

## **Finding Stability in Uncertain Times**

### **Online Mindfulness Course Information**

The uncertain times we are going through can increase our levels of worry, stress, depression and anxiety, impacting on both our physical and mental health. It can lead many people to 'over think' the issues and get caught up in negative thoughts.

#### **About this course**

This course aims to introduce you to mindfulness practices that can help with depression, stress, anxiety and increase our general wellbeing. The practices can also help us to feel more steady and grounded.

#### **How is the course organised?**

The online course is a structured 4-week group programme combining mindfulness meditation with cognitive and behavioural therapy exercises. The course lasts for 4 sessions and each session is 2 hours long. The size of the online class is likely to be 12 people. The course involves between 10-30 minutes of home practice a day, this includes meditation practices and other exercises.

The week before the course starts there will be an orientation session, this will:

- Give you further information about mindfulness and the course.
- Provide an opportunity for you to meet others on the course and the course facilitators.
- Give you an opportunity to try out a short meditation practice.
- Give you space to ask questions.

#### **What will I learn?**

You will learn different mindfulness practices that will help you to pay attention to what is happening in the mind and body, moment to moment. We are often caught up in over thinking/ rumination, so you will learn to move your awareness to your body, to switch off habitual negative thought cycles that can lead to stress, heightened anxiety and depression. You will practice bringing attention to present moment experiences such as breathing, bodily-sensations, sounds, thoughts, feelings, and movement. You will learn new ways of relating to your own experiences to become more fully aware and present in each moment of life.

#### **What happens in a session?**

Typically, each class will start with a meditation practice followed by an invitation to share what you noticed during the practice. During these practices our attention will inevitably wander away from the present moment, so the practices also include guidance on how to work with the 'wandering mind', with gentleness and kindness.

We aim to create a friendly and supportive atmosphere in the class, and no one will be required to do anything they don't want to. For example, if you prefer not to speak in front of the whole group, but rather want to simply listen to what others have to say, then that's absolutely fine.

### What will I need to do?

An important part of the course is the daily home practice. This can at times feel challenging, but it can also make life more enjoyable, interesting, and fulfilling. You will need to set aside between 10-30 minutes each day for practicing at home. We will provide you with activity sheets and links to download guided practices.

### What is the evidence for the effectiveness of MBCT?

This course is based on Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy. There is good evidence that MBCT can reduce the chances of depression returning and the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) particularly recommends it for people who have previously experienced three or more episodes of depression.

*Quote from past MBCT participant: "A very useful and helpful course. It empowers people to be kinder to themselves and to find inner peace".*

### Questionnaires and Feedback

You will be asked to fill in a short questionnaire about anxiety and low mood before each session. This enables us to both give you feedback about your progress and evaluate the course. We also welcome any comments or suggestions you might like to share about the course.

### Crisis Support

If you are in crisis or need immediate support:

**Samaritans: 116 123** or text "**shout**" to **85258**

For support and information:

**Sussex Mental Healthline: 0300 5000 101** open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

For more advice on coping with suicidal thoughts:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/suicide/>

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health-problems/suicidal-feelings/helping-yourself-now/>