9 Easy Steps to Start your Mindfulness Practice

1. **Plan a time when you can practice being mindful each day. Pair it with a time when you do something else every day. It could be the first thing you do in the morning while your coffee is brewing, after you brush your teeth, or any other time that could work better for you. Bedtime is another good time to do this too.**

2. **Designate a peaceful, quiet place where you can regularly practice.**

3. **Set a timer for 5-10 minutes and just focus on your breath.**

4. **Notice what your body feels like as you are breathing in and out and the pace and quality of your breathing. Is it fast? Slow? Choppy? Steady?**

5. **If and when you get distracted, simple name the distraction, and gently return to your breath.**

6. **After the timer goes off, notice how it went for you. What was the experience like? How busy was your mind?**

7. **Give yourself a huge pat on the back because you have just strengthened your brain.**

8. **Mindfulness phone applications (like Headspace or Calm) or YouTube videos are great if you want guided instruction. You can search online by topic and/or time limit.**

9. **Aim to stick with it and be compassionate if you miss or get off track with it. Remember it is a practice. If you forget, don't beat yourself up, do it when you can the next time.**

For more information on body appreciation, please contact me at drkerryluke@gmail.com or visit bodyappreciationandself-kindness.com. Please share your ideas too. Kindly, Kerry