



## **IHPE Position Statement: Mindfulness**

### **HISTORY**

1. People have been practicing mindfulness for thousands of years. Mindfulness is a human quality, which can be trained and has been a component of Buddhism, Hinduism, Daoism and other contemplative traditions, dating back to 900 B.C.E.
2. Two fairly recent pioneers in mindfulness are **Thich Nhat Hanh** and **Jon Kabat-Zinn**, both have produced seminal works. Thich Nhat Hanh is a Vietnamese Buddhist Zen Master who has been bringing mindfulness to the West since the early 1970s, developing new ways to apply ancient wisdom to the challenges of modern life. Jon Kabat-Zinn is an American professor emeritus of medicine (University of Massachusetts). He developed a *Mindfulness-based Stress Reduction* programme (MBSR) in 1979, for long-term medical conditions, which continues to be offered at the University of Massachusetts Medical Center and worldwide. In the 1990s, a team of psychologists interested in the application of MBSR for depression developed mindfulness-based cognitive therapy (MBCT) in the UK.
3. Mindfulness has continued to grow in popularity across a range of settings from the workplace, schools and the health service, to prisons and the police force. It is practiced by individuals and groups, face to face, online, through apps and books.

### **DEFINITIONS**

4. There are a range of definitions.

*"I define mindfulness as the practice of being fully present and alive, body and mind united. Mindfulness is the energy that helps us to know what is going on in the present moment."* **Thich Nhat Hanh**

*"Mindfulness means paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally."* **Jon Kabat-Zinn**

*"Mindfulness means paying attention to what's happening in the present moment in the mind, body and external environment, with an attitude of curiosity and kindness."* **Mindful Nation UK**

*"A natural, trainable human capacity to bring attention and awareness to all experiences. It is equally open to whatever is present in a given moment with attitudes of curiosity, friendliness, compassion, and discernment in the service of suffering less, enjoying greater well-being, and leading a meaningful, rewarding life."* **Christina Feldman and Willem Kuyken**

*"...Instead of being on automatic and mindless, mindfulness helps us awaken, and by reflecting on the mind we are enabled to make choices and thus change becomes possible."* **Daniel Siegel**

## **EVIDENCE BASE**

5. The evidence base for mindfulness has continued to grow, with an exponential increase in research publications since the late 1990s. However, not all the research is of a high standard. As with other research, it is important to view with a critical eye.
6. In 2015, the Mindfulness All Party Parliamentary Group (MAPPG) reported on the evidence for mindfulness in the workplace, education, health and criminal justice system, making recommendations for implementation, resourcing and further research across all of these sectors.
7. Mindfulness-based interventions have been shown to improve health outcomes across a range of clinical and non-clinical populations with the strongest evidence for the prevention of relapse in depression, pain and addiction.
8. There is a need for further research to build the evidence base. The MAPPG report has clear recommendations. Mindfulness practice has the potential to improve certain important health behaviours, including diet and exercise. However, robust research needs to be funded.

## **MINDFULNESS TEACHERS**

9. There is a great variation in the quality of mindfulness teachers. It is important that they have had appropriate training so that they are competent and confident to teach others.

*"...the quality of MBSR as an intervention is only as good as the MBSR instructor and his or her understanding of what is required to deliver a truly mindfulness-based programme."* **Jon Kabat-Zinn.**

Participants should take care in choosing a teacher. Similarly, as there is considerable variation in the quality of books and online courses – care is needed in choosing appropriately.

10. It is important as health promoters that we do not just concentrate on individually focused activities without also addressing the underlying social determinants. Supportive environments should be created as envisioned in the Ottawa Charter. Health promoting schools, workplaces and local communities should be encouraged. This would include dedicated space and management support for mindfulness practice.

## **Resources**

### **General**

Campion J (2019) Public mental health: Evidence, practice and commissioning. London: Royal Society for Public Health.

