

## WFWP USA: Our Focus is Our Future

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"All things are ready, if our mind be so." - William Shakespeare

This incredible image, by local photographer Dick Vogel, evokes a representation of attention and awareness. I appreciate the opportunity to think about five important elements of mindfulness as we allow our senses and brain to enjoy the splendor of spring - including these five poised prairie dogs!

Jon Kabat-Zinn, professor emeritus of medicine at the University of Massachusetts, is often credited for popularizing mindfulness. He defines

mindfulness as "the awareness that emerges through paying attention, on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally to the unfolding of experience moment by moment."

We can consider five common aspects of mindfulness as we reflect on how these concepts could be helpful to our vitality and well-being.

### **Intention**

A major component of mindfulness is connecting with our highest intentions to focus on the present moment. It is a gift to provide a space and place to rest our mind and body for healing and reflection.

### **Attitude**

Our desire is to open the heart and mind to compassion for ourselves, others and ultimately to our world. Our attitude and thoughts have the power to evoke misery and despair or hope and comfort.

### **Energy**

There is an emotional regulation associated with mindfulness that is supported by directing our intention and attitude. The goal is to meet whatever arises with equanimity (a combination of balance and calmness) rather than with reactivity.

### **Curiosity**

All of this might sound great, but how is it actually possible? Having a curious mind allows us to put our judgmental thoughts aside. Boulder mental health professional, Charles Davis, often says, "More curiosity, less agenda." Our brain has sometimes been described as an 'anticipation machine.' When curiosity is allowed to develop, we can redirect our automatic responses and take a fresh look at how our thoughts promote or hinder our happiness.

### **Insight**

Over time, practicing mindfulness can lead to clearer understanding and self-awareness. We are able to gather important information about ourselves and others with less bias. Our observations are more accurate, we understand things more deeply, and we see things more clearly. Insight can lead to an inner understanding and peace that alleviates the negative impacts of stress.

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Interested in mindfulness? 'Here for You' has prepared a spring toolkit of free meditation resources great for all ages. Enjoy exploring the resources at [hereforyouforthem.com/spring-healing-mindfulness-activities](http://hereforyouforthem.com/spring-healing-mindfulness-activities)

Marilyn Halpern is the founder and executive director of Aspen Care Services. This locally owned business provides medical power of attorney, care management and professional guardianship services in the Denver Metro area. For more information visit - [www.aspencareservices.com](http://www.aspencareservices.com) or [www.aginglifecare.org](http://www.aginglifecare.org). Photo credit: Dick Vogel