

An Introduction to Mindfulness

Time to Change Filmed Workshop

Supporting Notes

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1. Overview

Time to Change is a growing movement of people changing how we all think and act about mental health problems. The programme is run by the charities Mind and Rethink Mental Illness, and funded by the Department of Health, Comic Relief and the Big Lottery Fund.

We aim to work with all sectors and communities to encourage more open conversation about mental health and ensure that people with mental health problems can be equal and active citizens.

We know that the workplace is a key area where people both experience and perceive stigma and discrimination around mental health. The Time to Change Employers team offer a range of initiatives that employers may use in order to create workplaces that are conducive to mental health and wellbeing, where stigma and discrimination around mental health has no place. Our suite of free downloadable workshops form part of this offer.

This accompanying briefing will provide you with an introduction to the topic, suggestions for how to use each workshop, guide you as to when to pause or break for interactive segments/group discussion if you so wish, and signpost to further information and support.

Each workshop film runs for between 45 minutes - 1hour and has been filmed with a small number of attendees for input. We advise allowing an additional 10 minutes to the run time shown, to allow for group discussion.

Disclaimer

These training sessions are delivered by Time to Change Regional Coordinators. Whilst our trainers are experienced and knowledgeable in their field, they are not mental health professionals or therapists. The content of these workshops is not intended to provide medical advice or serve as a substitute for it. For more information about sources of support and guidance about mental health and mental illness see the 'Where to go for support' section of this resource.

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Introduction

The most widely used definition of Mindfulness is the one given by Jon Kabat-Zinn, "Mindfulness means paying attention in a particular way; on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally."

Research by Oxford University has shown that practicing Mindfulness may achieve a number of positive outcomes including the reduction of stress and anxiety. Clinical trials have demonstrated its benefits in preventing serious depression and emotional distress and research is continuing to explore extending the approach to other disorders, using brain imaging techniques together with experimental cognitive science, to learn how mindfulness has its effects, and which practices are best for whom.

However, as importantly, mindfulness helps us to keep up with the constant demands of the modern world and to build resilience at critical periods in our working and personal lives.

This 45 minute taster session provides a useful and thoughtfully sequenced introduction to the subject of mindfulness, several short exercises that can be repeated, and signposts to other resources.

2. How to use this resource

These workshops have been designed to be flexible resources. We have made some suggestions as to how and when you might like to run them, however we encourage you to use them in the way you find most beneficial, practical, and conducive to learning in your working environment.

However, please take note of a few guidelines below:

- Make sure you include signposting to **internal** and **external** sources of support in any training that touches on issues surrounding mental health and wellbeing (see the 'Where to go for support' section of this briefing.)

You don't need to be an expert to talk to and support someone if they raise related issues, however it is always helpful to be able to direct them to professional sources of support.

- Although it may be beneficial for individuals to watch the workshop on their own, to gain maximum benefit from the sessions we recommend running them as part of a group or team activity.

To do this you will need to have a nominated in house facilitator providing support, allowing for interaction between participants and exchange of thoughts and ideas. The facilitator will not need an in depth knowledge of the subject matter but it will help if they have already viewed workshop content and are familiar with the flow of the session. Our session timetable below will show you when to break for interactive segments.

- We have a range of Time to Change [workplace resources](#) that could compliment and support your session.

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3. Session Timetable

Segment	Timings (min:sec)
Introduction	00:00 – 02:53
Overview of session	02:54 – 05:06
Pause at 02:54 – Interactive segment coming up	
When the film resumes the trainer will bring the group to the present – participants should do the exercise along with the film	
Bringing ourselves to the present	05:07 – 07:32
Definition of mindfulness by Jon Kabat-Zinn	07:33 – 08:29
How does it feel for you?	08:30 – 10:04
Pause at 10:04 – Interactive segment coming up	
When the film resumes a Mindfulness exercise will take place – participants should do the exercise along with the film.	
Mindfulness body and breath exercise	10:05 – 19:02
Myths about mindfulness	19:03 – 29:46
Pause at 29:46 – Interactive segment coming up	
When the film resumes a Mindfulness exercise will take place – participants should do the exercise along with the film.	
Resources	35:32 – 36:56
Pause at 36:56 – Interactive segment coming up	
When the film resumes a Mindfulness exercise will take place – participants should do the exercise along with the film.	
Our responses	26:27 – 26:47

How you might run the workshop:

- Incorporate the workshop into an existing e-learning / induction package for staff.
- Run the workshop as part of an extended team meeting, or all staff meeting.
- Make content available on your staff intranet.
- Offer a space to run the workshops at a key point in the organisational or mental health calendar, for example World Mental Health Day (10 October), National Stress Awareness Day (November), or National Mental Health Awareness Week (May).

