NATIONAL CENTRE FOR INTEGRATIVE ONCOLOGY





PARTICIPANT HANDOUT

Mindfulness-Based *Cancer Recovery*

A NINE-WEEK PROGRAMME

Tuesdays, 6.30 to 8.30pm, on Zoom
20 October to 15 December
Taught by Vicky Fox

www.ncio.org.uk

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Nine-week Mindfulness-Based Cancer Recovery programme

Tuesday 20th October 6.30-8.30pm (every Tuesday for 9 weeks)

(20th, 27th October, 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th November and 1st, 8th, 15th December)

Week 1 – Welcome and Introduction to the programme, what is Mindfulness Based Cancer Recovery (MBCR) and the evidence to support MBCR. Exploring mindful movements and body scan.

Week 2 – Breath awareness and observing our changing physical bodies and how we can find a restful state that we can return to. Working with a "beginners mind".

Week 3 – Attitudes that are helpful for mindfulness. How judgement affects our experience, and the possibility of living with acceptance that all our experiences are a normal part of being human.

Week 4 – Stress Reaction, understanding how we respond when we are stressed and how we can recentre.

Week 5 – Patterns of breathing and the autonomic nervous system. Exploring different breathing techniques and finding practices that resonate and work for you that you can apply to your everyday life.

Week 6 – Our internal weather; exploring our thoughts and beliefs and how they can create our experience of stress.

Week 7 – Cultivating compassion in our heart and mind; exploring imagery, the power of our mind and how we can use imagery to enhance qualities we already have.

Week 8 – Exploring expanded awareness that can help create perspective and to see the bigger picture.

Week 9 – Reflections. How can we incorporate mindfulness in our lives going forward. Creating an ongoing practice and the support there is for that.

Each session will be held on zoom and include **discussion, teaching** and **practice**. There will also daily home practices assigned to each session. Each week builds on the previous week, so the classes are cumulative.

When joining on zoom it can help to clear your space of all distractions, switch off your phone and wear comfortable clothing that allows you to move easily as we will do some gentle stretching exercises (yoga) as part of each session.

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WEEK 1

Introduction to mindfulness

Mindfulness-Based Cancer Recovery (MBCR) is a structured group programme which teaches individuals the principles of mindfulness and how to apply them to deal more effectively with stress, illness and the demands of daily life.

The programme consists of body awareness, exercises, meditation, gentle yoga and inquiry, in conjunction with daily home practice.

The MBCR programme is based on the Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) programme, which was originally developed at the University of Massachusetts Medical Centre by Jon Kabat-Zinn, PhD and colleagues. Dr. Linda E Carlson PhD, R. Psych and Dr. Michael Speca created the Mindfulness-Based Cancer Recovery Programme and have conducted numerous scientific studies documenting its benefits. She has also written Mindfulness-Based Cancer Recovery and published over 250 scientific papers and presents at international conferences.

What is Mindfulness?

Mindfulness is being aware of what is actually happening within you and around us in the present moment without judging or evaluating your experience.

When we are not being mindful, we can spend much of our lives:

- Reliving the past
- Planning for the future
- Analysing and judging our experience
- Not being present, therefore missing the only time that we actually do our living.

When we learn to spend more time paying attention in the present moment, we generally feel happier.

Mindfulness can be thought of as having three components:

- Intention (Why: practice with a purpose)
- Attention (What: training the capacity to direct attention)
- Attitude (How: applying kind and curious attitudes)

Mindfulness meditation uses the practice of moment-to-moment awareness to help us simply to BE where we are. The technique of directing attention to the ongoing flow of breath serves to anchor awareness in the present moment experience and promotes clarity of perception and calmness of body and mind. Ultimately mindfulness also allows us to recognise which of our tendencies of behaviour are beneficial or hurtful to ourselves and others and to make appropriate adjustments.

Your teacher:



Vicky Fox has been teaching yoga since 2008 and working as a specialist yoga for cancer teacher since 2013. Vicky runs trainings for yoga teachers to help them support anyone living and impacted by cancer. She was trained as a facilitator of the Mindfulness-Based Cancer Recovery Programme by founders Dr Linde E Carlson and Dr Michael Speca.

