

Journey with Mindfulness: Finding Your Anchor in 2021

If you're like so many people, 2020 may have left you drifting in a place of uncertainty and constant change, searching for a sense of belonging and calm – an anchor. Research has shown that regular mindfulness practice can boost your immune system, improve concentration, reduce stress and help you to be less reactive in difficult situations. A mindfulness practice can involve sitting or moving, inside or outside, in silence or with sounds, by yourself or with a group. It's all about finding your anchor ... what works best for you and fits into your lifestyle.



Throughout the spring 2021 semester, ISU WellBeing is offering opportunities to explore a variety of mindfulness practices to help you find your anchor. Join us on this journey as we learn about and experience the many benefits of mindfulness.

Journey with Mindfulness – Program Opportunities

Mid-Morning Mindfulness

- An ongoing opportunity that offers one way to stay focused and productive when all around you is a little chaotic by having a regular mindfulness practice.
- Sessions continue Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10-10:15 a.m. via Zoom.

Meditation 301: Beyond Mindfulness - Working with Difficult Emotions

- In partnership with ISU Professor of Psychology and Zen monk Dr. Douglas Gentile, these sessions will focus on using meditation and contemplative techniques to work with anxiety and other difficult emotions.
- Mondays from 2:30-3 p.m. beginning February 1 for 13 weeks.



Beginning Your Mindfulness Practice Course

- This course is a gentle introduction to mindfulness, designed to teach beginners how to access the deep wisdom, well-being and wholeness that reside within each of us.
- 3-week course, Wednesdays from 8:30-10 a.m. beginning February 17.



Am I Hungry? Mindful Eating Program

- This program provides you with the tools and strategies to make the best decisions for yourself in relationship to food and offers useful ways to create the healthy, energetic and vibrant life you deserve.
- Two 8-week sessions, Wednesdays from 9-10:15 a.m. beginning March 3, and Thursdays from 9-10:15 a.m. beginning March 4.

ISU WellBeing Book Club

- An opportunity to read a book that supports your overall well-being and offers the space to connect with other ISU employees for great discussions.
- Next book - *Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us* by Daniel H. Pink. Discussion sessions will be March 8-18; times to be announced.

Ignite Your Relationship with Movement

- In partnership with Nora Hudson of ISU Recreational Services, this workshop will introduce simple mind/body exercises and self-exploration techniques that ignite an intentional relationship with movement and well-being.
- Two 4-week sessions, Mondays from 11 a.m.-noon beginning March 15, and Thursdays from 3:30-4:30 p.m. beginning April 15.



Wholehearted Living Lunch and Learn

- Based on Brené Brown's book, *The Gifts of Imperfection*, this series will explore the 10 Guideposts of Wholehearted Living and explore how to engage with the world from a place of worthiness.
- Thursdays from 11-11:30 a.m. or noon-12:30 p.m. beginning March 18 for seven weeks.



Mindfulness Retreat

- Details and dates for this day-long experience in late spring are being worked on. Stay tuned for more information.



More details and registration links for these and other programs will be available on the [ISU WellBeing](#) homepage under "WellBeing News" at the bottom of the homepage as they are finalized. Information will also be available via the weekly *WorkLife at ISU* email communications and on the [Adventure2 portal](#).

Adventure2 Spotlight: Mindy Hanna

In each edition of our ENGAGE newsletter, we include a testimonial from a participant in the Adventure2 employee well-being program.

This issue, we asked Mindy Hanna, a grants finance specialist in the Finance Department, for her thoughts on what Adventure2 has meant to her during her two years in the program. Mindy was one of approximately 80 employees who achieved the top level (Level 4, Soar Confidently) in last year's program. She accumulated more than 5,000 points via her Adventure2 activities in 2020 and was one of two lucky grand prize drawing winners who won a \$300 gift certificate for her accomplishments.



Talk a little about how you got involved in Adventure2.

I learned about it the day I started at ISU in December of 2018 and was encouraged to see what it was about. Once I started Adventure2, it added enjoyment to my university experience, knowing that Iowa State is not only a place I come to work, but also a place that cares about who I am.

What have you enjoyed most about being a part of the Adventure2 program?

I've met a lot of new people who are very supportive of each other. I'm a very reserved

person and didn't know anyone at ISU when I moved to Ames in 2017. Through Adventure2 I've met some great and supportive people that I've been able to open up to and share some great experiences with. Being a part of the program has increased my self-awareness in many areas in my life. When doing the competitive portion of the activities, it's great to have teammates who cheer, support and encourage you. Even when we're not on each other's team, people still reach out and check in with you to see how you're doing.

How has Adventure2 impacted you in your work life?

It's allowed me to meet new people to interact with, which makes it easy to start a conversation when you have questions about work. I look at it as an ice breaker when it comes to meeting new people. For those I work closely with, it's allowed us to check in with each other and make sure we're taking the breaks we need so we can be refreshed.

Has it impacted your life outside of work?