Feldman C and Kuyken W (2019) Mindfulness: Ancient Wisdom Meets Modern Psychology. London: The Guildford Press.

The Mindfulness Initiative (2019) Fieldbook for Mindfulness Innovators. Sheffield: The Mindfulness Initiative.

The Mindfulness Initiative (2019) Health, Wellbeing & Mindfulness. Sheffield: The Mindfulness Initiative.

Goleman D and Davidson R (2018) The Science of Meditation. How to Change Your Brain, Mind and Body. London: Penguin Life.

Doty J. (2016) Into the Magic Shop: A neurosurgeon's true story of the life-changing magic of mindfulness. London: Yellow Kite.

Mindfulness All-Party Parliamentary Group (2015) MINDFUL NATION UK.  
[www.themindfulnessinitiative.org/mindful-nation-report](http://www.themindfulnessinitiative.org/mindful-nation-report)

Williams M.G., Kabat-Zinn J (Editors) (2013) Mindfulness: Diverse Perspectives on its Meaning, Origins and Applications. London and New York. Routledge.

Williams M, Penman D. (2011) Mindfulness: a practical guide to finding peace in a frantic world. London: Piatkus.

Parlour T. (2010) An Exploration of Ki Meditation. Volume One: Principles and Practice. ISBN-13: 978-1447781219

Hanh T N. (2008) The Miracle of Mindfulness: The Classic Guide to Meditation (Classic Edition). London: Rider.

Sapolsky R.M. (2004) Why Zebras Don't Get Ulcers. New York. St. Martin's Griffin.

Sogen O. (2002) An Introduction to Zen Training. Vermont: Tuttle Publishing.

Kabat-Zinn J. (1990) Full Catastrophe Living. London: Piatkus.

Tohei K. (1978) Ki in Daily Life. Tokyo: Ki No Kenkyukai H.Q.

## Health

Tickell A., Ball S., Bernard P. et al. (2019). The Effectiveness of Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) in Real-World Healthcare Services. *Mindfulness*.

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s12671-018-1087-9>

Dunning. D.L., Griffiths, K., Kuyken, W., Crane, C., Foulkes, L., Parker, J., & Dalgleish, T. (2018). The effects of mindfulness based interventions on cognition and mental health in children and adolescents - a meta analysis of randomized controlled trials. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*. 60(3):244-258

National Institute of Health and Clinical Excellence (2009). Depression in adults: recognition and management (updated April 2018) (Clinical Guideline No. 90).

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg90>

Kuyken, W., Warren. F., Taylor, R.S., Whalley, B., Crane, C., Bondolfi, G. & Dalgleish, T. (2016). Efficacy and moderators of mindfulness-based cognitive therapy (MBCT) in prevention of depressive relapse: an individual patient data meta-analysis from randomized trials. *Journal of the American Medical Association: Psychiatry*. 73(6):565-74.

Kuyken W, Hayes R, Barrett B, Byng R, Dalgleish T, Kessler D, et al. (2015) The effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of mindfulness-based cognitive therapy compared with maintenance antidepressant treatment in the prevention of depressive relapse/recurrence: results of a randomised controlled trial (the PREVENT study). *Health Technol Assess* 2015;19(73)

Strauss C, Cavanagh K, Oliver A, Pettman D. (2014) Mindfulness-based interventions for people diagnosed with a current episode of an anxiety or depressive disorder: A meta-analysis of randomised controlled trials. *PLoS One* 9:e96110.

Birch V, Penman D. (2013). *Mindfulness for Health. A practical guide to relieving pain, reducing stress and restoring wellbeing*. London: Piatkus.

Krusche A., Cyhlarova, E. & Williams, J.M.G. (2013). Mindfulness online: an evaluation of the feasibility of a web-based mindfulness course for stress, anxiety and depression. *BMJ* 3(11). <http://dx.doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2013-003498>

Spek AA, van Ham N C, Nyklíček I. (2013) Mindfulness-based therapy in adults with an autism spectrum disorder: a randomized controlled trial. *Research in Developmental Disabilities*. 34:246–53.