Vicky is the author of, *Yoga For Cancer, A-Z of C: How yoga can reduce the side effects of treatment for cancer* and *Time To Repair: helping the body to repair after illness.*

Weekly Yoga & Meditation Homework Log

Week 1 Homework 30-min body scan daily			
DATES	**Total Minutes in yoga**	**Total Minutes in Meditation**	**Comments**
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
Saturday			
Sunday			
Monday			
Total Weekly Minutes:			

WEEK 2

Mindfulness and breath awareness

Diaphragmatic Breathing





Yoga as a mindful movement.

Body Scan



Weekly Yoga & Meditation Homework Log

Week 2 Homework 30-min body scan daily, and 15-mins lying yoga			
DATES	**Total Minutes in yoga**	**Total Minutes in Meditation**	**Comments**
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
Saturday			
Sunday			
Monday			
Total Weekly Minutes:			

WEEK 3

Mindfulness attitudes

Mindfulness meditation practice is based upon foundations of:

Non-judging: Mindfulness is cultivated by assuming a stance of impartial witness to our own experience. This requires that we become aware of the constant stream of evaluative and judging thoughts that we have... and then try to step back. With a non-judging mind, things are neither “good” nor “bad” but simply the way they are.

Patience: Patience demonstrates that we understand and accept that things have their own schedule for unfolding. We tend to be particularly impatient with ourselves, expecting that we should be able to calm the mind, stop the thoughts, or get over whatever is upsetting us. Nature has a “mind of its own” and patience allows us to simply observe the unfolding of the mind and body over time.

Beginner’s mind: In order to see the richness of the present moment, it helps to cultivate a mind that is willing and able to see everything as if for the very first time. If we think we know it all then there is nothing left to discover. With a beginner’s mind, the joys of the world as it unfolds around us become new again, as if we are all children freed from our old expectations.

Trust: Living in a world of experts can lead us to begin doubting ourselves. Innately, you are the best expert on you. For matters of personal growth it is far better to open to your own feelings and intuition than to get caught up in outside authorities. In meditation practice, if something doesn’t feel right to you, pay attention and examine your feelings. Trust in your intuition and your own basic wisdom, goodness, and ability to work through challenges.

Non-striving: Mindfulness meditation is different from other human activity: we do it not with a goal or destination in mind, but rather with a mind towards simply being, not doing. There is no goal other than for you to be conscious of yourself as you are.

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Acceptance: Acceptance involves seeing things as they actually are. We may not like it, but if that's the way things are, so they are. Acknowledging the truth of our lives is the first step in any genuine process of change. Through acceptance, we cease struggling to change things that are beyond our ability to control, and free ourselves from the weight of denial.

Letting go: Letting go, also known as "non-attachment," is fundamental to mindfulness practice. It involves recognizing and welcoming the ever-changing nature of experience. Our tendency to hold on to some parts of our experience and reject others is a root cause of suffering. Letting go allows us to live in greater harmony with inevitable change (adapted from Kabat-Zinn, J.,1990)

INTRODUCTION TO SITTING MEDITATION & BENEFITS OF MINDFUL MEDITATION

- calms the body, mind, and spirit
- trains us to let go of past regrets and future worries and to live more fully in the present moment
- reminds us of our fundamental connection to others and the world outside of ourselves
- helps us find peacefulness and clarity within a hectic world
- decreases levels of stress, anxiety, anger, and confusion
- enhances ability to cope with pain
- balances the autonomic nervous system
- slows the heart rate, decreases blood pressure
- strengthens the body's immune system
- decreases levels of stress hormones

BASIC MINDFULNESS MEDITATION PRACTICE INSTRUCTIONS

Initial Practice: Sitting with full awareness of breathing

1) Make this commitment to yourself with gratitude that you have the opportunity to simply be. Recognize the importance of this practice for transforming yourself and the world.
2) Choose a suitable space. At first it is helpful to have a place with as few distractions as possible. You may wish to create a special place that is conducive to your practice.

