

Living Mindfully

Office G6/7,
Tanfield Lea Business Centre,
Tanfield Lea North Industrial Estate,
Stanley
Co Durham
DH9 9DB

The Living Mindfully Programme – 5 weeks

What is mindfulness?

Mindfulness is developed by paying purposeful attention, moment-by-moment, to your experience and what is happening around you. It is a way of connecting with yourself in the here and now, fully awake and aware and living in the present, rather than mulling over the past or worrying about the future.

By learning to be mindful, and practising the skills taught on the course, you may begin to see yourself and some of your experiences in a different light. Recognising and developing your own strengths and self-confidence, could create new perspectives and bring more balance to your life. Many people completing the Living Mindfully programme report lasting physical and psychological benefits including greater self confidence, the ability to cope more effectively with potentially stressful situations, improved sleep patterns, more energy and enthusiasm for life, and the ability to relax and respond more calmly to the demands of everyday life.

Is the course right for me?

The course is suitable for most people, and teaches skills and practices designed to help with the difficulties of everyday living. Some participants have a particular problem, which motivates them to join the course, such as pain, anxiety or illness; others are simply interested in improving their quality of life.

This is the time to consider whether the course is right for you at this time, and if you have any doubts, please contact us and we will give you more information about the course, to help you to make this decision. The course itself, whilst potentially very rewarding, can also be very challenging. People who have recently experienced a major loss or trauma, might sometimes be advised to delay their application.

Orientation and Introduction to the course

Once we receive your application form, a teacher will contact you to arrange an introduction and orientation session. This session is an opportunity for us to tell you more about the course, discuss any areas that you feel might be difficult for you, and answer any questions you might have. These sessions are usually a telephone conversation between you and a teacher, and may take about half an hour, so we will always arrange in advance to ring at a time that is convenient for you. Some people are keen to meet with a teacher before they commit to a course, and this can be arranged if you would prefer.

Very occasionally, information raised in this session leads us to advise that the time is not right for an individual to take part and, if this is the case, the teacher will always discuss this with the applicant and arrange a full refund of any deposit or course fees.

What happens on the course?

An experienced teacher will teach you in a suitable and safe environment, in a group of no more than 15 people. The course consists of 5 weekly sessions held on weekdays or evenings. Each session is 2 to 2.5 hours long. There is also an option of a course taught one to one, with 5, one-hour sessions covering the same materials.

The practices we teach include a lying down meditation, sitting meditations, walking meditation and some gentle stretches which can be adapted to take account of any mobility difficulties or other physical limitations. Each session includes some time practising and some time talking in the group about participants' experiences of each practice, and any useful learning that comes out of that. There is no pressure to disclose information about yourself, your past or any other personal information in the group setting. The level of your contribution to these discussions is entirely in your control, and may vary from week to week.

Another important part of the course is the 30 minutes of daily home practice that you undertake to do. Using the CDs/downloads we provide to guide you, home practice is not difficult, but we recognise that it can be hard to fit into a busy lifestyle. However, your commitment to home practice (and the important lessons you learn from it) will ensure that you get the best out of the course. The practice can be done at any time of the day that suits you.

There are no formal written assignments for you to complete, but we do ask you to keep a few brief notes about your home practice to remind yourself about issues you may want to bring to the group sessions. These are for your eyes only. You will never be asked to share any notes or hand in any written work.

Your teachers

Living Mindfully teachers practice mindfulness in their daily lives, as well as formal meditation. They have undergone training to teach mindfulness, have suitable experience and have arrangements in place for supervision of their work.

There may also be an assistant teacher on your course, and this may be someone who is less experienced or currently in training to teach mindfulness. These trainee teachers will always be adequately supervised in class and will be practising at a level appropriate for their stage of training and experience.

Support during the course

It can be very helpful to have someone who knows you are doing the course, and who is able to offer informal support to you if issues arise between sessions that you want to talk about. A partner or family member, a close friend, or if appropriate a therapist or health professional, can be invaluable for personal support.

For any difficulties with the course, or advice on home practice, it is possible to contact your teacher between sessions, by email or phone. The course teacher will be happy to advise but will not be able to offer therapeutic support.

