

# MINDFULNESS: INFORMATION SHEET



## What is mindfulness?

Mindfulness is an integrative, mind-body based approach which involves paying attention to our thoughts and feelings so we become more aware of them, less enmeshed in them, and better able to manage them. It is not positive psychology, a means of escaping unpleasant feelings or a relaxation exercise, but an approach to life that can help people relate more skilfully to thoughts, emotions and body sensations as they arise. Although commonly associated with Buddhism, developments in psychology and neuroscience support mindfulness as being an inherent part of the human mind that can be developed and enhanced through non-religious meditative practice.

## Some common misconceptions

### Mindfulness is **NOT**

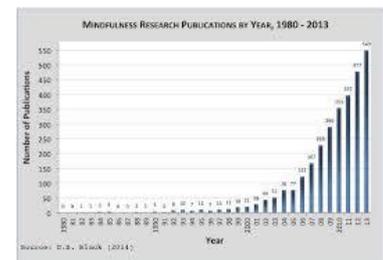
- Emptying our minds
- Becoming emotionless
- Escaping pain
- Withdrawing from life
- Seeking blissful states

### Mindfulness **IS**

- A valuable life skill
- Understanding the impact of stress on our bodies, thoughts, emotions and relationships
- Befriending our minds and our emotions
- Working with pain
- Living life to the full

## What is the evidence for mindfulness?

As the graph shows (Mindfulness Research Publications by Year, 1980 – 2013, source: D S Black 2014) research into mindfulness has grown exponentially in recent years. Our understanding of the brain has been completely rewritten over the past three decades with advances in technology and neuro-scientific evidence continuing to support the beneficial effects of mindfulness on both mental and physical health.



## Delegates completing mindfulness courses report benefits including

- Improved ability to cope with the effects of chronic illness
- Less worry, anxiety and depression
- Improvements in fatigue levels
- Enhanced emotional control, resourcefulness and resilience
- Greater capacity for relaxation and calmness
- Better quality sleep

## Who will benefit from learning mindfulness?

A diverse range of participants attend mindfulness courses from students, parents of young children, corporate directors to healthcare professionals who join for a variety of reasons; from simply taking the time to prioritise their wellbeing to those who wish to adopt a complementary approach to managing health concerns such as high blood pressure, IBS, CFS/ME, fibromyalgia and depression. Learning mindfulness is ideal for people who see their health and well-being as their personal responsibility and who like to learn from their experiences.

## Personal commitment to the course

It is important to understand that mindfulness courses are not designed to be relaxation classes, a group therapy session or a “quick fix”, but to teach a valuable life skill, the development of which can be nurtured through attendance at an 8 week course. As with any new skill, learning it will be most beneficial if you are able to practice regularly. Each week delegates are given daily practices that will help develop mindfulness skills, and it is strongly recommended that time is put aside on a daily basis, so as to support the integration of mindfulness into daily life.

## Finding out more

If you would like to find out more about our mindfulness workshops or courses please visit <http://yorkmbsr.eventbrite.co.uk/>, email us at [relax@yorkmbsr.co.uk](mailto:relax@yorkmbsr.co.uk) or call 01904 634710. If you would like to explore mindfulness a bit more before committing to an 8 week course we would recommend one of the following books:

- Mindfulness: A practical guide to finding peace in a frantic world by Prof Mark Williams and Danny Penman
- Mindfulness for Health: A practical guide to relieving pain, reducing stress and restoring wellbeing by Vidyamala Burch and Danny Penman.

We offer skills development workshops for professionals who have completed an eight-week mindfulness course and are interested in integrating mindfulness into their work with patients/clients/children. For those interested in teaching mindfulness we would recommend having a look at the [UK Network for Mindfulness Based Teacher Training Organisations](#) which gives guidance on good practice and teacher training organisations within the UK.

The Northern Centre for Mindfulness and Compassion offer a range of courses and events for individuals, healthcare professionals and organisations centred on the practice of mindfulness meditation.

Please see [www.yorkmbsr.co.uk](http://www.yorkmbsr.co.uk) or call 01904 634710 for further details.