3) Find a posture on your cushion, bench or chair in which you feel balanced and erect so that your breathing is not restricted, and that you can maintain for some time in relative stillness without strain.
4) Bring awareness to your body and release any obvious muscular tension.
5) Bring awareness to the sensations of your breathing. To begin, you may wish to take a couple of deep breaths to facilitate relaxation and to mark the beginning of your practice, but thereafter allow your breath to find its own rhythm.
6) Focus on the sensation of breathing at a distinct point in your body such as the tip of the nostrils, the sinuses, or the belly. Allow your awareness to be saturated with the sensation of your breath as it flows out and in.
7) As soon as you become aware of your mind drifting (e.g. daydreaming, judging, planning, strong emotion) note that this has happened, acknowledge where your mind has gone, and bring awareness gently back to the breath.
8) If you note discomfort in your body that fails to resolve with patience, you may choose to adjust your body, but do so with full awareness; awareness of your intention to move, then awareness of the movement itself and the ensuing change in sensations.
9) After a time, you may find that your posture begins to sag. Similarly restore your balanced, alert posture mindfully.
10) Arising thoughts, feelings, and discomforts do not indicate failure. Accept them simply because they are as they are.
11) Resume attending to breathing.

Over time, your capacity for calm, concentrated awareness will strengthen, become more accessible at each moment of your life, and bear fruit.

AWARENESS OF PLEASANT EVENTS LOG			
	What was the experience?	Were you aware of the unpleasant feelings while the event was happening?	How did your body feel, in details during the experience? Describe the sensations you felt.
example	Going to yoga.	Yes, I felt very calm.	My shoulders were relaxed and my breathing was easier.
MONDAY			
TUESDAY			
WEDNESDAY			
THURSDAY			
FRDAY			
SATURDAY			
SUNDAY			

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Awareness of pleasant events log	
What mood, feelings and thoughts accompanied this event at the time?	**What thoughts are in your mind now as you write this down.**

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Weekly Yoga & Meditation Homework Log

Week 3 Homework Alternate days of 30-min body scan with 30-min sitting meditation. Practice 15 min lying yoga daily. Practice mindful attitudes throughout the day. Complete the pleasant events log. Eat a meal mindfully.			
DATES	**Total Minutes in yoga**	**Total Minutes in Meditation**	**Comments**
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
Saturday			
Sunday			
Monday			
Total Weekly Minutes:			

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WEEK 4

Mindbody wisdom and healing

Stress self-assessment

Underline any of the following symptoms of stress that you have experienced in the last week.
Physical symptoms Headaches, stomach aches, back pain, sweaty palms, sleep difficulties, dizziness, tight neck and shoulders, racing heart, restlessness, tiredness, ringing in ears.
Behavioural Symptoms Smoking, bossiness, compulsive gum chewing, critical attitude, grinding teeth at night, overuse of alcohol, compulsive eating, inability to get things done.
Emotional Symptoms Crying, nervousness or anxiety, boredom (no meaning to things), edginess (feeling ready to explode), feeling powerless to change things, overwhelming feeling of pressure, Anger, Loneliness, Unhappiness for no reason, Easily Upsest.
Cognitive Symptoms Trouble thinking clearly, Forgetfulness, Lack of creativity, Memory Loss, Indecisiveness, Thoughts of running away, Constant worry, Loss of sense of humour.
Spiritual Symptoms Emptiness, Loss of meaning, Doubt, Unforgiving, Martyrdom, Looking for magic, Loss of Direction, Cynicism, Apathy, Need to prove self.
Relational Symptoms Isolation, Intolerance, Resentment, Loneliness, Distrust, Hiding, Lowered Sex Drive, Nagging, Lack of intimacy, Using people, Fewer contacts with friends, Lashing out, Clamming up.

Reacting to stress: fight or flight alarm reactivity.

