



Mindfulness – An 8 Week Introductory Course

Week 1 – Autopilot

HANDOUT 1.3 – Homework Record and notes

Name: _____ Date Commencing: _____

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Meditations						
Body Scan with Audio						
Raisin exercise (if you wish)						
Mindful Behaviour						
Eat 1 entire meal mindfully as you did the raisin						
Mindful Awareness of a routine daily activity (e.g. brushing teeth)						



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Week 1 – Autopilot

HANDOUT 1.3 – Homework Record and notes

Daily Notes on Meditations

Mon: _____
 Tue: _____
 Wed: _____
 Thu: _____
 Fri: _____
 Sat: _____
 Sun: _____

Any Other Notes or Comments:



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Week 2 - Dealing with Barriers

Teaching Agenda

Welcome

Meditation Practice - Body Scan Med.

- Enquiry in pairs or groups

Homework Review

Meditation Practice - 10 min. of mindful breathing ex.

- Enquiry

Exercise - Thoughts and feelings

- You are Walking Down the Street.
- Exercise Discussion

Explain Pleasant Events Calendar

Set Home practice

- Daily - Body Scan Meditation
- 10 minutes Mindfulness of Breathing (without CD, per shames)
- Bring attention to a different routine activity
- Keeping a daily record of a pleasant experience.

Take Questions

Materials Needed:

Whiteboard or Flipchart & Markers

Home Practices:

- 45 Minute Body Scan Meditation
- 10 Minutes Mindfulness of breath
- Mindfulness of Routine Activity
- Pleasant Experiences Calendar

Handouts

- 2.1 - Summary of Session 2
- 2.2 - Body Scan Text
- 2.3 - Home Practice Instructions
- 2.4 - Home Practice Record
- 2.5 - Pleasant Events Calendar



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Week 2 - Dealing with Barriers

Teaching Material - Walking Down the Street Exercise -

Materials needed:

Whiteboard or flipchart

Markers

Exercise:

Close your eyes and imagine...

You're walking down the street and on the other side of the street you see someone you know. You smile and wave. The person just doesn't seem to notice and walks by.

Become aware of what's going through your mind, the thoughts, feelings, and any sensations you might have.

Open your eyes and describe anything you experienced. It might be something like, "I was upset (feeling) at not being acknowledged" (thought column) - "if you want to be that way, be that way" (thought column) - "fine if that's how you feel, I don't care" (feeling) - "you must have seen me do what you want" (thought) - "I was hurt" (feeling) - "I felt unwanted & ignored" (feeling) - "nobody likes me" - (thought) - "my thinking would be very negative and every time there would be even more negative thoughts" (thoughts and feelings)

Note how the same situation elicits many different thoughts and interpretations - hence many different feelings.

This observation is used as a springboard for discussion of how emotional reactions are often the product of our interpretation of events.

Importance:

- Thoughts are not Facts
- Negative thinking (interpretation) can be a warning sign of an oncoming increase in negative thought patterns
- Awareness of the above gives an opportunity to "check in" on healthiness of thoughts.



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Week 2 - Dealing with Barriers

Handout 2.1 - Summary of Session 2

The aim of this program is to learn to be more aware, more often, of ourselves and the environment around us.

A large cause of our inability to be Mindful consistently in each moment is the natural human automatic tendency to judge our experiences in an instant. And all too often, they are judged as being "not quite right" — that it is not what we expected, not what we want or think "should" be happening, or it's simply not good enough.

These snap judgments can lead us, without thinking, on autopilot, down very well used paths of thought to opinions about what **should** be, fair and unfair, fault and blame, what needs to be changed, how to fix it, or how things could or should be different. With this distraction, we are led away from awareness of the present moment. More importantly, falling into Autopilot often leads down the same road to the same automatic reactions of the past preventing the opportunity to **choose** an action which might be more constructive than the option presented as fat accompil by our Autopilot.

We can regain our choice of options by being Mindful. First, we are able to view and acknowledge the reality, ie FACTS, of the situation, without being immediately drawn into our automatic thought patterns of the past. This allows us to view the situation from a different perspective and perhaps see other alternatives.

The Body Scan Meditation provides an opportunity to practice bringing an interested and friendly awareness to the way things are - in each moment, practicing "Being Mode", without the need to do anything other than to just observe.

There is no goal to be achieved other than to focus your awareness, just as the instructions suggest. It is not about doing it "well" or being "skilled" - achieving some special state of relaxation is *not* a goal of the exercise. The goal is simply to experience what you experience. In fact, noises and distractions would be part of you experience in that moment.



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Week 2 - Dealing with Barriers

HANDOUT 2.2 - Tips for the Body Scan

- There is no "goal" for the Body Scan – nor a right or wrong way to do it. It is simply to experience and be aware of what is happening at the moment! Just be aware – they are your experiences! You may fall asleep, lose concentration, focus on the wrong bit of body, or not feel anything in an area. All are perfectly fine! These are your experiences in the moment. Just be aware of them.

