

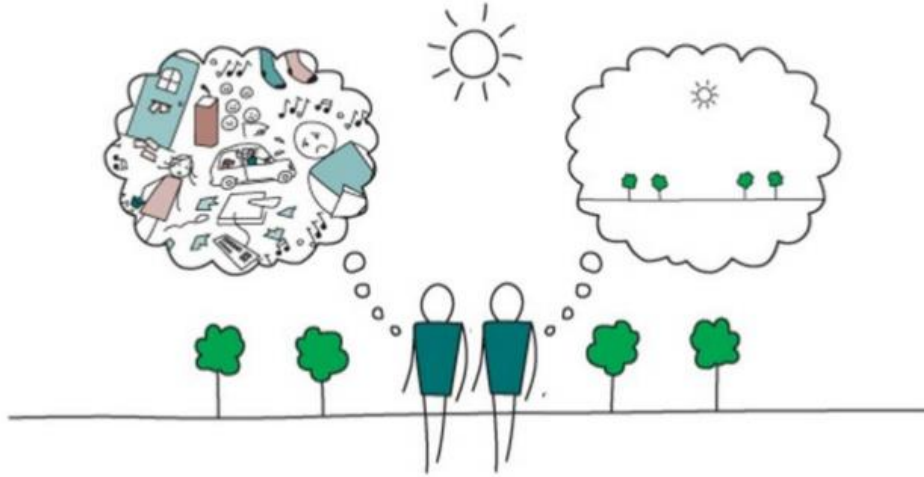
Week Two: Mindfulness

Today's Agenda:

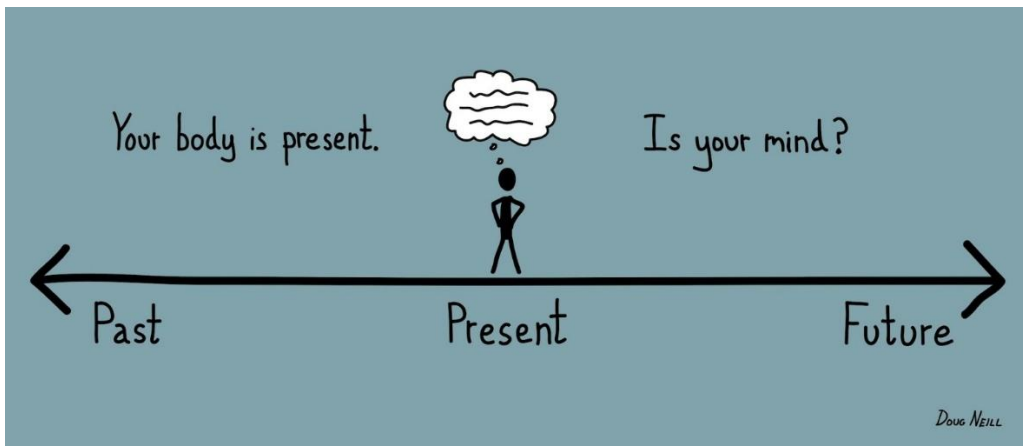
- Check-in
- Homework Review
- Benefits of Mindfulness
- Mindfulness
- Mindfulness Practice

Today's Packet includes:

- Benefits of Mindfulness
- Mindfulness
- RAIN Acronym
- Mindfulness Practice Exercises
- Homework



Mind Full, or Mindful?



1)

Mindfulness can yield tremendous psychological, emotional and physical health benefits.

But how exactly will mindfulness benefit you?

1. Stability of Mind

Mindfulness benefits include a much more balanced outlook on life, and a state of mind that is less likely to bounce around from one thought to the next.

2. Flexible Awareness

Mindfulness will help train you to take command of your awareness, so that you can shift your attention from depressing or angry thoughts to more positive ones with greater ease.

3. Self-Awareness

Mindfulness trains you to become aware of what is going on inside you and how your inner world of thoughts and feelings is reacting to the events that are taking place in the world around you. When you develop this kind of awareness, you will be more aware of inner disturbances if they arise, and therefore more able to take steps to maintain a positive outlook if they do. Oftentimes, stress and anxiety build up over a period of time because we are not paying attention to what is going on inside us.