AWARENESS OF UNPLEASANT EVENTS LOG			
	What was the experience?	Were you aware of the unpleasant feelings while the event was happening?	How did your body feel, in details during the experience? Describe the sensations you felt.
Example:	You miss your train?	Very much so.	Pacing up and down, jaw tight, shoulders raised.
MONDAY			
TUESDAY			
WEDNESDAY			
THURSDAY			
FRDAY			
SATURDAY			
SUNDAY			

Awareness of unpleasant events log	
What mood, feelings and thoughts accompanied this event at the time?	**What thoughts are in your mind now as you write this down.**
Annoyed “why didn’t I leave the house on time” Anxious “people will be wating for me and think I am unreliable”	It does not help me to become annoyed or angry. Being stressed just hurts me.

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Week 4 Homework 30-min sitting meditation. Practice 15 min lying yoga daily. Complete the unpleasant events log. Pay attention to stress responding vs reacting.			
DATES	**Total Minutes in yoga**	**Total Minutes in Meditation**	**Comments**
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
Saturday			
Sunday			
Monday			
Total Weekly Minutes:			

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WEEK 5

Balance in the autonomic nervous system

You can have voluntary control over your breath and the way you breath impacts your autonomic nervous system.

MINI RELAXATION EXERCISES

- Mini relaxation exercises are focused breathing techniques that help reduce anxiety and tension immediately!
- You can do them with your eyes open or closed (but make sure that youreyes are open when you are driving!)
- You can do them in any place, at any time, and no one will know that you are doing them

GOOD TIMES TO "DO A MINI"

- When stuck in traffic
- When put on "hold"
- While waiting in the doctor's office
- When someone says something that bothers you
- At all red lights
- When waiting for a phone call
- In the dentist's chair
- When you feel overwhelmed by what you need to accomplish in the near future
- While standing in line
- When in pain
- ...Anytime!

WAYS TO "DO A MINI"

Become mindful of slow, deep diaphragmatic breathing.

Return to breathing naturally if you start feeling light-headed or dizzy.

BALANCED MINI 1

Count from ten down to zero – one number for each in and out breath. With the first diaphragmatic breath say "ten" to yourself; with the next breath say "nine"; - 8-7-6-5-4-3-2-1-0.

BALANCED MINI 2

As you inhale, count very slowly up to four. As you exhale, count slowly back down to one. As you inhale, you say to yourself "one, two, three, four." As you exhale, you say to yourself, "four, three, two, one." Do this several times.

BALANCED MINI 3

After each inhalation pause for a few seconds. After you exhale, pause again for a few seconds. Do this for several breaths.

RELAXING MINI

Triangular breath. Breathe in fully, then out fully. Pause and hold after the out breath.

AROUSING MINI

Inverted triangular breath. Breathe out fully, then in fully. Pause and hold after the in breath.

The only time that minis do not work is when you forget to do them!

So go do a mini

ALTERNATE NOSTRIL BREATHING

Ancient yogic masters discovered that:

- At any given time, we are breathing through one nostril more than the other. That is, one nostril is active while the other is passive.
- The active (or dominant) nostril changes cyclically about every 90-120 minutes.
- When the right nostril is dominant, activity is warmed and intensified. Right nostril dominance is good for eating, conducting business, or hard physical work.

- When the left nostril is dominant, it has a cooling and receptive influence. Left nostril dominance is good for listening, studying, resting, and renewing the body and mind.
- By purposely regulating the flow of air through the nostrils, we can achieve a state of balance between the effects of the two nostrils. This practice is called Nadi Shodhana.

STEPS IN ALTERNATE NOSTRIL BREATHING

1) Determine which nostril is more active at the present moment.
2) Bring the right hand to the nose. Place the thumb of the hand over the right nostril, and the ring and little fingers of the hand over the left nostril. Either tuck in the middle two fingers or rest them on the forehead between the eyes.
3) Close the passive nostril at the end of an inhalation, and exhale through the active nostril.
4) Close the active nostril, and inhale through the passive nostril.
5) Follow the pattern shown below alternating back and forth until the third breath, when the rhythm is reversed for three more breaths.

Repeat for three rounds.

SLEEP EXERCISE

This elegant little technique will put you to sleep and will help you to sleep more peacefully. It uses an effortless 2-to-1 breath (breathing out for twice the length of time you breathe in).

