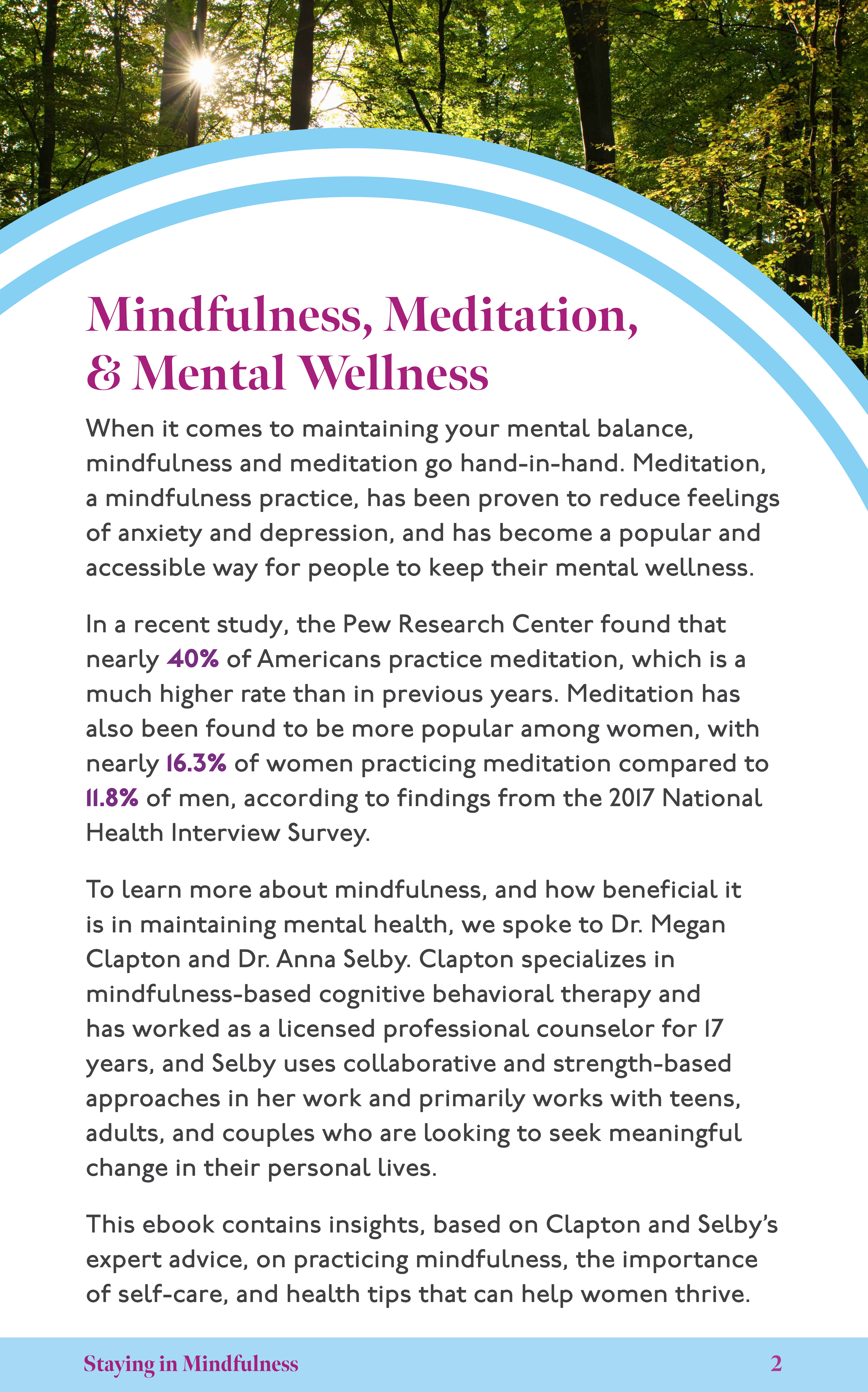


Staying in Mindfulness:

Insights from
Dr. Megan Clapton & Dr. Anna Selby



**WOMEN'S
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Mindfulness, Meditation, & Mental Wellness

When it comes to maintaining your mental balance, mindfulness and meditation go hand-in-hand. Meditation, a mindfulness practice, has been proven to reduce feelings of anxiety and depression, and has become a popular and accessible way for people to keep their mental wellness.

In a recent study, the Pew Research Center found that nearly **40%** of Americans practice meditation, which is a much higher rate than in previous years. Meditation has also been found to be more popular among women, with nearly **16.3%** of women practicing meditation compared to **11.8%** of men, according to findings from the 2017 National Health Interview Survey.

To learn more about mindfulness, and how beneficial it is in maintaining mental health, we spoke to Dr. Megan Clapton and Dr. Anna Selby. Clapton specializes in mindfulness-based cognitive behavioral therapy and has worked as a licensed professional counselor for 17 years, and Selby uses collaborative and strength-based approaches in her work and primarily works with teens, adults, and couples who are looking to seek meaningful change in their personal lives.

This ebook contains insights, based on Clapton and Selby's expert advice, on practicing mindfulness, the importance of self-care, and health tips that can help women thrive.



Why should women practice mindfulness?

There is pressure on women to be chronic multitaskers and problem solvers. This reactive way of living forces us to constantly be in survival mode. Consequently, we're not fully engaged in what is in front of us, be it our children, careers, or health.

Women's constant daily multitasking puts our central nervous systems into hyper-drive. When we are chronically stressed, cortisol, our stress hormone, spikes which can be harmful to the endocrine systems, heart rate variability, blood pressure, and inflammation response.



