

**Patient  
Information**

# Introduction to mindfulness for persistent pain

- Do you feel that you are in a daily battle with your pain?
- Is your mind full of thoughts, fears, frustrations or muddle?
- Do you feel like you are always rushing?
- Do you hate the idea of “accepting your pain” or “coming to terms with it”?
- Mindfulness can help you find a calmer way to live life despite having pain.

## What is mindfulness?

Mindfulness is simply paying attention in a particular way, on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgementally. It is based on meditation practice which helps you to:

- Allow your mind to settle more in the present moment.
- Accept what is here, for better or worse.
- Let go of fruitless and exhausting struggles.
- Focus your energy on the things that you can change.

Mindfulness does not remove uncomfortable situations from our lives, but helps us relate to them in a different way.

Mindfulness meditation has been used for thousands of years within the Buddhist tradition. The benefits of meditation practice for health and wellbeing have been researched, and now a non-religious version of the mindfulness approach is widely offered by the NHS as part of effective healthcare.

## How do you learn to be more mindful?

Learning to be more mindful requires a little teaching and a lot of practice.

Many people find attending a course helps them to understand mindfulness more and start practising meditation regularly.

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Department

**Pain  
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## Patient Information

The following websites have online courses although there may be a charge.

### **Be mindful**

Website: [www.bemindfulonline.com](http://www.bemindfulonline.com)

### **Breathworks**

Website: [www.breathworks-mindfulness.org.uk/methods-for-living-well-with-pain-and-illness](http://www.breathworks-mindfulness.org.uk/methods-for-living-well-with-pain-and-illness)

Or you could ask in your local library for help to find courses in your area.

There are also two mindfulness courses run at the St Michael's Hospice in Herefordshire, one for health problems and the other for stress. There is a small charge for these courses.

## **Gloucestershire NHS Mindfulness Course**

The Gloucestershire Pain Self-Management Service offers an NHS course specifically tailored for people with persistent pain. The team involved with the course are qualified and experienced mindfulness teachers.

The course involves attending 7 weekly sessions, in a group setting (which may be online), and daily meditation practice at home. This is a structured course. Probably the most important part of the course is doing some home practice each day which will take around 20 minutes, so it is worth thinking about whether you will have the time and motivation to do this before enrolling on the course.

The course is based on the Breathworks 'Mindfulness for Health' book by Burch and Penman which is available from most book retailers or via Gloucestershire County Council libraries. Please note, the book states that mindfulness often makes pain and stress 'dissolve'. In our experience, although mindfulness may not necessarily dramatically reduce pain, it can change how people think and feel about the pain and that can make a significant difference to how pain impacts on their life.

## Comments from previous attendees on our Mindfulness Course:

*"Mindfulness has brought me a peace and contentment with my situation that I have not experienced for many years."*

*"I was fairly sceptical as to its usefulness for me and my pain and to what level it might help me. After a few weeks and investing the time, I found it truly helpful in changing my attitude to my sensation."*

## Recommended mindfulness resources

If you would like to find out more about mindfulness, there are some very good resources available. Here are a few we recommend:

### Online videos

- An introduction to mindfulness (Mindfulnet.org, 3 mins)  
Website: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NbizmVKHdgs>
- 'About mindfulness' - (Dumfries & Galloway's, 7 mins)  
Website:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\\_embedded&v=IPuTqDI99qM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=IPuTqDI99qM)
- BBC News (David Sillito, 3 mins)  
Website: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/health-16406814/scans-show-mindfulness-meditation-brain-boost>
- All it takes is 10 mindful minutes (Andy Puddicombe, 9 mins)  
Website:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qzR62JJCMBQ&feature=em-share\\_video\\_user](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qzR62JJCMBQ&feature=em-share_video_user)

### Books

- 'Mindfulness for Health' by Vidyamala Burch and Danny Penman
- 'Mindfulness: A Practical Guide to Finding Peace in a Frantic World' by Mark Williams and Danny Penman

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**Websites**

**Headspace**

Website: <https://www.headspace.com/science>

**Breathworks**

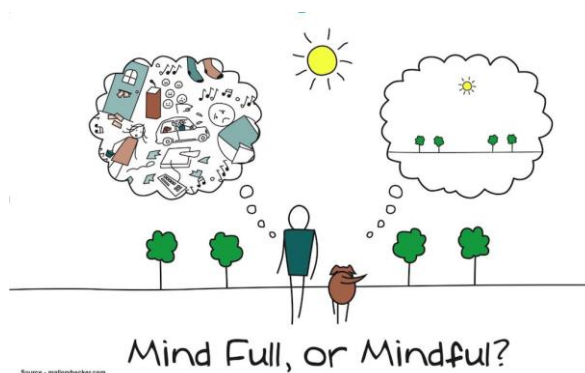
Website: <http://www.breathworks-mindfulness.org.uk/what-is-mindfulness>

**The Free Mindfulness Project**

Website: <http://www.freemindfulness.org/>

**Tara Brach**

Website: <https://www.tarabrach.com/guided-meditations/>



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