1) Get into bed and pay close attention to your breath.
   - allow the breath to become smooth and deep
   - eliminate even the pause between inhalation and exhalation
2) Take:
   - 8 breaths lying on your back
   - 16 breaths lying on your left side
   - 32 breaths lying on your right side
3) Repeat if you are still awake

Very few people complete this exercise... sweet dreams!

Week 5 Homework 30-min sitting meditation. Practice 15 min lying yoga daily. Practice mini breathing exercises daily.			
DATES	**Total Minutes in yoga**	**Total Minutes in Meditation**	**Comments**
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
Saturday			
Sunday			
Monday			
Total Weekly Minutes:			

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WEEK 6

Mindful coping

STORIES WE TELL OURSELVES

Often people strongly identify with their thoughts. We believe we are in control of our thoughts. In reality, thoughts are habitual and automatic, almost like digestion – commonly people are at the mercy of their thoughts. We can begin to mistake our thoughts for reality.

In truth, thoughts are often:

- Involuntary
- Repetitive
- Limiting
- Distorted
- Only one side of the story

Our body believes and reacts to the stories told by the voice in our head.

- These interpretations shape our emotional experience. Sometimes the thoughts we have lead to fear, self-blame and depression.
- Often this happens very quickly and automatically. The same life event can lead to very different emotions depending on the meaning we attribute to it. These attributions are often influenced by past experiences that may no longer be relevant. Thereare also characteristic ways in which we distort reality. Here are examples of the most common categories of troublesome automatic thoughts that are woven into our story lines:

Labelling or stereotyping: An extreme form of over- generalizing in which people or situations are seen as fixed and unchanging and other aspects or possibilities are ignored.Examples:“My doctor is uncaring” “Women are the weaker sex”

Jumping to Conclusions: Making an interpretation in the absence of clear evidence to support it. Example: Doctor doesn't mention result of a test – "I must not be doing well."

Magnification (Catastrophizing) and Minimization: Exaggerating the importance or likelihood of something seen as negative or minimizing the importance or likelihood of something seen as positive. Examples: "It's terrible and unbearable that my doctor recommends another treatment." or "My accomplishments don't amount to much."

Emotional Reasoning: Because you feel it or fear it, you believe it must be true. Examples: The oncologist only spends a few moments with you during a clinic visit: "I feel uncared for – My oncologist doesn't like me" or "If I have negative thoughts, my disease will return."

Mental Filters: Picking out a limited aspect of a situation or experience and allowing it to colour your perception of the whole event.Example: You see ill people at the hospital – "the hospital is a terrible place."

All or Nothing Thinking: Seeing everything in black and white categories. Example: Your spouse doesn't help clean up after dinner – "I do everything around here – You don't care about me at all!"

Personalization: Interpreting an event as being about you when there are many other plausible causes or interpretations. Example: Person you know is walking in your direction and as they get closer they suddenly turn and walk in a different direction – "They were trying to avoid me – they don't like me."

Musterbation: Thinking that you "must" or "should" behave in a certain way – or else! Often combined with an unrealistic conclusion regarding the consequences of failing to do it. Example: "I must keep up appearances or others will see my imperfections and reject me."

Mindfulness allows us to recognize when we are having these types of thoughts and see the limitations they impose on our lives.

- This gives us the possibility of choice, whereas previously we may have reacted automatically.
- It can be helpful to identify and challenge assumptions and distortions in our thinking in order to obtain a more balanced understanding of a situation.

- This may allow new solutions, possibilities, or feelings to emerge. When you become aware of engaging in these forms of thinking:
- Realize that thoughts are just thoughts – they are not reality: “the map is not the territory” and “the finger pointing at the moon is not the moon.”
- Remember that you are not your thoughts – they arise and pass away like waves on the ocean. You are more like the ocean than the waves. Some questions you might ask yourself:
- How do I know that my assumption is true – what is the evidence?
- Are there any other possible explanations or ways of seeing it?
- Even if it is true – are the consequences necessarily as horrible as I feel they are?
- Is this really the most helpful interpretation or are there other possible explanations that would be more acceptable and allow further courses of action?
- Just because something may be true at one time or in one situation, does that mean it always will be true?
- Look for exceptions to the rule and new possibilities to guide your behaviour rather than self-limiting beliefs.

