



# STAYING CONNECTED

Week One - Roni Davis Presentation



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# MINDFULNESS BASICS

Suffering, struggling, these things universal in our world. We all struggle with different things, we all suffer. By suffer, I mean have negative experiences in life; anything from trauma and terror to just minor disappointments or unhappiness.

And those things occur, not so much because of the external things we experience but rather significantly more so because of the thoughts, beliefs and emotions we attach to them. We tend to go through life actually contributing to our suffering in so many different ways.

Further, almost ALL of the thoughts and beliefs we hold contributes to that suffering, don't even originate with us. We don't come out of the womb hating ourselves for our belly rolls, criticizing ourselves for everything, or being scared of everything. We learn all those things - they come from someone or somewhere else (parents, teachers, media, etc) .

We learn much of it when we're growing up and it all still guides us to this day.

You can only hear how terrifying the world is right now for so long before you start to believe you need to be terrified. Without awareness, we tend to think and feel the things we're told we should be thinking and feeling or the ways we've been programmed- and act in the ways we think we're supposed to act. And we've lived this way for so long, we don't even question any of it; we just believe it all to be truth and for most these things have not helped us to have the healthy, happy, full and abundant lives we want.

For most of us, it creates patterns of thinking, living and behaving that are often flat out self-destructive and contributing to or creating that suffering I spoke of earlier. This was certainly the case for me for most of my life. So mindfulness is simply present moment awareness. It's an active and constant practice of staying present and noticing our assumptions, our thoughts, beliefs, and emotions.

It gives us the space between thought and reaction to explore a different path - one that leads us closer to health, happiness, abundance, peace, all the goodness we want and deserve. We stay present in the moment, present with our thoughts, present with our emotions and the sensations in our body, we sit in meditation to explore our inner world, to reflect and to learn about ourselves, and to quite literally change our minds - which by default then changes not only the choices we make but also the way we we experience our lives and the things that happen in our outer world.

Mindfulness suggests that we CAN have the life we want, but it probably won't be found by changing the "world outside of ourselves." It comes from changing the world INSIDE because we actually LIVE and experience our lives inside of our skin.

My work includes three elements of mindfulness combined to support whole person, mind-body wellness.

They are: Mindful living, mindful moving and cognitive eating

## **CBT BASICS**

Cognition (what the brain does - thoughts, beliefs, feelings) and behavior (what the body does as a result - physical states, actions, behaviors) are inseparable.

Cognitive behavior therapy (or CBT) teaches us to understand the connection between them. It teaches us how our thoughts, feelings and behaviors are generating our results and it teaches us tools and strategies to manage them all in a more way that supports our physical and mental well-being.

Mindfulness keeps us present in the moment to make awareness easier and gives us the opportunity to take advantage of the space between thoughts, feelings and actions to rewire destructive conditioning and behavior patterns.

Combined, they teach us to change hard-wired habits by rewiring our brains, and give us the power to not only stop self-sabotaging weight-loss or healthy eating attempts but also binge eating, emotional eating, auto-pilot eating and during times like this, improve stress levels, quiet the voice of our inner critic, ease feelings of overwhelm, anxiety, depression, low-self worth and more.

We spend more than half of our day, every day, being unconsciously driven by all the stuff going on in our heads - if we never change that, nothing will ever change.

## **COGNITIVE EATING BASICS**

Cognitive eating is the combined power of mindfulness, CBT and some intuitive eating element broken down into a step by step process that focuses their combined power on the struggles damn near everyone has, with food because like everything else in life, our relationships with food, ourselves and our bodies are formed through the thoughts, beliefs, habits, and behaviors that are usually unconsciously developed over the course of our lives, exactly like everything else about us -- and those are the things that drive our behaviors -- they drive why we eat the way we eat.

Have you been one of the millions of the people complaining about weight gain and eating non-stop lately? This is why. Join us for more on this next week when we focus on food.

# ACTIONABLES

## **1** PAUSE & BE PRESENT

Start by simply practicing to pause and breathe through the day so you can take a second to check in with yourself - this in itself can be a hard thing to remember to do so it can be helpful to set some reminders in your phone.

In the same way you'd schedule appointments, schedule a reminder in your phone every hour that will pop up and simply ask... how are you? That's your cue to bring all of your attention to whatever you're doing in this moment right now and check in and notice: What are you doing? What are you thinking? What are you feeling? Where are you feeling it? What do you need right now? As you go through your day, practice bringing your full awareness to the present moment as often as possible. When you're brushing your teeth, when you're making breakfast, when you're showering.. What do you feel? What do you see? What do you hear? What do you taste?

Stay present in this moment because this is the only one you ever have. It's the only one you control.

As you're scrolling social media, talking to friends, watching the news - what are you thinking and feeling as a result of those engagements? Which messages are making you feel better, which are making you feel worse? As you're going about your day, which activities are making you feel better? Which are making you feel worse?

Also notice when you're struggling to stay present and are feeling compelled to escape and disconnect from it through mindlessly eating, scrolling, watching TV, etc.

## **2** FIVE KEY SHIFTS

These shifts are at the core of my CE work but they will support every aspect of your life.

