

Mindful Guided Practice CD's

There are 10 practices/exercises recorded on the 3 CD's, plus one recorded Introduction. You can also obtain these recordings by downloading them from the website. The first audio guide to listen to is the Introduction about why and how we're doing these practices/exercises ~ it might be an idea to listen to this more than once!

Week by week, each time we meet, we'll go through the various practices in the order shown below. Then the invitation is for you to do the practices in your own time each day for homework. You need this experience so you can learn to be mindful, and so we can talk about it on the course. We can't do them all at once, so these are the practices we will introduce and explore week by week:-

<u>Week 1</u>	Here PRESENT Mind PAUSE Body AWARE Sleep AWARE
<u>Week 2</u>	Sound AWARE Think AWARE
<u>Week 3</u>	Move AWARE

Guided Practice

Week 4 **Feel***AWARE*

Week 5 **Balance***AWARE*

Week 6 **Care***AWARE*

The idea is to get used to practicing regularly, and gradually build up a store of direct Mindful experience. This will help you to recognise, accept, investigate and observe your stress in a completely new and far less stressful way.

This is not the usual ‘relaxation tape’ kind of approach where you passively get lulled into a state of relaxation, it is for you actively to develop your *AWARENESS*. And, as you become more aware, you will no doubt become more calm and relaxed. It’s one of the great bonuses of being Mindful.

Using the Practices

We will do these practices in-session, and hopefully you will practice them daily in your own time. Start with the Intro and play this a few times to be sure you know what you're doing and why you're doing it.

Here *PRESENT*, *MindPAUSE* and the *SoundAWARE* practices will help you to get used to being focused on the present moment. Use them often. In addition, if you think your stress mainly concerns your thoughts and feelings, then use the *ThinkAWARE* and *FeelAWARE* practices daily. If you think your stress is primarily centred on your body and physical reactions and sensations, then focus daily on the *BodyAWARE*, *MoveAWARE* and Yoga practices too if they may help.

If you're not sure where your stress is coming from, that's OK. Follow the practices and as you go through the course you will gradually discover what helps you the most and those practices may become your own daily practice. Mindful awareness will give you greater choice and flexibility, and this sense of freedom will enable you to let go of the stress the mind creates for you. As you become more aware, not only will you suffer less stress you will no doubt become more calm and relaxed too. This is the great bonus of Mindfulness – you will be more at peace with yourself.

Caution! Please Be Advised

Listen to the audio guides, and do your practice:-

- ~ In a safe and comfortable place where you won't be disturbed**
 - ~ At times of day when you're not too tired**
- ~ Only at dedicated times when you're focused solely on the practice, and not doing anything else at all**
- ~ Do not use these practices while in any situation where you need to pay full attention**

After the Practice?

Take whatever time you need, to do your practice. *There is no endpoint.*

Wherever you are, whatever you're doing, the aim is to learn how to practice being Mindful. *You are what you practice.*

If you can bring Mindfulness into your life, you'll benefit by reducing your stress and by being more aware in your wider world too. *No need to try hard.*

Maybe you can set aside a little time to practice each day. *Just learning to be aware.*

And you can practice in everyday life. *Using all the senses.*

Everything you do is an opportunity for practice. *Especially the routines of life.*

Practice may not make you perfect. *But it will make you alive to this moment.*

Note

- **Doing the practices will help you see how your mind works – how you add to your stress unnecessarily.**
- **Practicing will help you to be Mindfully Aware, to take care of yourself and let go of stress more of the time.**
- **When we begin practicing, we get a glimpse of what it would be like to be more Mindful. Sometimes it does take a while for all the benefits to begin to sink in.**
- **On the other hand many people feel an immediate benefit.**
- **You are what you practice, so if you practice being more Mindful, you will become more Mindful, and learn to let go of stress.**
- **After a while, you won't need to listen to the audio practices to help you stay focused on doing the practice.**
- **To practice being Mindful, it is enough to sit, or walk or lie in silence with the intention of being Mindful.**
- **Anything we do in everyday life, can be done more Mindfully.**
- **Each moment of Mindfulness is a moment of presence – reclaimed – when we're really here, really alive.**
- **Each new moment is a chance to be Mindfully AWARE – to take care of yourself and let go of stress.**

The Importance of Silence

- Each audio practice has deliberate spaces of silence built in.
- These are not very long. They are there because silence is an absolutely vital and essential part of the practice of Mindfulness. Silence gives us ‘seeing time’.
- Silence affects us in different ways.
- Sometimes it seems to still the mind and create a sense of peace.
- Sometimes it can create agitation and restlessness in the mind.
- The practice of Mindfulness is about being **AWARE** of whatever is there for you at any one moment. Just to observe and witness whatever shows up.
- So, if in silence, your mind becomes peaceful and still for a while, then you can use the stillness for calm reflection.
- If your mind becomes agitated, wandering or troubled and turbulent – which it often will – then there won’t be the stillness on which to reflect. Nevertheless, even if there is no stillness, you can still look deeply and calmly at the agitation, wandering and trouble, just as it is.

For many people, silence is hard – we’re always trying to fill silences to cover unrest, embarrassment and uneasiness. Willingness in the practice, to go towards and embrace silence, to notice and acknowledge the way your mind is working, is all we’re trying to do.