
Becoming Jackson Whole was founded in January 2020 after two years of assessments, site visits, and research. With founder, Sara Flitner, and Chief Science Advisor, Dr. Amishi Jha, powering the initiative, Becoming Jackson Whole has quickly made a meaningful impact on the local community. About 125 people have completed their trainings, and over 3,000 people have taken advantage of their daily practices, multi-day challenges, or one-day programs in the past 20 months.

But to take on the incredible task of creating a mindful community, we must first understand mindfulness and its purpose.

What is mindfulness and what are the benefits?

One definition of “mindfulness” means to be fully present, aware of where we are and what we’re doing, and not overly reactive or overwhelmed by what’s going on around us. Mindfulness-based training, the motivation of Becoming Jackson Whole and many other mindfulness movements across the world, teach the brain to find focus and calm in stressful environments. The benefits are wide-reaching.

Jha noted in a piece she wrote for Scientific American Mind that, “Hundreds of articles lay out evidence showing that training to become more mindful reduces psychological stress and improves both mental and physical health. … My colleagues and I have connected mindfulness training to both a sharpening of focus
and improved mood.”

“Community leaders work with Becoming Jackson Whole to receive resources that spread compassion, patience, and resilience across Jackson and beyond.”

These effects on individuals are astounding, but an even greater triumph comes when mindfulness extends beyond the person to affect the community-at-large. Becoming Jackson Whole provides our community leaders—in government, business, medical fields, and non-profits—with mindfulness trainings and tools. Leaders work with Becoming Jackson Whole to receive resources that spread compassion, patience, and resilience across Jackson and beyond.

MINDFUL OFFERINGS

From trainings that span from 21 seconds to 21 days, Becoming Jackson Whole hosts a wide range of programs that provide an approachable look at mindfulness and its benefits (becomingjacksonwhole.org):

Pocket Practices (less than 5 minutes): These simple, time-minimal practices are designed to be used throughout the day to calm and focus the mind. “We [provide] exercises that are achievable enough to actually be done at a stop sign while driving,” says Becoming Jackson Whole program attendee, Elisabeth Rohrbach.

Guided Meditation (5 to 15 minutes): Entirely free to the Jackson community, Becoming Jackson Whole offers guided meditations on their website that can be practiced individually, on your own time, or with a group, in real-time via Zoom.

Events (2 to 12 hours): From mindfulness conferences to their first TRYathlon in August of 2021, Becoming Jackson Whole continues to host events that grow mindful awareness and stimulate comradery. Visit the “event and initiatives” tab on their website to see what’s next.

Mindfulness-Based Attention Training (4 weeks): This in-depth program combines an eight-hour Mindfulness-Based Attention Training (MBAT) with four weeks of mindfulness practice. A first-of-its-kind study launched by Becoming Jackson Whole resulted in “100 percent of participants [showing]
statistically significant improvement in the professional, emotional, and cognitive domains. … Trainees had better memory recall, higher mood quality, and less relationship conflict. It’s important because [these statistics] meant higher workplace performance and satisfaction, better relationship quality, and overall less distraction,” says Flitner.

Simple acts equal incredible results. We can build a mindful community, and a mindful community is capable of so much more.

So PAUSE. Breathe in slowly. Breathe out slowly. REPEAT.

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Editor’s Picks

Four-Legged Milestones

On the Farm: Rediscovering Heritage Grains
Wellness Wired: Emotional Digestion

In Season: Festive and Foraged