

LIVING MINDFULLY WITH STRESS AND ILLNESS

PATIENT INFORMATION SHEET



General information

This course is for people who may be finding it hard to adjust to life with a long-term health condition and/or who may be struggling with stress, anxiety or low mood as a result of their health issues. Mindfulness meditation teaches us to manage difficult physical sensations (such as pain or fatigue), thoughts and feelings by holding them in calm awareness instead of reacting in ways that may make things worse. It encourages self-acceptance and helps us to be kinder to ourselves, enhancing enjoyment and appreciation of life “moment by moment”.

Counter-indications: Mindfulness practice can be challenging, and it is best not to start a workshop if you are currently actively depressed, if you have a condition that causes you to disassociate, or if you are undergoing serious life crises that are likely to prevent you from engaging fully with the workshop.

Please note: Your place on this course will not be confirmed until you have attended either a face to face meeting or telephone consultation with us. This is to ensure that the course will be suitable for you. We will contact you to arrange a time to suit.

About the sessions

The full programme consists of eight sessions (90 mins to 2 hours as advised). You will be taught simple, non-religious meditation practices and we will also look at ways to develop mindfulness in your daily life and self-care. The main elements of the course are:

- Foundation practices: Kindly awareness of breath and body; settling and soothing
- Mindfulness of the body in motion: Gentle stretches and mindful walking (if appropriate - can be adapted as necessary to suit individual needs)
- Caring for yourself and managing your energy through mindful awareness
- Everyday mindfulness: practices to develop mindfulness in all aspects of daily life
- Building resilience: Developing self-compassion and acceptance in the face of difficulty

To benefit from the workshop you will need to practise at home between sessions. You will be given practice CDs, or links to MP3 recordings, so you will need a device to play them on (CD player, MP3 player, computer or smartphone). You will also be given hand-outs for each session.

What will it be like?

- The course is intended to be informal and enjoyable. The focus is on learning through experience: We will practise the meditations together and have a short discussion after each one, but you don't have to say anything if you don't want to.
- Please wear loose, comfortable clothes that don't restrict your breathing or movement.
- If you can, please bring a cushion and a blanket to keep yourself warm and comfortable. Some practices can be done lying down and you will be invited to do this if you want to.
- There are likely to be about 10 other people on the course.
- On arrival you will be greeted by the course leader. We generally sit in a circle of chairs so you can pick a chair and sit down. The course leader will ask you to give your name to sign you in (necessary for health and safety reasons).
- We try to start and finish the courses on time. If you are late, don't worry. Just arrive when you can and sit quietly if we are already doing a practice. It's better to come late than to miss the session completely. Traffic happens! (Please note: there are some venues where you will not be able to get in to the course if you are late. If this is the case it will say on the venue information sheet that you will be sent once you have booked onto a course).
- If you need to leave early let the course leader know on arrival, but feel free to leave when you need to without asking permission.