



Move into Mindfulness-The Basics

Program weekly themes and methods:

Formal Mindfulness Meditations Methods:

- Body centered practices: Scanning-focused attention on body sensation progressively (similar to progressive relaxation).
- Gentle postures to increase mindful awareness of the body in movement.
- Sitting Meditation-mindfulness of breath, sensations, thoughts and emotions, and habitual pattern of the mind.
- Walking meditation-using the activity of walking to increase mindfulness.
- Mindful eating

Informal Mindfulness Meditation Practices (mindfulness in everyday life):

Awareness of pleasant and unpleasant events, routine activities of daily living, interpersonal communications, repetitive cognitions and emotions and their relationship to bodily sensations and the habitual actions and behaviors in everyday life (i.e. habits and behaviors that create stress in our lives).

The formal meditation technique of mindfulness cultivates the ability to be fully present to the whole range of physical and mental experience without the reactivity that creates the negative impact of stress on the body and mind. Mindfulness is a technique that can be easily translated into the daily activities of life. This ability to be mindful in everyday living allows one to live more fully in spite of daily challenges.

Weeks 1 & 2 – Automatic Pilot

When we live life on automatic pilot we are at the mercy of our habitual patterns of mind and often react to what is going on in our environment in ways that create stress. Mindfulness – paying attention, on purpose, to what is going on in our minds and bodies, moment by moment, in a non-judgmental way – frees us from those habitual patterns and, thus, reduces stress. We begin developing this special kind of attention by focusing on physical sensations in the body.

Weeks 3 & 4 – Dealing with Barriers

Our perceptions, how we see things (or don't see them) will determine in large measure how we respond to them. It is not the circumstances in our lives that cause stress, but rather how we view them that create stress and influence the short and long-term health effects they may have on our minds and bodies.

Weeks 5 & 6 – Living in the Present

There is pleasure and power in being present. The mind spends much of its time in the past or the future and we miss the present moment which is where our lives are lived.

Bringing our awareness into our bodies grounds us in the present moment so that we can connect fully with our lives.

Weeks 7 – Letting Go into Life

Stress is created in the body when the mind tries to cling to some things and avoid/escape other things. Mindfulness is a way of staying present to whatever is happening in the moment without the push/pull that creates stress. It helps us relate to our experience in ways that promote healing and health in both mind and body.