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**Welcome to this MBSR Orientation!**

**What is Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction - MBSR?**

MBSR is an eight-week, evidence-based, psychoeducational program offering secular, intensive [mindfulness](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mindfulness) training; assisting people with a host of stress-related physical, emotional and psychological conditions. MBSR provides a practical approach to gaining a deeper level of awareness and insight into our lives as well as to how we relate to the experiences of our lives by cultivating and strengthening our ability to attend to the present moment - to what is really here – to the actual experience, instead of getting lost and entangled in our ruminations, thoughts and intricate often false narratives. It’s really about becoming more fully (and actively) engaged and present in all areas of one’s life. MBSR is group-based and highly experiential, using a combination of mindfulness [meditation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meditation), body awareness practices, [yoga](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mindful_Yoga), and the exploration of habitual patterns of behavior, thinking, feeling and action. MBSR is not a therapy!

MBSR was developed at the [University of Massachusetts](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_of_Massachusetts) [Medical Center](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/UMass_Memorial_Health_Care) in the 1979 by Dr. Jon Kabat-Zinn.

The 8- week class, along with regular and ongoing home practice, systematically trains attention - cultivating present moment (or moment-to-moment) awareness. With this greater level of awareness, it then becomes possible to discover and utilize one’s own inner resources for enhancing emotional regulation, stability and clarity, stress management, level of contentment and overall enthusiasm for life. Integrating mindfulness strategies and practices into one’s life has the potential to deeply transform one’s relationship towards their stress. MBSR offers essential coping skills for becoming resilient in both body and mind – helping one to more skillfully navigate through life’s inevitable challenges.

It is important to realize that MBSR ***is not a panacea***.

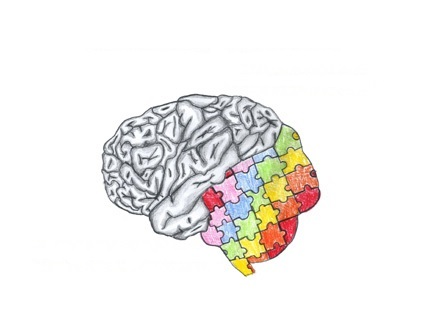
Although mindfulness is a powerful tool with the potential to provide us with many benefits, it is a compliment, not a replacement to modern medicine. There are ***no guarantees or predications as to a particular outcome*** – each person responds differently – however in general those who practice regularly and consistently, report more positive outcomes!

**Research**

* **University of Massachusetts** [www.umassmed.edu/mbsr-journalarticles](http://www.umassmed.edu/mbsr-journalarticles) -
* **Brown University** [www.brown.edu/public-health/mindfulness/research](http://www.brown.edu/public-health/mindfulness/research) -
* **University of Wisconsin – Richard Davidson** [www.centerforhealthyminds.org/about/founder-richard-davidson](http://www.centerforhealthyminds.org/about/founder-richard-davidson) -
* **Mindful Awareness Research Center – UCLA** <https://www.semel.ucla.edu/marc>

**Science**

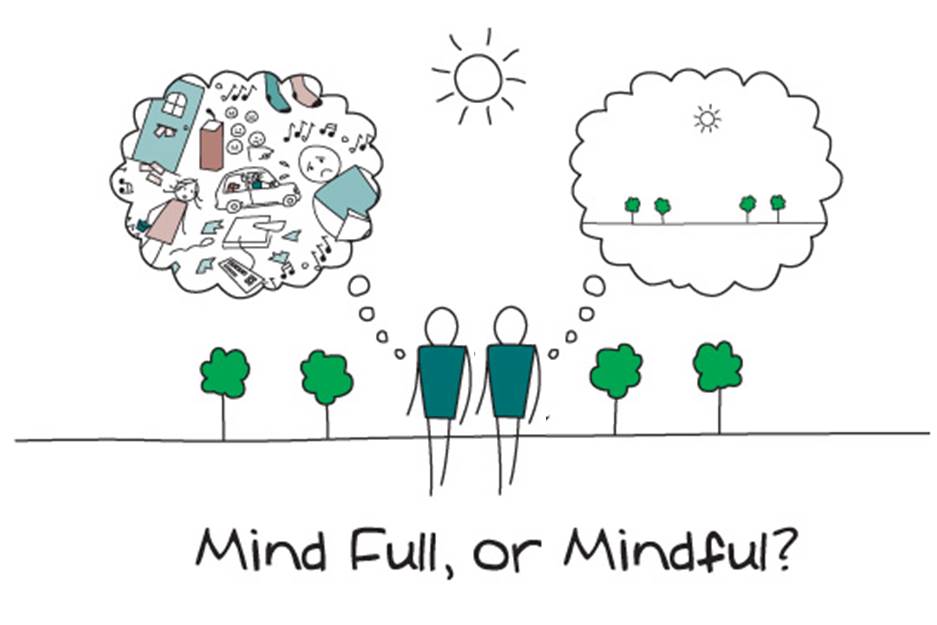
* **Positive Neuroplasticity** – the ability of the brain to change and grow - building new and stronger neuronal pathways based on repetitive behavior. (both positive and negative)
* **Brain Growth** – functional imaging reveals increase brain growth in regions of the brain associated with empathy, compassion, perspective taking, emotional regulation - mood, memory, planning and attention…to name a few - and a down- regulation and size of the ‘alarm center’ (amygdala)



