burst of warmth.

- The **bedroom** sequence can be done any time for restfulness and peacefulness. It would be a great one to do before bed for a better night's sleep.
- The **study/den** sequence can be done on a chair, before a test, or anywhere teens would like to draw their focus back to the present moment but have no place to stand or lay down.
- The **hallway** sequence is for when teens are feeling stagnant, in transition (a bit scattered without purpose), or simply needing some balance.

Have participants do these sequences slowly and at ease, taking at least five full breaths during each pose or timing each one for one minute.

Mindful Movement for Any Room: Kitchen – <https://youtu.be/5rAzgMqu14g>

Mindful Movement for Any Room: Bedroom – <https://youtu.be/bK6ZNJZQVMs>

Mindful Movement for Any Room: Study/Den – <https://youtu.be/taC0bIpGbNw>

Mindful Movement for Any Room: Hallway – <https://youtu.be/M-uTD1mdlV4>

As time and space allow, continue the mindful movement practice with the following additional poses.

Cobra

Lie on your stomach on the floor. If you are sitting in a chair, sit up straight with your feet flat on the floor. Put your hands on the floor under your shoulders. If you are sitting in a chair, put your hands on your knees or desk.

Stretch your upper body up high, with your arms straight and your stomach resting on the ground. If you are sitting, lean forward slightly, push your hands against your knees or desk and push your shoulders back to look up slightly, keep your neck as straight and in-line with your spine.

Keep stretching and breathing in and out as you breathe out slowly sigh. Tighten your abdominals to support your back.

If you are on the floor, breathe in and lift your feet up by bending your knees. Try to bring your head and feet close together. Can they touch each other?

Paint the World

Stand up. Bend forward with your arms hanging down.

Clasp your hands together, with fingers interlocked. Envision holding a big paintbrush.

Walk around the room. Keeping your elbows locked move the paintbrush high, low, and all around.

After a minute, take a deep breath in and stretch your 'paintbrush' higher up into the air. Lean back and with the 'paintbrush' high towards the sky, exhale fully as you sign your name through the air with a big slow sigh, bringing the paintbrush down with your exhale (sigh).

Relaxed Jack Knife

Kneel on the floor on your knees, and then sit back on your heels. If you are sitting in a chair, keep your feet flat on the floor.

Lean forward and stretch your arms forward to the ground. Continue stretching as far as you can. Can you touch your forehead to the floor? If you are sitting on a chair, just reach down to the floor as far as you can.

Stretch your arms out as far as they will go, allow your body to relax.

Take in big breaths, feel your chest rise with each breath in and your chest relax toward the floor with each breath out, breathe in and out at your own pace.

Relax for a minute.

Supine Deep Relaxation

Lie on the floor on your back with your legs straight and arms at your sides. Or sit in a chair with your feet flat on the floor and hands on your desk or lap.

The palms of your hands are facing up and resting on the floor, desk or lap.

Close your eyes and breathe gently.

Focus on your breath and allow any thoughts or distractions to come to you and just let them go, refocusing on your breath.

Sometimes you might need a word to focus on, or a favorite place to imagine like lying or sitting on a beach. Imagine the warm sand, the hot sun and the cool breeze off the water. Your breath sounds like the waves! As you breathe in, listen! It sounds like the waves coming up to the shore. As you breathe out, imagine the waves going back out to sea. Keep breathing with the waves for another minute or two.

Deep Lunge

From standing, step left foot back as far as comfortable, staying high on the fall of the left foot, keeping the right knee over the right ankle bring right knee to 90 degrees if you can, keep left leg strong and straight. Pull abdominals in and as you breathe in move straight arms from sides up to sky and meet them in the middle above your head, hold for a moment, then as you exhale move straight arms down to side, repeat 5 more times, then switch legs.

Up Triangle

From standing, feet facing forward, spread feet apart as you are able. Bring straight arms above your head, palms together and look up at hands, tuck tailbone in, abdominals tight and focus on strong body, activating all your muscles in body to hold this pose. Breathe for 5 deep breaths in and out.

Down Triangle

From standing, feet facing forward, spread feet apart as you are able. Slowly bend at the hips forward bring your head and elbows as close to the floor as possible, breathe deeply and fully as you relax for 5 breaths.



Step 4: Chill at Home

Encourage participants to spend some time between now and your next meeting practicing mindful movement at least once, in any setting.