Confidentiality

All participants and teachers will be required to read and sign a confidentiality agreement, sharing the responsibility for ensuring that the confidentiality of any information shared in the course of our work is respected. The contents of this agreement are as follows:

Confidentiality, Courtesy and Respect Commitment

Living Mindfully will only keep and use information that is directly related to the work they are undertaking with you. The Directors and any persons they select to undertake work on their behalf, will exercise good judgement and care at all times to avoid unauthorised or improper disclosures of confidential information. We will not disclose, divulge or make accessible confidential information to any person, including relatives, friends, business and professional associates, other than to persons who have a legitimate need for such information, including that required by law.

Living Mindfully's Commitment To You

- We aim to treat you with respect and courtesy to ensure you enjoy working with us
- To provide you with a high quality and professional service.
- To provide you with highest level of skills and abilities in our profession.
- To deliver on pre-arranged times and dates.
- To respond quickly to any queries you may have.
- To work within our data protection and confidentiality policies and protocols at all times
- To make the above policies and protocols available on request

What Living Mindfully Asks Of You

- Your commitment to regular and punctual attendance.
- Your commitment to fully participating in the sessions.
- Your commitment to treating yourself and others with respect.
- Your commitment to taking responsibility for your personal needs.

Shared Commitment to Confidentiality

- We commit to keep any information shared in an organised group session confidential
- We commit to keep any personal individual information we learn about each other confidential
- We commit not to discuss individual or group issues in public places, such as corridors, lifts, or any other space shared generally with others.

If a teacher has concerns about information, shared by a participant, which has serious criminal, ethical or safety implications, then they may be obliged to breach confidentiality by reporting this to the relevant authorities. Wherever possible, this will be discussed with the participant in the first instance.

Complaints

If you have any complaint or cause for concern, please discuss this with your teacher or a Living Mindfully Director. Any complaints arising in connection with our work, which are not addressed satisfactorily at the informal stage, will be addressed through our complaints procedure, which is available on request.

Cost

The cost of the 5 week course is £195 per person, inclusive of all course materials. There are a small number of concessions per course for participants on low income. Some participants are funded by their organisation as part of a personal development programme, or by referral through Occupational Health.

Payment Method

PERSONAL PAYMENTS: If you are paying for the course yourself, we require a £50 deposit at the time of application. The easiest way to do this is to send a cheque along with your application form made payable to 'Living Mindfully CIC'.

Upon confirmation of your place on the course, you will be emailed an invoice for the remaining balance. This is payable by cheque, or direct bank transfer.

PAYMENTS BY EMPLOYER: If your employer is paying for your place on the course, please provide us with their contact name and email address so we can send them an invoice for the full amount.

Your Well Being

1. As the course includes some gentle stretching and movement we would appreciate any information in relation to your health and wellbeing which will help to make the sessions enjoyable and comfortable for you.

2. If you have identified any condition such as epilepsy/angina/asthma we would appreciate more information on how we can help with the management of your condition if you should need support during a session. e.g. administer medication, put in recovery position.

3. Have you had any mental ill-health within the last few years, including symptoms of stress, anxiety or depression?

4. Have you had any significant life events or changes in the last year?

This type of course offers an opportunity for change and can be challenging at times. The teacher is there to support your learning and we encourage you to have your own support system to help you get the most out of the course. Sometimes difficulties arise which can feel overwhelming, and this can very occasionally give rise to concern about a participant's well-being and/or safety. In this event the teacher will arrange to discuss this with the participant.

If the teacher believes that there are risks to your immediate health and/or safety, they may decide to contact your GP. We therefore ask that you sign below to indicate that you understand that in an emergency the teacher will contact your GP. If you are unsure and want to ask some questions about this before signing please feel free to return this form without signature until you have had an opportunity to talk to your teacher.

Name, address & telephone no. of GP;.....
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I consent to participate in the aforementioned activities and to Living Mindfully following the agreed protocol on box 2, to ensure my wellbeing.

Signed.....Date.....

Please return this form to:

Living Mindfully,
Office G6/7
Tanfield Lea Business Centre,
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Stanley,
Co. Durham
DH9 6DB

Telephone 01207 291212

email- enquiries@livingmindfully.co.uk