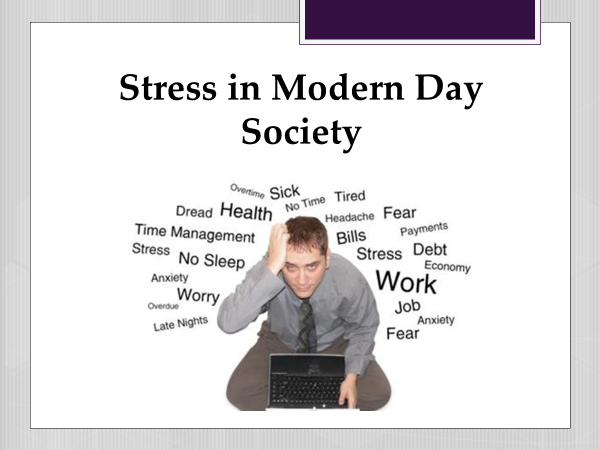
**Potential Benefits MBSR**

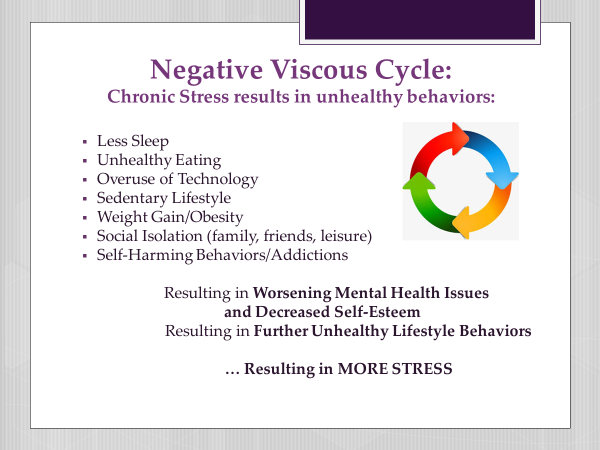
* Improved **emotional regulation and emotional balance**
* Enhanced **ability to cope** with - and ameliorate the secondary complications and effects of **chronic illness and stress**
* Enhanced **resiliency**
* Improved **sense of well-being**
* Improved **self-esteem**
* Increased ability to meet high stress situations with **calmness and clarity of mind**
* **Better able to care for oneself** in the midst of high stress demands
* Strengthens **attention**
* **Impulse control**
* Increased ability for **broader perspective taking**; **compassion and kindness**
* Increased feeling of **contentment**, **peacefulness and at ease**
* Improved sense of **self-efficacy and self-control**
* Prevents, reverse or **reduces symptoms of numerous** **disease processes**
  + Anxiety
  + Depression
  + PTSD
  + Chronic Pain
  + Fibromyalgia
  + Skin Disorders
  + Sleep Disorders
  + Hypertension
  + Heart Disease
  + Asthma
  + Cancers
  + Eating Disorders

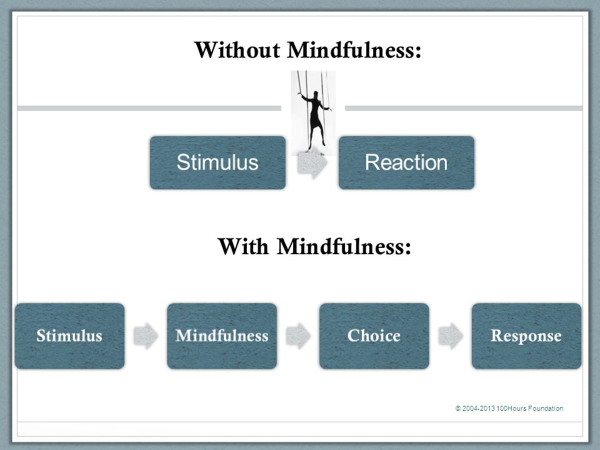
**What is Mindfulness?**

“The awareness that arises from paying attention in a particular way to the present moment, on purpose and without judgment.” JKZ





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**Potential Risks**

Engagement in MBSR Program may be seen as a risk to one’s lifestyle given time and commitment. It may exacerbate or bring into one’s awareness – more strongly- physical, emotional, psychological or relational issues

* Physical
* Emotional
* Psychological
* Social
* Time

**MBSR Class Guidelines**

**Confidentiality**

* Whatever is shared is to be held by the group alone.

