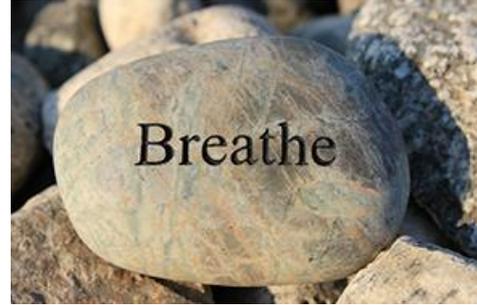


INFORMATION ABOUT MINDFULNESS

Mindfulness is the awareness that emerges through paying attention in the present moment, on purpose, without judgement, with compassion, and open-hearted curiosity. Through cultivating mindful awareness, we discover how to live in the present moment rather than dwelling in the past or worrying about the future.



MINDFULNESS IS...?

...an integrative, mind-body based training that enables people to change the way that they relate to their experience. Through practicing mindfulness we become more aware of our body and our mind. This increased awareness helps us to become more flexible in how we respond to our thoughts or to physical sensations. Mindfulness has its roots in ancient meditation practices but also draws on recent scientific advances. It is increasingly being used in healthcare settings and there is an evidence base to support its use for people with a variety of different health conditions. Mindfulness does not contain any religious teaching and is compatible with any religious or spiritual belief or none.

GUIDEANCE ON PRACTISING MINDFULNESS



The practice of mindfulness sounds simple because essentially you are doing very little, but people often find it hard to pause and take a step back. It is easy to keep on *doing* but to forget how to *be*. When we are in the 'doing' mode we can easily get caught up in unhelpful thoughts and behaviours that damage our well-being and take us further away from how we really want to be.

Mindfulness is not just about practising formal meditation, you can do anything mindfully such eating a meal or looking at nature.

People often say that they're not good at mindfulness because they can't relax or because their mind is too busy. It's not about being 'good' or 'bad' at mindfulness, it's about being with what's happening in the here and now.

HOW CAN IT HELP WITH PAIN?

Research has shown that learning and practicing mindfulness can help to improve mood and quality of life, and can reduce the distress caused by pain. People have reported that their pain has become more manageable through using mindfulness and/or they feel more confident in managing life in spite of pain.

HOW DO I DO IT AND WHERE CAN I FIND OUT MORE?

Mindful awareness is developed through learning and regularly practicing the techniques. Having support to practice these regularly, especially in the early stages, is important. We will be practicing mindfulness each week on the programme.

The mindfulness exercises that we use on the programme can be found by

1. Going to www.solent.nhs.uk/msk/our-services/persistent-pain/
2. Select the 'Self Help' link and then select 'Persistent Pain Management'
3. There are links to freely downloadable mindfulness tracks and there are also eight tracks recorded by our service which we will be using during the course of the programme

If you would like to find out more about mindfulness there is plenty of good quality information on websites such as:

- Books or Audio CDs by Jon Kabat-Zinn such as 'Mindfulness for Beginners'
- The Free Mindfulness Project is an online resource with lots of freely downloadable mindfulness exercises. Go to <http://www.freemindfulness.org/home>
- Headspace – is an online resource / mobile app to support the learning and use of mindfulness techniques. The first month is free and then you pay a subscription fee. More info at <https://www.headspace.com>

"You can't stop the waves, but you can learn to surf" (Jon Kabat-Zinn)

