

# What Is Mindfulness?

Mindfulness involves learning to direct our attention to our experience as it unfolds, moment by moment, with open-minded curiosity and acceptance. Rather than worrying about what *has* happened or *might* happen, it trains us to respond skilfully to whatever *is* happening right now, be that good or bad.



**Brain imaging studies** show that mindfulness practice reliably and profoundly alters the structure and function of the brain to improve the quality of thought, feeling and concern for others.

## What's the point of mindfulness?

In adults, mindfulness training has been proven time and again to improve health and wellbeing. It also helps people of all ages to learn more effectively, think more clearly, perform better and to feel calmer, less anxious and less depressed. Mindfulness is now recommended by the National Institute of Clinical Excellence, and GPs are referring adults to 8 week courses that reduce stress and help prevent recurrent depression. It is increasingly being used in business to improve staff wellbeing and satisfaction, in sports training to improve performance, and with children and young people and in schools to enhance wellbeing and learning.



## How do people learn mindfulness?

Mindfulness is always learned in a highly practical way, through experience rather than talk. We gradually learn to direct our attention in a more focused way to whatever is actually happening - whether it be our breathing, the sensations in our body, thoughts and feelings, or everyday activities such as walking and eating.



## Is it difficult?

At first the mind wanders constantly, but with practice we learn to sustain our attention and direct it more skilfully. This helps break the grip of unhelpful mental habits, judgements and impulses, making way for greater calm, and for more helpful, kinder and rational thinking about all aspects of life. However, this takes practice!



## What mindfulness IS

- A training in paying attention to experience as it happens
- A rigorously-researched treatment for anxiety and depression
- A way of enhancing well-being and performance
- Recommended by the National Institute of Clinical Excellence

# What is .b ?

**.b** stands for “Stop, Breathe and Be!”. This simple act of mindfulness provides the kernel of a nine lesson course for schools. Written by experienced classroom teachers and mindfulness practitioners, and evaluated positively by the Universities of Cambridge and Oxford Brookes, **.b** can be used in a wide range of contexts and age ranges, including adults.



## What makes **.b** distinctive?

**.b** was carefully crafted by classroom teachers to engage everyone, including the most cynical of student audiences. It is taught with striking visuals, film clips and activities that bring mindfulness to life without losing the expertise and integrity of classic mindfulness teaching.

## What are **.b**'s objectives?

**.b** aims to give students mindfulness as a life-skill. Students use it:

- to feel happier, calmer and more fulfilled
- to get on better with others
- to help them concentrate and learn better
- to help cope with stress and anxiety
- to perform better in music and sport.

## Who can teach **.b**?

**.b** has to be taught by teachers who themselves practise mindfulness regularly. An adult 8 week MBCT or MBSR course is a good start, although more experience is even better. After that you can sign up for a **.b** training course, which gives the skills, confidence and materials to teach **.b** effectively in classrooms.

*It's helped me to stop doing all that stupid stuff I do... and I like it*

*It helps me to gather up my thoughts. I can keep my mind focused, just get work done, and find the answer to the problems I face.*

**What **.b** ISN'T**

Boring • Hippie • Yoga • Religious • Therapy

For further information email [info@mindfulnessinschools.org](mailto:info@mindfulnessinschools.org)  
or visit [www.mindfulnessinschools.org](http://www.mindfulnessinschools.org)