



Wellbeing  
*for*  
individuals  
*and*  
organisations

Liz O'Brien

Mindfulness, Wellbeing and Performance  
6 Week Course  
Royal Children's Hospital

## Introduction

A practical and experiential course using discussion, reflection, mindfulness tools and cognitive strategies

The course offers a mindfulness-based approach to achieving and maintaining high performance, managing and reducing stress, and supporting self-care for mental and physical wellbeing, in a complex and high pressure work environment.

It takes a high level approach which allows participants to draw from it your own individual learnings, and tailor the key concepts and tools to your own requirements.

There are all sorts of things constantly going through our minds which colour our responses to, and ability to deal with, daily life. Most of these thoughts,

**Improve and maintain focus and high performance**

**Reduce stress**

**Enhance wellbeing**

feelings and reactions are habitual and automatic. In mindfulness, it is important to take a curious stance, rather than a judgemental one, as you observe your own behaviours and reactions.

Gentle self-awareness (as opposed to self-criticism) is essential for stress reduction and improved wellbeing. Mindful self-awareness allows you to respond instead of react.

## Summary of Tools & Strategies

- Mindful meditation exercise
- The Refreshing Comma
- Mindful Eating
- Mindful Listening - paying attention to:
  - your own inner conversations
  - conversations with other people
- Mindful anything
  - walking, looking, listening ...
- Perception & Stress
- Letting Go & Acceptance
- Gratitude & Appreciation
- 5,4,3,2,1
- Mindful hand cream
- Regular, moderate exercise
- Eat well & regularly
  - the body & brain need good quality fuel
- Sufficient good quality sleep
- Do things you enjoy, connect with people you like
- Take time to be with and by yourself

## Discussion & Reflective Questions

- What makes you feel stressed?
- How does this affect your :
  - energy levels?
  - ability to think clearly, make decisions?
  - emotions?
  - sleep?
  - physical health?
- What do you do to manage your stress?
- What, if any, exercise do you currently do?
  - what motivates/prevents you?
  - how could you build in incidental exercise to your day?
- Do you eat a regular & balanced diet?
  - what gets in the way of eating healthily or regularly?
- Do you get enough good quality sleep?
- Do you have good support and connectedness?
- When you eat well, sleep well, exercise enough, what do you notice about your: energy, sleep, focus, mood?
- Which 1 of these would make the most difference to your wellbeing?
- How could you incorporate it into your day?

## Mindful Meditation Exercise

### **Mindfulness is attention training**

#### *Benefits*

You will notice positive changes very quickly, as well as long-term, cumulative benefits:

- Improved mental & physical energy & resilience
- Reduced stress & reactivity to issues
- More relaxed, rested & alert
- Improved attention, efficiency and performance
- Improved sleep

#### *Preparation & Posture*

- Choose a regular time of day that you works best for you  
eg before breakfast; a lunchtime 'top up'; before bed to help you sleep
- Try 5 - 10 minutes, once or twice a day; before meals is best, to avoid sleepiness
- Sit comfortably on an upright chair, feet flat on the floor, hands resting in your lap, and your spine gently erect OR sit cross-legged if your prefer
- Wear comfortable, loose clothing
- A room that is warm but not stuffy, have enough fresh air
- A room that is not too bright or too dark - but anywhere will do!

- Let others know you don't want to be disturbed
- Put your phone on silent
- Set a timer or alarm so that
  - you won't worry about falling asleep
  - you don't need to keep checking the time
- Have a drink of water, go to the toilet.... whatever will let you then relax

**Don't wait for the perfect time and place  
to meditate - just do it!**



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## Mindful Meditation Exercise (continued)

### *How to meditate*

*Your mind will wander - that's ok, it's normal!*

*When you notice that your attention has wandered off, or thoughts intrude, or a noise interrupts, then simply let go of those thoughts & just gently bring your attention back to your breath.*

- Use an upright comfortable chair so your spine is relaxed & gently upright
- Sit in an open posture, feet flat on the floor, hands resting in your lap, eyes softly closed
- Take 3 slow, deep breaths in .... & out.... then let your breath find its own rhythm
- Become aware of your body in the chair ... feet in contact with the floor ...
- Starting with the feet, feel the sensations in the feet ...
- Slowly shift your attention as you scan through the parts of the body ...
- ... until you reach the top of your head
- Notice how still & relaxed you feel
- Now become aware of the breath at the nostrils
- Let your attention rest gently with the breath for as long as you wish
- Relax, & be aware of how relaxed you feel
- To finish, take a deep breath in and out, open your eyes & gently move into your day...



## Your notes and reflections ...