Gilbert D, Waltz J (2010). Mindfulness and Health Behaviors. *Mindfulness*;1(4):227-234.

### **Schools/Children/Young people**

Weare, K (2019) Mindfulness and Contemplative Approaches in Education. *Current Opinion in Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsy.2019.06.001>

Hanh T N, Weare K (2017) *Happy Teachers Change the World: A Guide to Cultivating Mindfulness in Education*. San Francisco: Parallax.

Zenner C, Herrnleben-Kurz S, Walach H. (2014) Mindfulness-Based Interventions in schools—a systematic review and meta-analysis. *Frontiers in psychology*. 5:603.

Weare, K. (2013), "Developing mindfulness with children and young people: a review of the evidence and policy context", *Journal of Children's Services*, Vol. 8 No. 2, pp. 141-153. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JCS-12-2012-0014>

MYRIAD - a school research project.  
<http://myriadproject.org/>

### **Workplace**

Chaskalson, M, Reitz, M (2018). *Mind Time: How ten mindful minutes can enhance your work, health and happiness*. London. HarperNonFiction

Heckenberg, R.A., Eddy, P., Kent, S. & Wright. B.J. (2018) Do workplace-based mindfulness meditation programs improve physiological indices of stress? A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Journal of Psychosomatic Research* (114): 62-71.

Janssen, M, Heerkens, Y, Kuijer, W, Van der Heijden, B, Engels, J (2018) Effects of Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction on employees' mental health: A systematic review. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0191332>

The Mindfulness Initiative. Private Sector Working Group (2016) *Building the case for mindfulness in the workplace*. Sheffield: The Mindfulness Initiative.

Chapman-Clarke M Ed. (2016). *Mindfulness in The Workplace: An evidence-based approach to improving wellbeing and maximizing performance*. London: Kogan Page.

Goleman, D (2013). *Focus: The Hidden Driver of Excellence*. London. Bloomsbury.

Chaskalson, M (2011). *The Mindful Workplace: Developing Resilient Individuals and Resonant Organizations with MBSR*. West Sussex, UK. Wiley-Blackwell.

### **Criminal Justice System**

A summary of evidence relating to the impact of mindfulness on people in prison and on probation.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/mindfulness-in-prison-and-probation>

Fitzhugh H, Michaelides G, Connolly S, Daniels K. (2019) Mindfulness in policing: A randomised controlled trial of two online mindfulness resources across five forces in England and Wales. Coventry. College of Policing Ltd.  
[https://whatworks.college.police.uk/Research/Documents/Mindfulness\\_RCT\\_report.pdf](https://whatworks.college.police.uk/Research/Documents/Mindfulness_RCT_report.pdf)

Maul F (2019). Radical Responsibility: How to Move Beyond Blame, Fearlessly Live Your Highest Purpose, and Become an Unstoppable Force for Good. Boulder, Colorado. Sounds True Inc.

Mindfulness in prisons work USA  
<https://www.prisonmindfulness.org/>

### **Organisations**

Mindfulness All-Party Parliamentary Group (MAPPG)  
<https://www.themindfulnessinitiative.org/>

The British Association of Mindfulness-Based Approaches  
<https://bamba.org.uk/>

Mindfulness-based cognitive therapy (MBCT) - International listing  
<https://www.accessmbct.com/>

Mindfulness in Schools Project (MiSP)  
<https://mindfulnessinschools.org/>

Mental Health Foundation- mindfulness campaign site and on-line short course  
<https://bemindful.co.uk/>

### **On-line resources**

Mindfulnet  
<http://mindfulnet.org/>

Documentary exploring MBSR in 1993  
<https://billmoyers.com/content/healing-from-within/>

Newman K (2019) Free Mindfulness Apps Worthy of Your Attention.  
<https://www.mindful.org/free-mindfulness-apps-worthy-of-your-attention/>

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