4. Non Reactivity

Through mindfulness, and especially through the practice of mindfulness meditation, you learn to observe your thoughts and feelings and any environmental circumstances with a more detached outlook. You learn to stop labelling the events in your life as “bad” or “irritating” or “boring” and so on. Instead, you learn to simply accept things as they are without reacting to them. Of course, this does not mean that you stop working to change the things in your life that problematic for you, but it does mean that you will not be so burdened by problems that you may once have deemed to be intolerable. Non reactivity is summed up nicely by the ever popular “serenity prayer.”



5 Top Benefits of Mindfulness Meditation



MORE PATIENCE

In our lightning-fast instant gratification culture, it's easy to get distracted. Mindfulness teaches us to practice patience so it comes more naturally to us when we need it.



BETTER FOCUS & PRODUCTIVITY

It's tempting to get caught up in social media, interruptions, and unhelpful thoughts. Mindfulness helps us recognize distracting thoughts or impulses and let them pass without indulging them.



INCREASED COMPASSION

Mindfulness broadens compassion for ourselves and others by helping us suspend self-judgment and bring our attention back to the present moment.



HEIGHTENED BODY AWARENESS

We tend to lose awareness of what our body is feeling when we get too busy or distracted. With mindful awareness, we can listen to our bodies and react in healthier, purposeful ways.



LESS STRESS & ANXIETY

By learning how to be more choiceful about when to think about what, we can rewire our brains to reduce stress and anxiety.

DBT SKILLS MINDFULNESS OVERVIEW

Mindfulness is a quality of attention, awareness, and presence you bring to every day life.

Mindfulness Skill Sets

What Skills - What you do to be mindful

- Observe
- Describe
- Participate

How Skills – How you do what to be mindful

- Non-judgmentally
 - One-mindfully
 - Effectively
-

OBSERVE

Observing brings you into the present

Steps to observing

- Focus on one thing at a time.
- Notice on the experience without describing it.
- Observe things inside of yourself
- Observe things outside yourself

When a thought comes along

- Just notice it
- Return your attention

Observing inside

- Step back and watch your mind
- See If a thought comes in
- Notice it

DESCRIBE

Describing is putting words to what you notice

- You can describe things outside of yourself
- You can describe things inside of yourself
- You can describe thoughts put them into categories like
 - Worry thoughts
 - Planning thoughts
 - Critical thoughts
- The key is being able to tell the difference between a thought and a fact
- Describe only what you observe
- Do not add to or subtract from what you see
- Do not make interpretations

DBT SKILLS MINDFULNESS OVERVIEW

Mindfulness is a quality of attention, awareness, and presence you bring to every day life.

PARTICIPATE

Participating is being present fully in whatever activity you are engaging in

- Throw yourself into an activity
- Become one with the activity
- Lose self-consciousness in an activity
- Participating is really hard

HOW SKILLS OVERVIEW

How skills refer to:

- How to Observe
- How to Describe
- How to Participate

How Skills Set

- Non-judgmentally
- One-mindfully
- Effectively

NON-JUDGMENTALLY

Judging is observing a fact and then adding an evaluation of good or bad to it.

Know the distinction between

- Observing and JUDGING
- Observing and DESCRIBING

JUDGING: Mary said something not true on purpose and she is bad for lying

DESCRIBING: Mary said something not true on purpose & there were consequences for lying.

Judging is a shorthand way to describe consequences

- NEGATIVE = "bad"
- POSITIVE = "good"

Judging short hand sometimes confuses the difference between-

- Judging consequences as good or bad
- Judging persons as good or bad

Problems with judgments

- Hard to react to the real world
- Causes unending problem emotions

Feeling Overwhelmed? Remember “RAIN”

Four steps to stop being so hard on ourselves.

R

Recognize
what's
going on

A

Allow the
experience
to be there,
just as it is

I

Investigate
with
kindness

N

Natural
awareness,
which comes
from not
identifying
with the
experience

Mindfulness Practice

You can do any activity mindfully...

