



TEAM NATURE NERDS  
DAY 17  
**MINDFUL CHILL**

JENNIFER LIN | ALICE CHEN | JOANNE LI | RICHARD REN

WEARETHENATURENERDS@GMAIL.COM  
USE: NATURENERDS  
JERICHO HIGH SCHOOL

## Why practice mindfulness?

Nowadays, many people are too busy to consider pausing their daily activities to take a break for mindfulness. They brush it aside, thinking that a mere ten minutes of mindfulness can not have any significant health benefits, however these ten minutes may play huge role when considered altogether. A ten minute mindful breathing session can reduce stress, boost relaxation, and even reduce blood pressure, and a body scan meditation session can even increase pain tolerance. With a variety of mindfulness exercises, the benefits listed are only the beginning.

**For today's Wellness Challenge, Alice decided to give mindful eating, breathing, and stretching a try!**

# Mindful Eating



after the mindful eating session: empty bowls and a calmed mind!

Alice enjoyed her favorite comfort foods for dinner tonight - soup wontons and fried dumplings.



Usually, Alice's dinners are loud and last a maximum of 30 minutes. Today, to practice mindful eating, Alice decided to take the time to slowly eat her dinner alone in another room with all electronics shut off. It was just her and her food!

# Mindful Breathing and Stretching

After eating her dinner, Alice decided to continue practicing mindfulness through mindful breathing. She leaned back in her chair, closed her eyes, and focused on breathing for a full 5 minutes before bringing the used plates downstairs.

Everyday sometime after school, Alice runs for 15 minutes on her family's treadmill. Usually, she heads for the shower right after, but today she decided to use mindful stretching - not yoga - as a way to cool down first. Alice tweaked mindful yoga a bit and practiced mindful stretching instead because she has not had the time to stretch recently but, as a dancer, needs to maintain her flexibility.

**What did you notice about your emotions and thoughts before and after each practice? Was there any difference?**

"Before mindful eating, I was in a very rushed mindset. I was trying to get everything done as quickly as possible and, in some cases, did not do them very well in my rush. After mindful eating, I felt significantly slower, probably due to both the amount of food I ate and the mindfulness factor. Instead of constantly thinking of all the things I had to do the rest of the night, my mind focused on what was immediately next on the to-do list, approaching everything step by step instead of trying to get it all over with."

**What practice did you prefer and why?**

"I preferred mindful stretching the most. While attempting mindful breathing and eating, many thoughts were rushing through my mind - mostly on what I had to do - mostly because I was just sitting there or eating dinner. However, when I was stretching, I was able to focus on the stretching itself. (It's hard to think of other things when you feel the burn of some stretches!)"

Were there any external or internal barriers that impeded you from having an effective mindfulness session? How might you eliminate those barriers in the future?

"Yes - there were many internal barriers. Many things ran through my mind repeatedly which distracted me while I was practicing mindful eating and breathing, but, with considerable effort, I was able to finally focus on eating and breathing after a few moments."

## Our Social Media Post:



**the.nature.nerds** Practicing mindfulness is VERY important, but some people never get around to it even if it only takes 10 minutes. You don't even have to stop what you're doing to practice mindfulness, as mindful EATING exists! So, we, the Nature Nerds, encourage all of you to grab a snack, sit in silence (with phones and computers turned OFF!) and just think about your food as you eat it :) (psst - you get to eat AND reduce your stress from the mindfulness! it's a win-win) Go give it a shot!  
#pgc2018 @turninggreenorg

