

## WHAT DOES MINDFULNESS REALLY MEAN?

As the world changes new terms come into daily vocabulary and are often confusing. To help clarify the key terms around mindfulness here is a list of definitions.

### **Awareness**

Awareness is the knowledge or perception of a situation. Self-awareness is the conscious knowledge of one's character, feelings, motives, and desires. The more aware we become, the more mindful we become.

### **Concentration**

Concentration is intensely focusing on an object, task, or person. While awareness encompasses many areas simultaneously, concentration typically focuses on one area at a time. Focusing on the breath while meditating is a good example of concentration. We concentrate on the breath.

### **Distraction**

Most of us are bombarded with distractions such as notifications on our devices, noise pollution, friends, family, or coworkers. There will always be interruptions when we are trying to concentrate, but with practice, we can learn to let distractions go instead of allowing them to hijack us from what we are concentrating on.

The more we meditate, the more skilled we become at releasing distractions. We may notice the distraction, but because we are aware that it is a distraction and nothing more, we can easily allow it to pass and return our focus to the breath.

### **Reflection**

After an event has occurred, such as a meditation session or acquiring knowledge, or perhaps even a conversation with someone, we can spend a few moments reflecting on that event. The purpose of reflection is not to ruminate over the event, rehashing words or feelings, but to step back and view it from a more neutral observer standpoint, as if we are watching a film clip of the event. We focus on how we felt during the event, we look for insights from the event, and we consider our reaction to the event. This allows us to strengthen our awareness and become more mindful.

For more information on meditation and mindfulness check out our articles on [www.curtishealth.com/thrive](http://www.curtishealth.com/thrive)