CHALLENGING OUR ASSUMPTIONS

Situation Describe the event surrounding the unpleasant emotion (just the facts)	
Emotions Describe the emotion aroused (angry, sad, anxious…..)	
Automatic Thoughts What thoughts preceded the negative emotion	
Distortion of thoughts Identify the distortion or limitations in each automatic thought.	
Alternative response How could you think or behave differently in the situation?	
Outcome How would you feel or behave if you substitute the alternative for the automatic thought?	

Week 6 Homework Alternate 30-min sitting meditation with walking meditation. Practice 15 min standing yoga daily. Practice mindful attitudes throughout the day. Complete the thought monitoring log.			
DATES	**Total Minutes in yoga**	**Total Minutes in Meditation**	**Comments**
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
Saturday			
Sunday			
Monday			
Total Weekly Minutes:			

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WEEK 7

Cultivating beneficial states of heart and mind

USE OF IMAGINATION

Our imagination provides a powerful tool we can use to remind us of qualities we possess that are beneficial and empowering and also to strengthen them. For example, attitudes such as patience, letting go and non-striving can be cultivated using imagery. Other qualities such as loving kindness and compassion towards yourself and others can also be developed. With practice these beneficial qualities become more accessible to us when they are needed.

Imaginal experience has a very real effect on our body-mind. It can be used to support healing and enhance performance. Working with mental images in a relaxed state brings us closer to the unconscious mind. It tends to bypass the edited and reconstructed versions of our lives and to work at an embodied level. Imagery can help to alleviate stress, fears, isolation, depression and anxiety.

SOME PRINCIPLES OF IMAGERY USE

1) Our bodies don't fully discriminate between sensory images in the mind and reality – that is, images elicit the same quality of body experience. For example, read a recipe and you may salivate as if you are hungry. Imagine yourself at the beach and your body may relax.
2) In a relaxed state we are capable of more rapid, intense healing, growth, learning and change. This calm and energized alertness is often used by athletes to attain peak performance. Sometimes called being in the "zone" or in the "flow" - it is a state in which we can intensely focus on the task at hand without distracting thoughts.
3) Imagery is not only visual, but becomes more powerful when all the senses are involved – including smell, taste, touch and hearing.

LOVINGKINDNESS MEDITATION

Lovingkindness is one of four heart qualities often cultivated in meditation practice. The other three are compassion, sympathetic joy, and equanimity.

Lovingkindness can be cultivated by evoking inner feelings of caring and compassion for oneself and others. The process usually begins with calling to mind the image of another for whom kind and loving feelings are strong and easily accessible. This person is used as a touchstone for kindling warm and loving feelings. Over time, lovingkindness is directed in turn to oneself, to others for whom feelings are initially more neutral, to acquaintances, and eventually those we don't even know or may dislike. This practice is beneficial for overcoming destructive emotions and provides a new basis for relating to self and others. It can help to:

- Remind us that suffering is universal
- Remind us that others wish to be happy just as we do
- Reduce our sense of being exceptional or different from others
- Reduce feelings of being alone or isolated
- Increase feelings of connectedness and shared humanity
- Allow forgiveness and arrest the chain reaction of destructive emotions

INSTRUCTIONS

1) Sit in a comfortable position, allow the attention to come to the breath, coming and going all by itself.
2) Bring to mind the image of a person dear to you.
3) As you breathe, allow a softening and expanding of the heart space as you feel kindness and care for your loved one.
4) Repeat inwardly to yourself:
    - with each breath in: "May you be free from suffering"
    - with each breath out: "May you be at peace"
5) Continue with each breath breathing compassion into the heart, extending it across time or space to reach your loved one. Though at first these may only feel like words echoing in the mind, persist in accordance with your intention.
6) After a few minutes allow the focus of your care and kindness to shift inwardly towards yourself. Consider yourself like a child in need of comforting, recognizing and having compassion for your own suffering. Allow yourself to be comforted by the wish for your own well-being.

