

PRACTICE MINDFULNESS

Mindfulness is a way of thinking and focusing that can help you become more aware of your present experiences. U.S. Air Force Veteran Paul Gordon has been practicing mindfulness for three years now, and attending VA Butler’s monthly Mindfulness Skills class.

“The one thing that has helped me out the most is learning the different ways to stay in the present moment, such as using your senses or meditating,” shared Paul. “Mindfulness is not difficult to understand, it’s difficult to implement

(and keep implemented).”

Practicing mindfulness helps to foster an awareness of one’s thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations, and environment. VA Butler Healthcare’s Mindfulness Skills class is open to any interested Veteran who may benefit from learning these skills.

“Every time I leave class I learn something new – either from something I’ve never heard before, or from somebody else talking in the group. I find it very empowering because in my personal

situation I needed something more than medication to help me. This really proved to be a positive avenue for me to take.”

A mindfulness practice can reduce stress, improve emotional balance, increase self-awareness, and help reduce symptoms of anxiety, depression, sleep issues and chronic pain.

“I used to have some really bad trauma symptoms. I feel so relieved to have found a way of combating them, because medicine wouldn’t help me. This gives



me relief,” said Paul.

Veterans interested in mindfulness, or attending the mindfulness class, should talk to their health care team at VA Butler Healthcare.

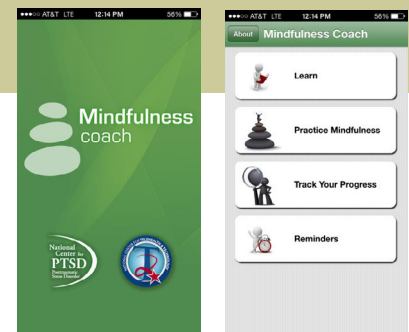
“The class is very

open and welcoming, and I’d encourage other Veterans to go,” said Paul. “Mindfulness can improve your life. I am totally somewhere different than I was three years ago.”

“Mindfulness can improve your life. I am totally somewhere different than I was three years ago.” – Paul Gordon, Air Force Veteran

THIS MONTH IN HISTORY...MARCH

- 2 The first Easter egg roll is held at the White House (1877)
- 7 The World Health Organization (WHO) is established by the United Nations (1948)
- 9 The National Prisoner of War Museum is dedicated on the site of an American Civil War POW camp (1998)
- 10 The Bataan Death March begins as prisoners are forced on a six-day march from an airfield on Bataan to a camp near Cabanatuan [75th Anniversary] (1942)
- 15 The first American school for the deaf is founded in Hartford, Connecticut [200th Anniversary] (1817)
- 16 The first National Stress Awareness Day is recognized to raise awareness of stress and promote healthy solutions (1992)



MINDFULNESS COACH

Mindfulness Coach was designed to help Veterans, Servicemembers, and others learn how to practice mindfulness. The app can be used on its own by those who would like mindfulness tools, or to supplement face-to-face care.

Learn more: <https://mobile.va.gov/app/mindfulness-coach>.



NEW (FREE) YOGA AND MEDITATION CLASS FOR VETERANS

VA Butler Healthcare, with community partner Yoga on Mars, now offers a new, free class for Veterans called “Basic Mindful Yoga and iRest Inspired Meditation.” The class focuses on breathing to assist mind/body connection for increasing skills to manage stress and the disconnect that can occur after trauma. This specific style of yoga is designed with a military-audience in mind and strives to return a sense of personal control to issues such as insomnia, anxiety and depression.

This new class, free for Veterans, is offered every Monday from 1pm to 2:15pm in VA Butler Healthcare’s auditorium. Veterans may attend at any time; pre-registration is not required. For more information, or any questions, Veterans may call 724.285.2292.



SIGN UP FOR MONTHLY VA BUTLER UPDATES!

VA Butler Healthcare sends out monthly updates so that Veterans, their family members, and Veteran advocates can keep up-to-date with all the information and events going on at VA Butler.

How to sign up: Enter your email on our homepage (www.butler.va.gov) on the pop-up, or on the right-hand corner where it says “subscribe.” It’s that easy!

FREE MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA HEALTH CARE SERVICES

VA provides all care for mental and physical health conditions related to Military Sexual Trauma (MST) free of charge, and Veterans do not need to have reported their experiences of MST at the time, or have other documentation that MST occurred in order to receive free MST-related health care. Service connection (VA disability compensation) also is not required, and Veterans may be able to receive free MST-related care even if they are not eligible for other VA care.

VA offers mental health services for both male and female Veterans who experienced MST, including outpatient individual and group psychotherapy, as well as residential programs that target rehabilitation, recovery, health maintenance, improved

quality of life and community reintegration. Inpatient programs exist, and MST-related outpatient counseling services also are available through VA’s community-based Vet Centers.

To lessen the burden of accessing care, every VA health care system has a designated MST Coordinator who serves as the local point person to help Veterans navigate the many services available to them. For help with treatment and health care related to MST at VA Butler Healthcare, please contact our local MST Coordinator at 800.362.8262, ext. 2498. If you are in crisis or know someone who is, contact the Veterans Crisis Line at 800.273.TALK and press one. The service is available 24/7. Chat and text also are available.

We want to hear from you! Email amanda.kurtz2@va.gov to share your story with us!

EVENTS

Spring Fashion Show

4 Tuesday, April 4 • 1-4pm
VA Butler Auditorium

Town Hall Meeting

Wednesday, April 5 • 5pm
Lawrence Co. CBOC

5 Ridgewood Professional Centre
1750 New Butler Rd., New Castle, PA

Veterans Open House

Saturday, April 29 • 11am-2pm

29 Michael A. Marzano VA Outpatient
Clinic (Mercer County)
295 N. Kerrwood Dr., Suite 110, Hermitage, PA



800.362.8262
724.287.4781

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