- If your mind is wandering a lot, simply note the thoughts as passing events (like bubbles, balloons, or train cars) and then bring the mind gently back to the Body Scan and the part of the body where you were.

- Let go of preconceived ideas of "relaxation", "zennning out", "success", "failure", "doing it really well", or other ideas you may have had about Mindfulness or Meditation. This is a very personal introspective skill.

- The only discipline involved is regular and frequent practice. Just do it with an attitude of openness and curiosity, becoming more aware of yourself.

- You can imagine Meditations as a seed you have planted. The more you poke around and interfere, and check that it is growing, the less it will be able to develop. So with the Body Scan, just give it the right conditions—peace and quiet, regular and frequent practice, and it's development will take care of itself. That is all.

- Try approaching your experience in each moment with the attitude: "OK, that's just the way things are right now." Unpleasant thoughts, feelings, memories or body sensations will occur. Fighting or trying to rid yourself of the upsetting feelings will only increase their insistence and distract you from doing anything else – like just being aware. Simply acknowledge the mental event and refocus on the area of the Body Scan.

- It is quite normal to be worried that you aren't doing it correctly or to find it not very pleasant (particularly the longer meditations). We are not used to such intense focus on something with so little stimulation. That is why we practice. Once you "get it", you will totally "get it".

- Be aware, be non-striving, be in the moment and accept things as they are. Just do it and enjoy.



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Week 2 - Dealing with Barriers

Handout 2.3 - Mindfulness of the Breath – Meditation Text

Settle into a comfortable sitting position, either on a straight-backed chair or on a soft surface on the floor. If you use a chair, it is very helpful to sit away from the back of the chair, so that your spine is straight. If you sit on the floor, it is helpful if your knees actually touch the floor. However, most important is that you feel comfortable, ready to be Mindful and have thought about your intention for the Meditation.

Allow your back to adopt an erect, dignified, and comfortable posture. If sitting on a chair, place your feet flat on the floor, with your legs uncrossed. Gently close your eyes. If you would like a blanket or pillow, please make yourself as comfortable as possible. This time is your special time for you to enjoy.

Bring your awareness to the physical sensations of your body by focusing your attention on the points of touch and pressure where your body makes contact with the floor or whatever you are sitting on. Spend a moment or two exploring these sensations, just as in the Body Scan.

Now move your awareness to the changing patterns of physical sensations in the lower abdomen as the breath moves in and out of your body. When you first try this practice, you might find it helpful to place your hand on your lower abdomen to become aware of sensations where your hand makes contact with your abdomen. Once “tuned in” to the physical sensations in this area of your body in this way, you can remove your hand and continue to focus on the sensations in the abdominal wall.

Focus your awareness on the sensations of movement and stretching as the abdominal wall rises with each in-breath and as it falls with each out-breath. As best you can, see if your attention can follow the changing physical sensations in the lower abdomen all the way through your body as the breath enters your nose on the in breath and all the way through the body again as the breath leaves your body on the out-breath. You might like to picture your breath as a wave, or a colour, flowing through your body. Perhaps you will notice the slight pauses between one in-breath and the following out-breath, and between one out-breath and the following in-breath.

There is no need to try to control the breathing in any way—simply let the breath breathe itself. As best you can, also bring the attitude of curiosity and “allowing” to the rest of your experience. There is nothing to be fixed, no particular state to be achieved. As best you can, simply allow your experience to be your experience without needing or wanting it to be other than it is.



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Week 2 - Dealing with Barriers

Handout 2.3 - Mindfulness of the Breath (cont. p. 2 of 2)

Sooner or later (usually sooner), your mind will wander away from the focus on the breath in the lower abdomen to thoughts, memories, planning, daydreams, drifting along, what is for dinner—whatever. This is perfectly OK—it’s simply what minds do. It’s not a mistake or a failure. When you notice that your awareness is no longer on the breath, just gently note the fact and you can congratulate yourself—you have come back and are once more aware of your experience! You may want to acknowledge briefly where the mind has been (“Ah, there’s thinking”). Then, gently guide the awareness back to focus on the physical sensations in the lower abdomen, renewing your intention to pay attention to the ongoing in-breath or out-breath, whichever you find happens next.

However often you notice that the mind has wandered (and this will happen over and over and over again), each time just congratulate yourself on noticing and reconnecting with your experience in the moment (after all, it is part of the experience), and gently bring the attention back to the breath, simply returning to follow, in awareness, the changing pattern of physical sensations that come with each in-breath and out-breath.