Please note, if participating alone and without a facilitator individuals will still be able to engage with the workshop content but won't get the benefit of group reflection. This also misses an opportunity to normalise mental health by talking about it openly in a group situation.

4. FAQs

- **Is this an accredited session?**
This workshop is not accredited and is designed solely to give an introduction to the subject.
- **Could this session exacerbate existing mental health problems?**
This session in itself does not risk exacerbating existing mental health problems. However if viewing alone, or if facilitating a group session you should be mindful that starting any conversation about mental health can provide an opening for colleagues to disclose a mental health problem or concern. This can be the beginning of a positive pathway through which they are able to discuss needs and concerns openly and seek support if required. However, you should always have knowledge of internal and external sources of support to hand so that you may respond appropriately and helpfully.
- **Can Mindfulness replace medication?**
No. Research has shown that practising mindfulness can be conducive to wellbeing and help the healing process as part of an approach to tackling mental health problems such as depression, eating disorders, anxiety disorders and obsessive-compulsive disorder. It can also help manage stress levels thereby reducing blood pressure and boosting the immune system. It's becoming increasingly common for mindfulness to be combined with psychotherapy, especially cognitive behavioural therapy. However it should not be viewed as a substitute for medication. The practice of mindfulness whilst not replacing medication, may lead to a reduced reliance on medication to cope with stress and anxiety. However, you should always consult with your practitioner before reductions or changes to regular medication are made.
- **Can I watch this session at home?**
These sessions can be watched at any time in any context. However, in our experience the best results are possible when run as a group activity and attendees have the opportunity to reflect how they found the session and exchange their

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thoughts and ideas.

5. Further reading

Mindfulness For Dummies (Book + CD)
Shamash Alidina

Mindfulness: A practical guide to finding peace in a frantic world.
Prof Mark Williams and Dr Danny Penman

Wherever You Go, There You Are: Mindfulness meditation for everyday life.
Jon Kabat-Zinn

The Miracle Of Mindfulness: The Classic Guide to Meditation by the World's Most Revered Master
Thich Nhat Hanh

Mindfulness: finding Peace in a Frantic World: Burch and Penman

Online resources

www.bemindfulonline.com

An online online mindfulness training course run in partnership with the Mental Health Foundation.

www.freemindfulness.org

Home to a growing collection of free-to-download mindfulness meditation exercises.

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6. Where to go to for support

Support for those experiencing MH problems, distress

Rethink Mental Illness - call Rethink's general helpline for practical mental health information: 0300 5000 927. The line is open Monday to Friday, 10am-2pm. (The line is closed on Bank Holidays).

The charity also provides advice and information about issues such as

- Different types of therapy and medication
- Benefit, debt, money issues
- Police, courts and prison
- Your rights under the Mental Health Act and other laws

They also have lots of free, printable resources / PDF factsheets.

Mind – the mental health charity

Mind infoline - provides information on a range of topics including:

- types of mental health problem
- where to get help
- medication and alternative treatments
- advocacy

Phone: 0300 123 3393

Email: info@mind.org.uk

Mind infoline FAQs can be downloaded from the charity's website and cover a range of topics including:

- What can I do if a friend or relative will not seek help for a mental health problem?
- What can I do if it is an emergency?
- What does it mean to be sectioned?
- How can I complain about the treatment I have received from NHS?

<http://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/helplines/common-questions/>

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Mind legal – provides legal information and general advice on mental health related law covering:

- mental health
- mental capacity
- community care
- human rights and discrimination/equality related to mental health issues.

Phone: 0300 466 6463

Email: legal@mind.org.uk

Who to contact if you need urgent support

If you feel like harming or hurting yourself or other people:

- Call 999
- Go to your nearest Accident and Emergency department (A&E). You can search for your local department through the NHS Choices website www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk

For non-emergency situations

- Visit your GP
- Call NHS 111 (NHS Direct) – open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. They can tell you about your local crisis support services or your nearest A&E.
www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk

If you would like to offload or talk to someone about your problems, then you may find an emotional support line useful. Some to try are:

- **Samaritans** - Offers emotional support 24 hours a day 08457 90 90 90
jo@samaritans.org
www.samaritans.org
- **Sane Line** – offers specialist mental health emotional support 6-11pm everyday.
0845 767 8000 www.sane.org.uk

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Young Minds – can support and advise young people and those who might be concerned about them. More information below and here; <http://www.youngminds.org.uk/contact>

- If you are an adult worried about a child, the address is parents@youngminds.org.uk
- For general enquiries: ymenquiries@youngminds.org.uk
- Telephone us: 020 7089 5050

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