

Module: An Introduction to Mindfulness

Module in Communication Skills for Supervisors

What is mindfulness?

Dr Jon Kabat-Zinn, founder of Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR), defines mindfulness as ‘the awareness that arises from paying attention in a particular way; on purpose, in the present moment and non-judgmentally.’^{1,2} It has its roots in Buddhist traditions and Zen meditation practices and has been brought into the mainstream by pioneers such as Kabat-Zinn and Buddhist teacher Thích Nhất Hạnh.

It is possible to cultivate a state of mindfulness through bringing awareness to an object or activity such as breathing.

Mindfulness is now used in health and care settings, in education and in the wider world of work. It can be of real benefit to us all and especially for trainees in the current climate, where many are feeling overwhelmed, stressed and exhausted.

Mindful moment Podcast

This podcast provides a simple breathing and mindfulness exercise to encourage trainees to stop and slow down. Even doing this for a few minutes can reduce feelings of stress and can support overall wellbeing.

Further information and resources

Headspace app for NHS staff. At the time of writing the mindfulness and meditation app, Headspace, is free to all NHS staff until 31 December 2022. For further details visit: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/supporting-our-nhs-people/support-now/wellbeing-apps/headspace/>

Bishop SR, Lau M, Shapiro S, Carlson L, Anderson ND, Carmody J, Devins G. Mindfulness: A proposed operational definition. *Clinical Psychology: Science and Practice*. 2004;11:230–241.

Hyunju Cho et al, *The Effectiveness of Daily Mindful Breathing Practices on Test Anxiety of Students*, Published online 2016 Oct 20. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5072593/> [at 28.02.2022]

Kabat-Zinn J. *Wherever you go there you are: Mindfulness meditation in everyday life*. (p4) New York, NY: Hyperion; 1994.

¹Video of Dr Jon Kabat-Zinn defining mindfulness: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wPNEmxWSNxg>

¹ Kabat-Zinn J. *Wherever you go there you are: Mindfulness meditation in everyday life*. (p4) New York, NY: Hyperion; 1994.

² Video of Dr Jon Kabat-Zinn defining mindfulness: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wPNEmxWSNxg>