



With mindfulness and mental health being such a **prevalent** issue in our society today, it's no surprise that hobbies have become a popular **pastime** to help **occupy** our minds from **negative** thoughts and thinking. From exercise to reading, hobbies are one of the best ways to **promote** mindfulness allowing one to relax, **unwind**, and have that important time to ourselves. Not only can hobbies make you feel happier through spending time doing what you enjoy - but they can actually improve your performance at work as well as have meditative **effects on** the brain. Dr Herbert Benson, a pioneer in mind/body medicine and author of "The Relaxation Response," says that the repetitive action of needlework can induce a relaxed state like that **associated with** meditation and yoga. Once you get beyond the initial learning curve, knitting and crocheting can lower heart rate and blood pressure and **reduce** harmful blood levels of the stress hormone cortisol. Knitting is the perfect hobby to **take up** to invest more in yourself.

1. Match the highlighted words in the text to their synonyms:

- a. Harmful:
- b. Start a habit:
- c. Decrease:
- d. Impact on:
- e. Fill:
- f. Leisure activity:

- g. Common:
  - h. Relax:
  - i. Connect:
  - j. Support:
2. What can you learn from the passage?