Refraining from commenting to someone about what they shared in class.

**Self-care**

* Wear comfortable loose waisted clothing.
* Wear layers in order to adjust to temperature changes in your designated classroom space.
* Have a water bottle with you during class.
* Bring whatever props or items that you would like for necessary support and/or comfort
* \*Take care to listen to your body and its needs – (changing positions, opting out of a practice that is too emotionally or physically challenging in any way, using the rest room….whatever may be needed!)
* **\*Encouraged to contact me for support or guidance: 231-342-9634**

**Attendance**

* It is important to attend every class in order to achieve optimal benefit.
* Each week builds on the prior week’s practices and themes.
* Please call or notify Wendy if you will be missing a class for any reason.
* You will have access to a Zoom recording for your review should you need to miss a class
* If you will need to miss more than 2 classes it may be best to attend another session when you will be more available.

**Home Practice**

* Home practice is an integral part of the program.
* This may take approximately 45 minutes to one hour each day.
* This commitment to make time each day for practice will involve preparation logistically, socially and materially.
* The willingness to meet oneself in the face of resistance, fatigue, boredom, restlessness, fear, pain, or whatever may arise - is extremely important!
* \*You will be provided with a recording and a home assignment sheet each week.

**Recordings:**

All recordings for weekly practices can be found at, **www.mindfulnesstc.com** under **“Free Adult Meditations.”**

**Class Documents**

Weekly Home Practices can be found at [**www.mindfulnesstc.com**](http://www.mindfulnesstc.com)on the MBSR class page within “**Class Documents.”**

**Optional - but Recommended Daily Self-Care**

* 60 minutes of Daily Physical Activity (30-45 minutes 3-7 days/week should be aerobic in nature)
* Get outside and enjoy nature
* Get enough sleep
* Be thoughtful of time spent on technology
* Eat a healthy diet
* **Journal:** What you are noticing as a result of your regular mindful practice/home assignments

**MBSR Class Schedule**

**Week 1**

Saturday, September 19th

9:00-11:30 am EST

**Week 2**

Saturday, September 26th

9:00-11:30 am EST

**Week 3**

Saturday, October 3rd

9:00-11:30 am EST

**Week 4**

Saturday, October 10th

9:00-11:30 am EST

**Week 5**

Saturday, October 17th

9:00-11:30 am EST

**Week 6**

Saturday, October 24th

9:00-11:30 am EST

**Full Day Silent Retreat**

**Sunday**, November 1st

8:45am-4:30pm EST

**Week 7**

Saturday, November 7th

9:00-11:30 EST

**Week 8**

Saturday, November 14th

9:00-11:30 EST

**How to Support Getting the Most Out of This Course**

* Strong commitment to daily practice
* Actively cultivating a stance of curiosity
* Realizing that there is **no right or wrong way to do this** or to experience this practice
* Attend all 8 weeks and full day retreat
* Fully engaging in class even if you do not wish to share
* Recognizing that while practice seems simple, bringing moment to moment awareness to our experiences formally and informally,

“*is the hardest thing in the world to do*” JKZ

* **Arrive at least 5 minutes early to the Zoom Classroom**
* **Have a journal to use in-between classes – no need for note taking during class**
* **Have all necessary items set up and ready to go in your space prior to each class.**
* **Find a quiet space for weekly class and for daily practice where you will least likely be disturbed.**
* **Watch the Zoom Tutorial at** [**www.mindfulnesstc.com**](http://www.mindfulnesstc.com)
* **Wear loose comfortable clothing**
* **Bring your favorite cushion, mat, bolster or blanket – whatever may be necessary for self-care!**
* **Contact Wendy if you will be missing a class for any reason.**

**\*Please contact Wendy for additional support or with ANY and ALL concerns/questions at 231-342-9634** [**wendyweckstein@gmail.com**](mailto:wendyweckstein@gmail.com)

**FiNAL Tips**

**Other Resources:**

* **Full Catastrophe Living** by Jon Kabat Zinn
* **Mindfulness** by Joseph Goldstein
* **Mindfulness for Beginners** by Jon Kabat Zin

**Home Assignment**

1. **Think about what brought you here…**