As best you can, bring a quality of kindness to your awareness, perhaps seeing the repeated wanderings of the mind as the opportunities they are - to bring patience and gentle curiosity to your experience. Don’t try to force your mind back. It will come back when it is ready.

Continue with the practice for 15 minutes, or longer if you wish, perhaps reminding yourself occasionally that the intention is simply to be aware of your experience in each moment, as best you can. You are using the breath as an anchor to gently reconnect with the here and now each time you notice that your mind has wandered and is no longer down in the abdomen, following the breath.

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Week 2 - Dealing with Barriers

HANDOUT 2.4 – About The Breath

Breath is a part of life we just take for granted – although we do it from the moment we are born until our last breath. The breath is always there every moment, moving by itself like a river, sending the air we need – always there in the background of our lives.

Have you ever noticed how the breath changes with our moods—short and shallow when we're tense or angry, faster when we're excited, that slight intake when awed, slow and full when we're happy, or perhaps breathless when we're afraid? It's there with us all the time.

This ever-present but subtle activity can be used as a tool, like an anchor, to bring stability to the body and mind when we deliberately choose to become aware of it. We can tune into it at any moment during everyday life – no matter what we are doing or where we are.

Usually, we're not in touch with our breathing—it's just there, forgotten. So one of the first things we do in mindfulness based trainings is to get in touch with it. We notice how the breath changes with our moods, our thoughts, our body movements. We don't have to control the breath. We just want to notice it and get to know it, like a friend. All that we strive to do is to observe, watch, and feel the breath with a sense of interest, in a relaxed manner.

With practice, we become increasingly more aware of our breathing. This is very useful. We can use it to direct our attention to different aspects of our lives. For example, to relax tense muscles, or to focus on a situation that requires our attention. Breath can also be used to help deal with pain, anger, relationships or the stress of daily life. During this program, we will be exploring this in more detail.

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Week 2 - Dealing with Barriers

HANDOUT 2.5 – Homework for Week Following Session 2

- Body Scan Meditation daily for 6 days. Make a note of your reactions on the Homework Record Form.
- At varied times, practice 10–15 min. Mindfulness of Breath for 6 days.
 - Being with your breath in this way on a regular basis builds the awareness of what it feels like to be connected and present in the moment without having to do anything.
- Complete Handout 2.7- Pleasant Events Calendar (one entry per day).
 - This is a Practice to become really aware of the thoughts, feelings, and body sensations which occur around a pleasant occurrence. Notice and record, as soon as you can, in detail, the nature and location of bodily sensations (e.g. tingling in stomach, a slight smile) or thoughts (e.g., use the actual words or images in which the thoughts came)
- Choose a new routine activity to be especially mindful of (e.g., brushing your teeth, washing dishes, taking a shower, taking out rubbish, shopping, drinking a coffee, etc).



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Week 2 - Dealing with Barriers

HANDOUT 2.6 – Homework Record for Week Following Session 2

Name: _____ Date Commencing: _____

Meditations

- Body Scan Tape for 6 days 1x day - note reactions
- Mindfulness of Breath 10-15 Min. 1x day – different times

Mindful Behaviour

- Pleasant Event Calendar 1x day
- Mindful Awareness - of a routine daily activity (e.g. brushing teeth)
- Eat 1 meal mindfully

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun

Notes:

Mon: _____
 Tues: _____
 Wed: _____
 Thurs _____
 Fri: _____
 Sat _____
 Sun: _____



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Week 2 - Dealing with Barriers

HANDOUT 2.7 – Pleasant Events Calendar

Name: _____ Date Commencing: _____

Be aware of a pleasant event at the time it is happening. Use these questions to focus your awareness on the details of the experience as it is happening. You can write it down later.

What was the experience?	Were you aware of the pleasant feelings <i>while</i> the event was happening?	How did your body feel during this experience? (As much detail as possible)	What moods, feelings, and thoughts accompanied this event?	What thoughts are in your mind now as you write this down?
<i>Example: Driving home I saw a complete rainbow.</i>	Yes	<i>Smile at of corners of mouth, excited tremor, breathless</i>	<i>Amazement – how rare to see a complete one – how lucky I am</i>	<i>The same but also how I appreciated and still do paying attention to it.</i>
Monday				
Tuesday				
Wednesday				
Thursday				

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Additional: Notes

What was the experience?	Were you aware of the pleasant feelings <i>while</i> the event was happening?	How did your body feel during this experience? (As much detail as possible)	What moods, feelings, and thoughts accompanied this event?	What thoughts are in your mind now as you write this down?
<i>Example: Driving home I saw a complete rainbow.</i>	Yes	<i>Smile at of corners of mouth, excited tremor, breathless</i>	<i>Amazement – how rare to see a complete one – how lucky I am</i>	<i>The same but also how I appreciated and still do paying attention to it.</i>
Friday				
Saturday				
Sunday				
Additional Notes				