Exercise 1: Conscious Observation

Pick up an object that you have lying around. Any mundane everyday object will do...a coffee cup or a pen for example. Hold it in your hands and allow your attention to be fully absorbed by the object. Observe it. Don't assess it or think about it, or study it intellectually. Just observe it for what it is.

Note: You can describe the objects by using only what you know and nothing more.

You'll feel a sense of heightened "nowness" during this exercise. Conscious observation can really give you a feeling of "being awake". Notice how your mind quickly releases thoughts of past or future, and how different it feels to be in the moment. Conscious observation is a form of meditation. It's subtle, but powerful. Try it...by practicing mindfulness in this way you'll really start to sense what mindfulness is all about.

Exercise 2:

One person will say a 3 letter word. The person next to them will say a 3 letter word that starts with the middle letter of the previous person's word. Group members continue doing this until everyone has participated several times.

Notice if your mind jumps into the future and comes up with a word, tries to guess what letter you might get, or worries about what others might think if you have difficulty coming up with a word. Each time one of those thoughts appears, gently and nonjudgmentally bring your mind back to the present.

You can do this activity by yourself. You can also choose longer words to do this activity with.

Exercise 3:

Choose one of your 5 senses: sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch. Now notice your experience of that sense in the present moment. For example, if you choose sound, notice the different noises you hear. Be aware of their changes in pitch, intensity, and volume. Notice which sounds start and which ones stop. Notice if there's silence.

If you notice that your attention moves away from the sounds you notice, gently bring it back. If you notice judgments about the sound, gently acknowledge the judgment and bring your attention back to the present moment.

Exercise 4: The Ten Second Count

This is more of an exercise in practicing concentration than it is in mindfulness, and it is a simple variation on exercise 1. In this exercise, rather than focusing on your breath, you just close your eyes and focus your attention on slowly counting to ten. If your concentration wanders of, start back at number one! For most people, it goes something like this...

“One...two...three...do I have to buy milk today or did John say he’d do it? Oh, whoops, I’m thinking.”

“One...two...three...four...this isn’t so hard after all... Oh no....that’s a thought! Start again.”

“One...two...three... now I’ve got it. I’m really concentrating now...”

Exercise 5:

The group leader sets a timer for 3 minutes.

Everyone takes out a pen and a piece of paper, and writes the alphabet on the left hand side of the page. Take the next 3 minutes is to write animals that start with each letter of the alphabet.

Notice any judgments that come up about yourself or your list of words. Notice any comparisons you make between yourself and your peers, notice any tendencies to generalize from this exercise to your intelligence or your abilities. Gently move your attention from them and return to the task at hand.

Exercise 6:

Try to be mindful during an activity that you do every day. For example, brushing your teeth...

Notice which hand you pick up the toothbrush with and how it feels in your hand. What color is your toothbrush? Notice which hand you pick up your toothpaste with and how it feels to unscrew the cap and squeeze the toothpaste onto the toothbrush. What color is your toothpaste? Which teeth do you put the toothbrush against first? How do your teeth feel as you brush them? What does the toothpaste taste like?



Mindfulness Apps for iPhone and Android



Calm

Runs on: iPhone and Android

Cost: Free (with in-app purchases)

This app offers both guided and unguided meditations with varying meditation lengths. The free '7 Days of Calm' teaches the basics of mindfulness meditation by breaking down meditation techniques in easy to learn 10 minute sessions. (Recommendation: try the 7 days of Calm, then use the one month free membership to dive into the 21 days of Calm to deepen your mindfulness understanding and practice)



Headspace

Runs on: iPhone and Android

Cost: Free (with in-app purchases)

Headspace is meditation made simple by learning meditation and mindfulness in just 10 minutes a day. The app offers both guided and unguided lessons that range from 2 to 60 minutes long.



Smiling Mind

Runs on: iPhone and Android

Cost: Free

Described as modern meditation for young people, Smiling Mind is an Australian not-for-profit organization that offers a series of free mindfulness-based meditations through online and mobile apps. When you sign up, you can specify your age (7-11, 12-15, 16-22 or adult) to get tailored meditations.

