

MINDFULNESS Tips and Tools



Easy for parents, Good for kids

TIPS & TOOLS TO HELP BUSY PARENTS RAISE HAPPY, SUCCESSFUL KIDS IN - 10 MINUTES A DAY



How MINDFULNESS leads to Happiness and Success

If we don't learn to control our thoughts and emotions, they control us. We think we are in control, but we're not. When we sense a threat – and it doesn't matter if it's a huge bear lumbering towards us in the forest, or a loved one criticizing our behavior, our body takes over and prepares for the fight/flight/freeze reaction to protect us. Our brain does not know the difference between a real threat (a tiger) or a perceived threat (fear of rejection, humiliation, failure, criticism, loss, or pain, etc.). It reacts the same way no matter what the reason is. The connections to the thinking part of the brain are blocked - so that all of our energy goes to the do-something part of the brain. We DON'T think because we CAN'T think. Think about how fast your arm jerks back when you accidentally touch a hot skillet? Your body reacts before you've had time to realize what happened. Sometimes we freeze in stressful situations like taking a test or giving a presentation in front of an audience – even though we are prepared. That's why people in emotionally charged conversations become so irrational. It's impossible to communicate with them because they are not capable of thinking rationally. Their brains have been hijacked. This is when we behave badly and make poor decisions. Decisions that are not necessarily aligned with our beliefs and goals. Decisions that are not even good for us. We can't see the big picture, nor the consequences that will result from the decisions we make while in that emotional state. All we see, or feel, at that moment, is the immediate threat. Mindfulness - learning how to manage our thoughts and emotions - leads to better behavior, which results in a happier and more successful life.



The HAPPYHOME ELVES pop up around the house (one per month), holding prompt cards for children, who love the magic and mystery of it all. Kids are excited to wake up each morning and see what message the ELF has brought, and end up doing more for their friendly ELF than they would for their parents. Parents learn how to parent like an expert without reading a single book. The prompt cards teach them what to say to their kids, and what activities to encourage that will help them develop the mindsets and habits that lead to happiness and success.

[See all 12 ELVES](#)

The 3-IN-1 FAMILY FUN Activities for MINDFULNESS

The three most important things happy families do is (1) sit down to meals and talk about what's important, (2) have fun together - without technology, and (3) celebrate family life with rituals and traditions that create memories and build strong family ties. 3-IN-1 FAMILY FUN ideas have been developed to deliver all those benefits in one simple activity.

Our most cherished childhood memories usually revolve around the holiday traditions we celebrate as a family. The fact that we repeat these traditions over and over again is one reason why they stick with us, but it's also because they involve so many of our senses; festive decor, yummy food, fun activities, and relaxed time with people we love. If you want your children to remember important life lessons, the easiest, and most effective, way is to weave them into holiday traditions and family rituals. That's what 3-IN-1 FAMILY FUN is all about. Below are three activities for the month of August, all about MINDFULNESS and learning how to stay relaxed and calm.

Cool as a CAT



We all experience fear, anxiety, stress, and other emotions that make us anything but calm. No one behaves well in emotionally charged situations. But if we learn to PAUSE and give ourselves time to calm down and think before reacting, we live happier and more successful lives. Use this game to encourage family members to PAUSE. When you are angry, scared, anxious, or frustrated, count to ten and take some deep breaths. Then go move your COOL CAT one square forward toward the treat under the gift box. Everyone knows that cats hate water, so if this COOL CAT can calm himself long enough to swim across the pool, so can you.



My PEACEFUL Place

My PEACEFUL Place is what you imagine in your mind when you feel afraid, anxious, angry, hurt, frustrated, or stressed. It helps you calm yourself down so that you feel better, behave better, learn better, and perform better. It could be somewhere you've never been and just imagined you would enjoy, or it might be somewhere you experienced before that left you with warm, happy memories.

Use the ten My PEACEFUL Place cards to talk about what someone might see, hear, smell, taste, and feel while they are in each of these peaceful places. This will help you create your own PEACEFUL place - to go to whenever you need to calm your emotions.



Name that FEELING

Children, as well as adults, are easily overwhelmed by emotions that they don't know how to explain. Good relationships make for happier and more successful lives, and it takes good communication to make those relationships work. Conflict is especially difficult if we don't know how to describe what we are feeling and we don't know how to read the signs (facial expressions, body language, and behavior) that tell us how others are feeling.

Use the 12 FEELING cards to talk about what it looks like when someone else is angry, sad, jealous, frustrated, afraid, ashamed, etc. You can also use these cards - in the heat of the moment - to help each other label what you are feeling.

See what you get for only \$6