Practicing mindfulness is like putting an anchor down in a stormy sea, it allows us to be grounded amid the waves of other's demands.



How is mindfulness-based cognitive therapy different?

This style of therapy encourages our clients to become curious about themselves and how they experience life. People often have misbeliefs about life or about themselves, and this can influence how they feel about and behave in the world. Mindfulness practice cultivates our ability to calmly respond to our lives instead of being reactionary.

What are a few stigmas women face when it comes to living with or managing the symptoms of mental illness?

Women feel pressure to both have it all and to enjoy it all. This pressure is only intensified by projections in the media that burden us with what our definitions of success—and to some extent, ourselves—“should be.”

We want to help women redefine success in a holistic way—which includes supporting their intrinsic values and health needs.



Most women are caregivers to multiple people and often put their mental health last.



And this tendency is one of the biggest contributors to burn-out. Women simply run out of energy and break down either physically or emotionally. But, by using a holistic approach to address women's life goals and mental health, we can help them overcome this tendency and encourage them to put their own needs first.

How can I start practicing mindfulness?

Here are a few ways you can start practicing mindfulness:



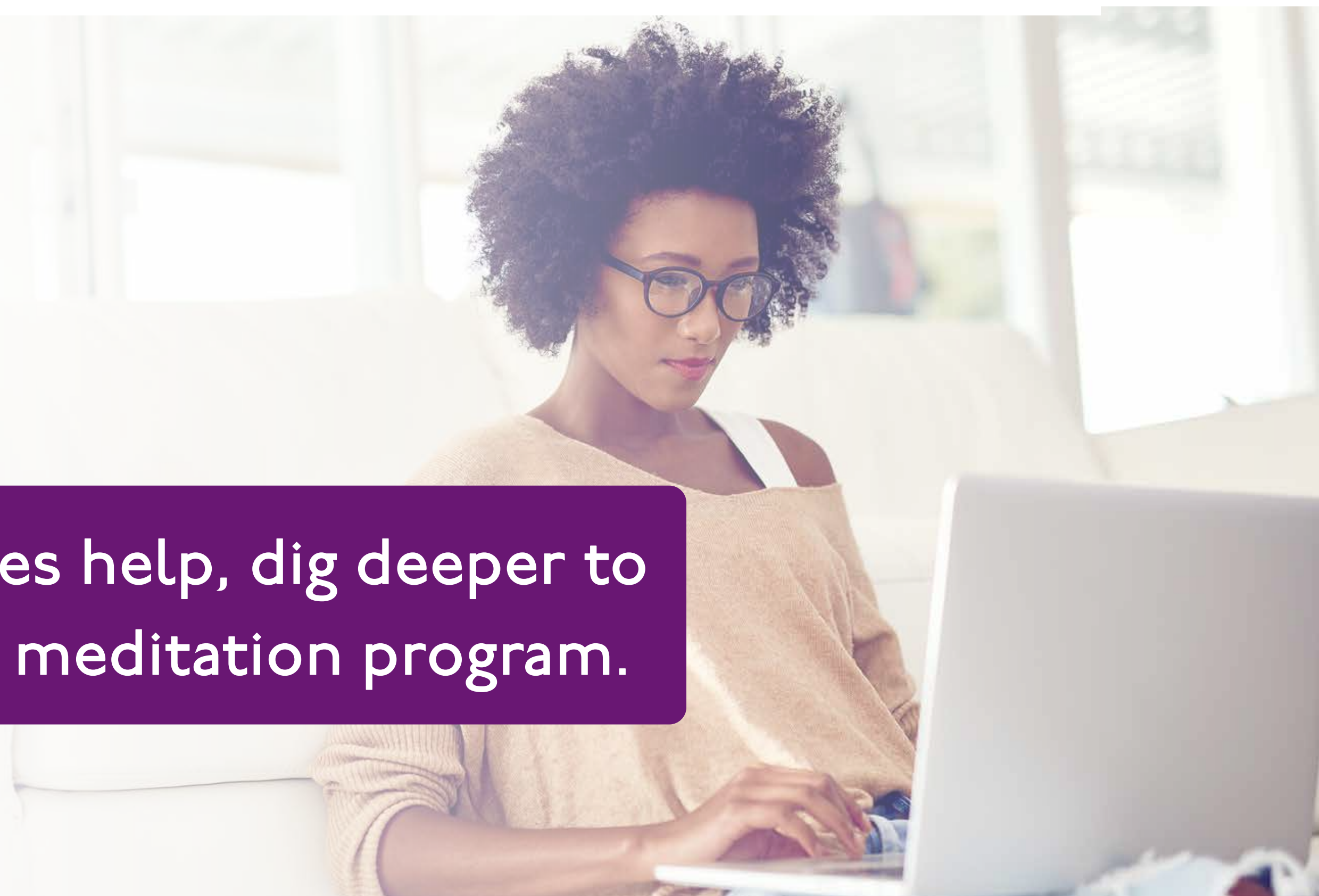
1. Try replacing a social media check with two minutes of mindful meditation. Try focusing only on your body's reaction to breathing deeply.

2. Before getting out of the car, stop for 30 seconds and allow your mind and body to catch up. If your kids are in the car with you, encourage them to join you. This works really well as a carpool routine.



3. Try a guided meditation that's available on YouTube. Or you can try a mediation app like Calm or Headspace.

If these simple practices help, dig deeper to find a more deliberate meditation program.





Want to Learn More? Check out these resources.

We've listed a few resources to check out below just in case you want to learn more about mindfulness and meditation!

[National Institutes of Health \(NIH\)](#)

[NIH News in Health](#)

[Cleveland Clinic](#)



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