

Mindfulness and Mental Health Awareness

World Mental Health Day is October 9th, but the entire month is dedicated to raising awareness and supporting mental health issues. At Ardene, October is also our month-long mindfulness challenge - a series of themes and practices we offer to our team members to help maintain balance, stay grounded and tackle whatever challenges they face. Mindfulness is an important practice to help us stay focused in the present moment, and through exercises and training, it can become part of our daily routine to support our mental health. Taking care of our minds as well as our bodies is essential to our overall wellbeing, and it's a practice we are committed to, both at home and within our community.

October Mindfulness Challenge

This year, the theme of our mindfulness challenge is “Mindfulness as a tool to train our attention”. Our goal is to show a few ways in which practicing mindfulness regularly can help us reclaim control of our overstimulated, wandering attention to be more present. Managing our attention can help us live with more purpose and prioritize what's most important to us in each moment. Our level of attention is responsible for each experience we have, and it not only determines how we perceive things, but it also affects how we feel, remember and think. It can bring back past memories or have us daydreaming of the future, and it can switch very quickly from one to the other. Our attention is also limited; there is only so much we can hold in our mind at once. When our attention is too strained, we have less ability to regulate our emotions, think critically and rationally solve problems. By training our attention to remain mindful of our mental and emotional needs, we have the opportunity to positively impact our quality of life and our relationships.

For the month of October, we will have four weekly themes with exercises to train our attention that can be done individually or as a group, and which are easy to integrate in our daily routines. Our aim is to encourage the regular practice of mindfulness, at work and at home, and we've received great feedback from our teams since we first

introduced mindfulness to our culture in 2018. What started as a month-long mindfulness challenge in October, progressed into monthly mindful activities, encouraging daily mindful moments and introducing a second month-long mindfulness challenge in July. We're very proud of this program because by supporting our team members with regular practices and resources, we're also creating a more positive team atmosphere where our mental wellbeing is a conversation we're all comfortable having - not only in October but year-round.

Partnership with Jack.org

Aside from supporting the mental health of our team members, it's also very important to us to be able to make a difference in our community, so this is the second year that we've partnered with jack.org. They are a Canadian youth mental health charity focused on training and empowering a network of young change-makers across the country, and their mission is to inspire, educate and motivate youth, working to break the stigma surrounding mental health. We care deeply about jack.org's mission, so to help support their various programs, we're collecting donations online and in-store until October 16th. Customers can make a \$1 donation online or round up their purchases in-store, with all donations helping jack.org continue their mental health revolution. We're very proud of this partnership and to have the opportunity to give back to our community by supporting young people across Canada. <https://www.ardene.com/ca/en/a...>

Connecting with our Social Community

Staying connected, reaching out and checking in with each other are key ways to support our mental health, and there's no better place for us to connect with our community than through our social channels. Every Monday we feature a motivation series on our instagram channel, and we'll be sharing tips and tricks this month that we use to keep our mental health in check. By supporting and empowering one another, we can face challenges together to create stronger communities and remind each other that we're not alone. Whether it be through practicing mindfulness or connecting with loved ones, let's remember to put our mental health first all year long and focus on what really matters.