## **SHIFT #1: PERMISSION**

Give yourself permission to get through this however you get through it - if you're not learning a new language or crafting with the kids, working out everyday - hell if you're not even getting dressed, let it be okay. Judging yourself for feeling like you're doing everything wrong or not doing enough will only make you feel worse. Let go of expectations and give yourself permission for all things.

## **SHIFT #2: ACCEPTANCE**

Release resistance to what is. There's a whole lot going on that you cannot ever control - let it all go and accept all things. It doesn't mean you have to like or love all things, but you may as well accept them.

## **SHIFT #3: KINDNESS**

Just be kind to yourself - it's that simple. Always ask yourself, am I treating myself kindly? Am I speaking to myself kindly? How can I be kind to ME?

## **SHIFT #4: COMPASSION**

The simplest way to think about self-compassion is to simply act the same way towards yourself that you would someone you love - especially when you are struggling, feel like you're failing, or are being judgmental/critical.

It's really just about treating and speaking to yourself kindly. If you wouldn't treat others poorly, why is okay to do it to yourself? But also, research has shown that people who are self-compassionate are happier, healthier, more successful and more resilient than those who aren't

### **SELF-COMPASSION EXERCISE**

This is something you can do anytime during the day or at night when you're struggling.

I'd invite you to think about what's causing you the most suffering. Isolation? Fear? Sadness? Mourning life before? Maybe you're feeling stressed or you're having a relationship problem or you're worried about something that might happen.

So finding a situation and getting in touch with it ask, what's going on, what happened or what might happen, who said what, really bring the situation to life in your mind's eye.

Next consider the following:

1) See it, acknowledge it and name it. This is a moment of suffering, right? We're bringing mindful awareness to the fact that suffering is present, and finding some language that speaks to you remind yourself that this (whatever it is) is really hard right now or I'm really struggling, or afraid, or angry, or whatever.

This allows you to turn toward the difficulty, acknowledging it, naming it, giving it a voice. So notice, this is a moment of suffering.

2) Common humanity/part of life. Remind yourself of our common humanity. Suffering is a part of life. And again, finding language that speaks to you, you may say something, it's normal to feel this way. Many people are going through similar situations. The degree of suffering may be different, the type of suffering may be different, but suffering is a part of life, part of being human.

3) Lastly, kindness. Repeat to yourself, may I be kind to myself in this moment?. And to support bringing kindness to yourself, I'd invite you to perhaps put your hands over your heart - feeling the warmth of your hands, the gentle touch, letting those feelings of care stream through your fingers. Repeat: May I be kind to myself. And using any language that supports that sense of kindness, perhaps language you would use with a good friend you cared about who was going through a very similar situation. It may be something like I'm here for you. It's going to be okay. I care about you. Or oh, sweetheart, I'm so sorry you're suffering, how can I support you? Anything that feels natural to express your deep wish that you be well, and happy.

And then letting go of the practice and noticing how your body feels right now, allowing any sensations to be just as they are, allowing yourself to just be.

## **SHIFT #5: CURIOSITY**

As I've already talked about... always checking in with yourself. What am I thinking? What am I feeling? Why am I thinking that way? Why am I feeling that way? How can I think about or feel about this situation that would make it easier?

Next week I'll go over how to apply these to the way you eat and why that's so powerful.

## **BREATHWORK**

HA breath...

Take a breath in through your nose.

As you exhale through your mouth, make the sound “haaaaa.”

Repeat as many times as you need to.

Tips:

Breathe deep into belly instead of high into your chest.

Make the exhale long and slow.

As you exhale, consciously relax your shoulders and arms.

Try several Ha breaths in a row.

Square breathing:

Close your eyes.

Breathe in through your nose while counting to four slowly.

Feel the air enter your lungs.

Hold your breath inside while counting slowly to four.

Try not to clamp your mouth or nose shut.

Simply avoid inhaling or exhaling for 4 seconds

Begin to slowly exhale for 4 seconds.

Repeat steps 1 to 3 at least three times.

Ideally, repeat the three steps for 4 minutes, or until calm returns.

## **QUICK THOUGHT EXERCISE**

When you notice yourself stuck in your head with catastrophizing or judgmental/critical thoughts, bring your attention to them and ask...

Identify the thought. Eg. "Omg I have to stop eating, I'm putting on so much weight."

How does it make me feel? Eg. When I think about weight gain, and how much I'm eating, I feel bad about myself. My chest and heart feel heavy and tight."

What do you do when you feel that way? Eg. When I feel bad about myself or in general, I usually reach for the chips

Then consider, is this thought helping or harming me? If the latter, why do I keep repeating it to myself and what can I tell myself instead the next time I notice this pop up?

## ABOUT RONI DAVIS

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Roni is a podcaster, speaker, writer, creator of Cognitive Eating and coach for almost a decade.

She struggled with weight, food, with disordered eating, an eating disorder, crippling depression, an anxiety disorder and panic attacks for most of her life.

She's also been a nationally qualified champion figure athlete, and spent over 8 years as an award-winning personal trainer and nutrition and wellness coach.

## RESOURCES

Free ebook - [www.ronidavis.com/whydieatthat](http://www.ronidavis.com/whydieatthat)

Free 8 week course - [www.ronidavis.com/mindful-movement](http://www.ronidavis.com/mindful-movement)

It's All In Your Head Podcast - [www.ronidavis.com/podcast](http://www.ronidavis.com/podcast)

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