Definitely! The program actually allowed me to have a healthy pregnancy despite being high risk. It's helped me to watch what I eat and drink and also stay active. Now that I have a one-year-old, it's allowing me to keep up with her and her energy level.

Did you buy anything fun with the \$300 gift card you won as a Level 4 achiever?

One of the items I bought for my husband and I was an Instant Pot. My husband uses it a lot because he stays at home with our daughter so she doesn't have to go to daycare during this pandemic. It's been a great addition to our home.

Do you have a special memory that stands out from your participation in the program?

My daughter! About five months after I started the program I learned that I was expecting, after being told earlier on that I wouldn't be able to have children. Adventure2 helped me to be much more conscientious about nutrition, which helped me to have a healthy pregnancy and be able to keep up with her now.

Would you recommend participating in Adventure2 to other employees?

Absolutely. It's allowed me to think more openly about activities and nutrition, and it's really challenged me. I've tried new activities that I now enjoy doing. I've also learned that when you incorporate family into the program, it makes things more fun and you want to do even more.



Prizes and Points:

Don't Forget To Take Your Annual Well-Being Assessment

Every year in Adventure2, the Well-being Assessment (WBA) is available for you to take, and you can earn **400 Adventure2 points** for completing it. As an added incentive this year, we'll be giving away **\$100 gift cards to four lucky drawing winners**. Everyone who completes their assessment between September 1, 2020 and February 28, 2021 will be entered into a drawing for the \$100 gift cards. If you've already completed your 2021 assessment, you'll be automatically entered into the drawing.

As a reminder, this is an annual assessment, so even if you've completed your WBA in a previous year, now is the time to complete the 2021 version. Answering the Well-being Assessment questions will help you understand more about yourself so you can explore different ways to improve your health and well-being. When you're finished with the assessment, you'll receive summarized insights tailored just for you in the My Results tab.

From there you can take action by choosing an area you would like to improve.

- The survey takes 20-40 minutes to complete. You can stop and start as time allows and your answers will be saved until the assessment is completed.
- Learn more about yourself in six life areas (Reaching Potential, Emotional, Physical, Capacity for Change, Work, Health).
- Review results with tailored recommendations for you.
- Your answers are confidential.
- Everyone who has completed the Well-being Assessment by **Sunday, Feb. 28** will be entered into the \$100 gift card drawing.

You can access the Well-being Assessment by clicking on the My Results tab in the [Adventure2 portal](#). In the app, click on the Services button, then on the My Results button to access the assessment. As a reminder, Adventure2 can be accessed from the [ISU WellBeing website](#), or you can bookmark the app in Okta.

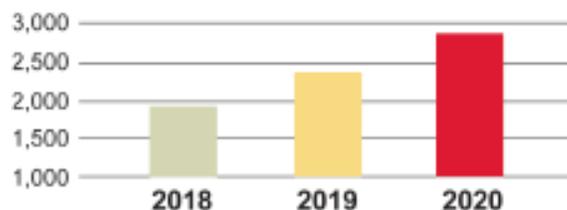
Adventure2 By the Numbers

- **2,725** ISU employees registered (39% of total population)
- **1,063** annual well-being assessments completed (39% of registered users)
- **4.2** out of 5.0 user satisfaction score
- **1,338** participants in Mid-Morning Mindfulness program
- **736** participants in Well-being Wednesday program



The numbers above are from 2020. For the 2021 Adventure2 year, our goals are to increase registration to 45% of our total population, increase the percentage of completed Well-being Assessments to at least 50%, and improve our user satisfaction score to 4.3. We look forward to your active participation throughout 2021. Enjoy the program!

Employee Registration Growth



Employee Level Achievement Growth



**LIVE YOUR
BEST LIFE**



Adventure2: Comments from your Colleagues

Following are some of the comments submitted by participants in Adventure2 and other ISU WellBeing programs regarding their recent experiences.

"Thanks for organizing all of these activities while we're in such strange times! I have really looked forward to the activity each day, to bring a sense of normalcy to my daily routine."

"Your well-being sessions are now essential to my day."

"The Am I Hungry workshop was the best workshop I've ever taken. Each week's content is targeted to be concise, clear, memorable and helpful; Rebecca taps into the very essence of who we are and what we do and breaks things down in relatable ways and provides tools that we can easily remember and assimilate in our lives."

"I really enjoyed and appreciated the session on holiday stressors. I am definitely going to share in my team, and I'm excited to continue watching out for more development sessions from your area that I think are awesome and everyone should be attending."

If you would like to share your thoughts about your activities or what Adventure2 or other wellness programs have meant to you, or to see what others have shared about their experiences, please sign in to Adventure2 through the [ISU WellBeing website](#) or the Okta app and then click on the Services tab at the top of the page. You can share your Adventure2 story through the Campus Connections. Your comments will post in My Updates. If you'd like to share but remain anonymous, you may email your comments directly to wellbeing@iastate.edu.

ENGAGE is an ISU WellBeing/University Human Resources publication. If you have comments, questions or suggestions for story ideas, please email wellbeing@iastate.edu.