

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) Online Course ~ Spring-2021

Overview

This 8-week, 9-session MBSR curriculum is based on systematic and intensive training in mindfulness meditation and is adapted for online participation. The core curriculum, developed over the course of four decades at UMASS Medical School & Brown University, is designed to teach you how to practice, integrate and apply mindfulness in your everyday life to a range of ordinary and extraordinary challenges.

You will learn how to draw on your own inner resources and natural capacity for greater health and balance, ease and peace of mind.

Class Logistics

- Free Information Session Tuesday, March 9, 6:00 pm – 7:30 pm. [Register](#)
- MBSR 8-Week Spring-2021 Course:
 - Classes meet Tuesdays online (via Zoom) every week (March 16 – May 4) for 2 hours and 15 minutes. Classes 1 & 8 may last longer.
 - An All-Day Online Silent Retreat will be part of this course held on Saturday (April 24) from 10:00 am – 4:00 pm.
- The bulk of each class will be spent learning different forms of mindfulness practice: yoga, sitting, body scan, walking meditation, mindful eating and communication.
- We will discuss stress physiology & psychology (no surprise!). You will be invited to explore behavioral, physical, emotional and cognitive stress patterns and more skillful responses to those reactive patterns. The course will also address the unfolding and unique stresses and challenges of the COVID-19 global pandemic.
- Each class will contain periods of mindfulness practice, group discussions, small group discussions, and practices/exercises related to the weekly topic.
- You will receive audio files of guided meditations via Dropbox to support your home practice. Home Practice sheets will be provided in .pdf format every week.
- Wear comfortable clothing and dress as if we were meeting in person.
- Have a yoga mat or blanket available.
- There will be one 5-10 minute break in each class, and you can have water, a light snack, or medicine as needed. You're encouraged to eat something light before class and step away from your screen as needed.
- Plan to set aside **30-60 minutes** for your daily home practice. This is a critical part of integrating mindfulness in your life.
- If you know you'll have to miss more than 2 classes during the series, please sign up for an 8-week series at a later date.
- There are no guarantees with MBSR, nor is it a quick fix. It is an intensive exploration of the human capacity to direct our attention to the present moment, nonjudgmentally, and has been the basis for decades of research.
- If you can't attend a class or know you will be late, please contact Scott MacGregor at 828.551.1142 (scottmac321@gmail.com).

Cost & Registration

The course fee is \$350.00 and registration opens about 8 weeks prior to the Information Session.

- If you have paid for the course, and you attend the Information Session and decide the course is not right for you for any reason, you will receive a full refund. However, you must notify one of the instructors via email by March 3.

A limited number of spaces for individuals needing financial assistance are available in every class series. Requests must be approved by the instructor.

Program Risks and Benefits

Physical risks

- The primary physical risk is connected to practicing mindful yoga. If you hear guidance that you know is not healthy for your body or condition, or if you are feeling pain, please practice self-kindness and don't push beyond your limitations.
- If you're currently working with a doctor or physical therapist, it can be helpful to discuss yoga pose limitations in advance with them.

Emotional risks

- Feelings of sadness, anger or fear could seem stronger at the beginning of the course because you may be paying attention in a conscious way to these for the first time.
- A history of trauma, abuse or addiction may heighten these reactions. Please tell me if this is true for you, and we can determine together if this is the right time for you to take this class.

Social risks

- It may be a challenge to set aside the space and time to engage in home practices, so it's important to request support from family, friends and/or coworkers.
- You may find you relate to others in new ways. Sometimes people are uncomfortable with the "new you."

Provider Referrals

- If a healthcare provider referred you, we may ask you to sign a release so we can communicate with them about your participation in MBSR.

Time

- Finding time to make a new habit of mindfulness practice can be challenging. It's normal to think there isn't enough time to practice. However, we sometimes find that setting aside time for practice can increase the sense of spaciousness in the remainder of your day.
- Please sign-on to Zoom and the class early to settle in before we begin. The Zoom call will be available by 5:50 pm for each class session.

Potential Benefits

- Research has linked MBSR to a number of health outcomes, including improved sleep, immune system function, memory, emotion regulation, decreased anxiety and depression, and improved social connections.
- Increased awareness and concentration, e.g. less mind wandering
- A quieter mind, a sense of ease and balance
- New ways to cope with difficulty, pain, stress, or suffering
- Improved self-care, and a reduction in work stress/burnout

Thank you for your interest in MBSR. Even if you recognize this isn't the right time, or program, for you, we appreciate your willingness to investigate it as an option for greater health and well-being.