



Move Into Mindfulness-Beyond 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
- Mindfulness of Thoughts and Emotions

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 – Review of Mindfulness the Basics & Working with Thoughts/Emotions

Difficult emotions such as anxiety, anger, grief, craving, can create stress. With mindfulness we develop a sense of “allowing” emotions to be, just as they are, without judging them or trying to make them different. We remove the extra layer of suffering caused by resisting these emotions. Such an attitude of acceptance reduces stress and allows us to see more clearly what, if anything needs to change.

Weeks 3 & 4 – Relationships and Communication: Opportunities for Practice

We all have people and situations in our lives that “cause” us stress. Taking care of ourselves means taking responsibility for our part in those relationships, for our own perceptions, thoughts, feelings, and behavior. Without awareness, we usually react unconsciously with some version of the flight-or-flight reaction that makes the situation

worse. With mindfulness, we can respond to these situations in ways that benefit us and others.

Weeks 5 & 6 – Diet: Nurturing the Body, Mind and Spirit

What we “take in” (diet in the broadest sense of the word) affects our health and well-being. Our choices are often made out of habits (unconscious, conditioned patterns of thought and behavior) that are not healthy. Diet includes not only what we feed our bodies, but also what we feed our minds (diets of violence, low self-esteem, abuse, depression). Mindfulness can help us to move out of self-destructive patterns of diet to more healthy patterns.

Weeks 7 – Mindfulness, a Way of Living

The last week is all about the rest of our lives. With the tool of mindfulness we can meet stress on a moment by moment basis and respond in ways that create well-being in body, mind and spirit. Tapping into resources that support our ongoing practice assures that our skills will continue to deepen long after the class has ended. As we take the skills we have learned into our daily lives, we make a commitment to continue mindfulness practice as a form of self-care