7) Repeat inwardly to yourself:
    - with each breath in: “May I be free from suffering”
    - with each breath out: “May I be at peace”

Notice whatever arises that may limit your willingness to accept these wishes; to be whole and to be healed.

8) In like manner continue extending wishes of lovingkindness to an expanding circle of others.

This may include:

- Friends
- Acquaintances
- Strangers
- People who have hurt us or who we may dislike
- All sentient beings

Eventually it may be possible to feel the same type of compassion and love for all beings that we instinctively feel for those closest to us. Through this practice we strengthen our capacity to access wholesome mental states in our everyday life.

THE GUEST-HOUSE

This being human is a guesthouse
Every morning a new arrival.
A joy, a depression, a meanness,
Some momentary awareness comes
As an unexpected visitor.
Welcome and entertain them all!
Even if they're a crowd of sorrows,
Who violently sweep your house
Empty of its furniture.
Still, treat each guest honourably.
They may be clearing you out
For some new delight.
The dark thought, the shame, the malice,
Meet them at the door laughing,
And invite them in.
Be grateful for whoever comes,
Because each has been sent,
As a guide from beyond.

- Rumi -

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Week 7 Homework 30-min sitting meditation (add in mountain or lake if desired). Practice 15 min standing yoga daily.			
DATES	**Total Minutes in yoga**	**Total Minutes in Meditation**	**Comments**
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
Saturday			
Sunday			
Monday			
Total Weekly Minutes:			

WEEK 8

Deepening and expanding

To this point, the focus of our meditation practice has primarily been on developing mindfulness of breath. With experience, one-pointed focus on the breath becomes more stable. At this point, it is often useful to allow the focus to expand to encompass other elements of experience, such as awareness of sensations, emotions, sounds or thoughts as they arise and fall away.

It is through this process of cultivating mindfulness of all elements of our experience with openness and curiosity that insight may develop. We can observe, for example, the relationships between grasping at desired outcomes and he subsequent suffering this may cause. We may also gain insight into the causal chain of events that motivate our behaviour. That which we take to be our "self" can be appreciated as an aggregate of constantly changing causes and phenomena.

"A human being is part of a whole, called by us 'universe', a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings as something separated from the rest... a kind of optical delusion of his consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest to us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty."

- Albert Einstein -

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Week 8 Homework 30-min choiceless awareness meditation, 15 min standing yoga daily or sunsalutations. Making plans for continuing practice after programme completion.			
DATES	**Total Minutes in yoga**	**Total Minutes in Meditation**	**Comments**
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
Saturday			
Sunday			
Monday			
Total Weekly Minutes:			

WEEK 9

Moving into the world

WHAT DO I DO NOW?

The 9th week is the rest of your life.

There are many ways you can build upon this beginning, from the personal to the political. Suggestions:

- Form a practice group
- Join a yoga class
- Volunteer service to others
- Spend time with others who share your values
- Relate to others from a place of compassion
- Practice mindful speech
- Practice non-harming
- Find work that is consistent with your values
- Work to counter social inequities
- Be mindful about what you put into your body
- Respect the environment that sustains us
- Appreciate your place in the natural world
- Express yourself with creative pursuits
- Leave the world better than when you found it.

This list could be endless.

Find your own way to embody principles of mindfulness that have been beneficial to you over the last nine weeks.

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Week 9 Homework Moving into the world….continue to do everything as above.			
DATES	**Total Minutes in yoga**	**Total Minutes in Meditation**	**Comments**
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
Saturday			
Sunday			
Monday			
Total Weekly Minutes:			

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FURTHER READING

Meditation reading list

Books:

Levine, S. (1991). Guided Meditations, Explorations and Healings. New York: Doubleday.

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https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QgZd5GvZ5Qs

Mindfulness is seen as an openminded awareness, an easy and transformative act but is commonly misinterpreted. In this video, Dr. Carlson reviews her experience with mindfulness.

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