

Independent Learning Newsletter Tips

7 Ways Mindfulness and Meditation Can be Helpful to Students

What is Mindfulness?

Headspace (www.headspace.com) defines mindfulness as “the intention to be present in the here and now, fully engaged in whatever is happening, free from distraction or judgement, with a soft and open mind”.

What is Meditation?

Meditation is a way of transforming the mind, making it calm and silent. According to the Australian Teachers of Meditation Association meditation is a discipline that involves turning the mind and attention inward and focusing on a single thought, image, object or feeling.

How does meditation and practicing mindfulness help you with your schoolwork?

1. **Reduces anxiety and risk of depression** - By becoming mindful, a person stops judging themselves and those around them and recognises that every situation “is what it is”. When you stop judging and comparing, you are able to reduce anxiety.
2. **Increases resilience** - resilience is the ability to experience something bad but to not internalise it and to be able to move on, still gaining benefit even from a negative experience. Practicing mindfulness and meditation quietens the mind and enables acceptance without judgement, which is key for achieving resilience.
3. **Improves ability to learn and recall information** - research by the University of Miami has shown that practicing mindfulness for 12 minutes a day improved attention and memory.
4. **Improves concentration** - regular practice of meditation may help improve concentration by enabling the brain to focus more accurately and to filter out unwanted or unhelpful messages.
5. **Improves creativity** - practicing mindfulness and meditation has the potential to allow the brain to unlock and unleash creativity. Creativity is of benefit to all students, not just in terms of artistic talents but also in relation to problem solving.
6. **Helps manage exam stress** - meditation can help you calm and focus your mind which helps to manage stress related to exams. This tool can be used in the lead up to the exam and also during the exam if stress levels begin to rise.
7. **Leads to better sleep** - getting enough sleep is crucial to ensure students have the mental and physical energy to learn. However, as academic and social pressures increase, this can lead to students having difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep. By reducing anxiety and stress you can ultimately sleep better and longer.

You can learn more about goal setting and many other topics to help you achieve your best at school by going to the links section in your portal and opening the ELES handbook:

