



### What is KORU?

- Evidence-informed curriculum designed for teaching mindfulness, meditation, and stress resilience. The curriculum consists of three components:
  - **KORU BASIC:** An introduction to mindfulness and meditation. Taught as a weekly, 75-minute class over four weeks by a trained and certified KORU Teachers.
  - **KORU 2.0:** An “advanced” class for students who have completed KORU Basic and are curious about practicing more mindfulness. This course also consists of a weekly, 75-minute classes taught over four weeks.
  - **KORU RETREAT:** A half-day silent, mindfulness retreat is based on a traditional way for people to practice the many methods that are called “mindfulness.” It is useful for both students who have already taken a mindfulness course and also those who are new to mindfulness and meditation.
- The Koru Mindfulness program was developed over the course of a decade by psychiatrists Holly Rogers, MD & Margaret Maytan, MD to bring the benefits of mindfulness to Duke University students.
- Koru Mindfulness has now been implemented by over 65 colleges and universities, including Harvard, UCSD, UK and University of Louisville.
- **UofL Health Promotion Wellbeing Central** provides Koru Mindfulness classes and retreats primarily for students with limited access for pre-approved faculty and staff. *Get Healthy Now* provides Koru Mindfulness for faculty and staff.
- **Read more and access FREE guided meditations at the Koru website: [www.korumindfulness.org](http://www.korumindfulness.org) Click on *Free Resources***

### Benefits of Mindfulness Practice

- Increases positive daily experiences of **compassion, self-awareness, and perspective**
- Increases **regulation and awareness of the nature of emotions**
- Reduces experiences of stress, worry, anxiety and fear. (Measurable reduction in the brain portion (amygdala) that controls these responses.
- Improves **working memory capacity** – measurable increases in brain portion
- Enhances **ability to pay attention**
- Improves **executive decision making** (measurable increases in grey matter on MRIs)
- Increases **quality of life**
- Rivals antidepressants in easing symptoms of depression
- Contributes to drug and alcohol relapse prevention

### KORU Key Factors

- Taught in small, diverse groups
- Requires commitment to attendance
- Focused and brief
- Develops self-calming and focusing skills
- Active teaching with language that resonates with “emerging adults” and those with curiosity about living life with less suffering.

**Register for KORU Basic, Koru 2.0 classes and Koru Retreat at:**  
[www.louisville.edu/healthpromotion/services](http://www.louisville.edu/healthpromotion/services)



## Why is the program called “Koru”?

“Koru” is the New Zealand Māori word for the *spiral shape of the unfurling fern frond*. The word literally means “looped” or “spiraled”, but the shape symbolizes harmony or balanced growth, representing layered growth around a stable center. The creators of Koru Mindfulness curriculum tell us, “We love the beautiful shape of the koru found in nature and feel it reflects perfectly the kind of growth that young adults experience as they begin to develop a mindfulness practice for themselves.”

## How is Koru Mindfulness different from other mindfulness training programs?

Koru was designed specifically for “emerging adults” (ages 18 – 29) and differs from mindfulness programs developed for more general populations of adults in several ways.

- Teaches mindfulness and meditation as well as stress-management skills
- The brief model accommodates the busy schedules of emerging adults. Koru Basic is four, weekly, 75-minute classes. Students may then opt to take another four-week series (Koru 2.0) of classes and/or attend a half day silent retreat
- Structured classes teach what becomes the daily homework: 10 minutes devoted to mindfulness and meditation practices and written reflections in a Mindfulness Log.
- Taught in small, diverse groups from variety of academic fields
- Inter-active teaching and sharing experiences with meditation practice addresses skepticism, increases curiosity, builds motivation and increases self-efficacy
- Stories and metaphors are relevant to the lives of emerging adults.

You may read more about the Koru research outcomes and access FREE guided meditations at the Koru website: [www.korumindfulness.org](http://www.korumindfulness.org) Click on *Free Resources*

Another way to for the UofL community to sustain or to begin practicing mindfulness consistently: drop in to **20 Mindful Minutes** sessions to relax and refocus awareness. Many options for locations, days and times on both Belknap and HSC.

**Check Health Promotion Wellbeing Central website for current details:** [www.louisville.edu/healthpromotion/services](http://www.louisville.edu/healthpromotion/services)

