

Mindfulness Workshop Notes

This worksheet is a companion to the video workshop and is not intended as a stand alone worksheet. Please consider your own confidentiality when writing, storing and disposing of this sheet.

Difficulties with being in the present moment

Our past is projected into the present, especially unresolved issues. Where can you see this in your life? Do you notice how you are affected by your past and where?

Can you think of a way in which you may misinterpret the present because of past experiences? Describe:

Mindfulness is being in the present

We worry about the future or ruminate about the past. Do you focus more on the past or the future and in what way?

Becoming present has three parts:

- Pay attention to something in the present – e.g. breath, body sensation, the sea, nature, animals, trees
- Being in this moment – without the past or future or projections from past experiences
- Accepting things as they really are and not expecting them to be something other than they are (Non-judgemental or non-reactive). Just accepting during this moment, this does not mean putting up with things that you can and should change.
- Accepting is peaceful. You can have anger or fear or anxiety and also a peaceful acceptance at the same time.

Being non-judgemental is very difficult/impossible and we will always have a certain level of judgement or opinions about things. But we can have opinions and not be overly attached to them, or stuck with them. We can be gentle, open and less judgemental which is a more mindful way to be. Where do you see room for this in your own life?

- Kindness is crucial to a mindful practice
- Observe your mind with curiosity rather than engagement

Mindfulness is not about thinking about nothing. The mind is a wonderful and creative tool which we don't need to take too seriously. When have you had thoughts that were exaggerated and that you didn't mean? How long does it take you to come back from those thoughts when they happen? Can you realise that you don't have to be overly identified with your mind?

Practice some mindfulness now. You can observe your mind, agree or disagree with it. What is your experience when you observe your wandering mind:

Informal meditation is taking mindful moments during the day e.g. bathroom, app on phone, brushing teeth, feeling your feet, taking in nature. Where can you find times to do this in your day?

Deep breaths for mindfulness

Relax your neck, your shoulders, your arms, legs and face muscles. Breathe deep into the body and very slowly breathe out, focusing on relaxing as you breathe out. Is there anything else that helps you to get into the mindful space?

Formal meditation

A regular, organised and routine practice. What can you commit to e.g. ten minutes in a set place every day? The long term goal is to introduce what we learn in these practices into our moment to moment lives and that is why the formal practice is important.

Research on mindfulness says that it helps

- Battle depression
- Reduce anxiety
- Reduce stress
- Increases dopamine

Be patient and take your time developing this practice. The more you practice the more it will make sense. Your experience will change as your life does. The kinder you are towards yourself the more it will work. Don't force anything. Mindfulness is an allowing and an accepting of what is.