**Wharfedale Mindfulness**

**About the Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy for Stress (MBCT) Course**

**What is mindfulness?**

Mindfulness is a form of attention and awareness training that helps people relate more effectively to their experiences. It involves paying attention to thoughts, feelings and body sensations in a way that increases awareness, acceptance and self-compassion to help manage difficult experiences, and create space to make wise choices.

**The Course**

The programme we offer derives from mindfulness-based cognitive therapy (MBCT) for depression developed by Zindel Segal, Mark Williams and John Teasdale. However, we have adapted it to a more general focus on stress. MBCT is a skills course rather than individual or group therapy.It will provide opportunities to become more aware of the usual ways you manage stress and life generally and can be helpful. However, rather than focusing on the content of our experiences we will concentrate on developing a mindful awareness of them.

Each course lasts for 8 weeks and comprises once weekly 2 hour evening meetings and one day of practice which will be on a weekend day. The first half of the course aims to establish the skills of mindfulness and the second half is more about their application in everyday life. There are four main compotents:

* + guided practices
  + homework practices
  + shared enquiry – to help you to be more curious about your experiences
  + talks and theoretical input

**Who is MBCT for?**

* Anyone interested in exploring how to use their minds more effectively to achieve goals in accordance with their values.
* Anyone experiencing stress, worry, anxiety, irritability, low mood.
* Anyone who want to find ways of increasing their overall well-being, self-awareness and insight.
* Anyone with physical and psychological health problems.

Everyone can benefit from mindfulness. We all face pressures and stresses and can get stuck in our personal reactions. The things that stress and challenge us may not change, but the way in which we deal with them can shift, making it all feel easier. Being more aware and accepting of our thoughts and feelings means we are in a better place to make wise choices and deal with difficulties more effectively.

**What are the benefits of MBCT?**

* A greater capacity for relaxation and calmness
* Less worry, anxiety and depression
* Enhanced emotional control, resourcefulness and resilience
* Improved self-confidence and creativity
* Better sleep quality
* Enhanced ability to focus attention

**Expectations**

Attendance at all sessions is highly recommended to derive the most benefit from the course. If you know in advance that you won’t be able to attend all 8 sessions please let us know. One missed session is usually acceptable and we can make arrangements to explain the content of that session and provide you with relevant handout(s) and CD the week before. However if you miss 2 sessions especially within the first 4, then the facilitator will need to have a conversation about your ability to continue with the course and in some cases may ask you to leave the group. This is to ensure that your and other participants’ progress is not compromised by the missed sessions.

**Please also be aware that the course does require a commitment to practice at home between sessions. This will take up to 45 minutes of your time for six days each week. The home practice involves listening to recorded meditations and other exercises as well as performing brief exercises throughout the day. We appreciate how difficult it can be to carve out time in already very busy lives, however, the commitment to home practice is an essential part of the course. Experience and research has shown that the benefits of this kind of training are felt most by those that have been able to make time for this practice.**

This course is designed to help you become aware of your present experience and this can, from time to time, include some difficult physical and emotional sensations. In order to get the maximum benefit from the course, participants are encouraged to take care of themselves by seeking support outside of the course as appropriate. This may be family members, friends or professionals.

**About the teacher**

Cathy Theaker is a BACP accredited counsellor, coach and trainer, with a speciality in health and well-being and a particular interest in the interface between psychological therapies and mindfulness. She has completed the Teacher Training Retreat Level 1 with Bangor University in 2016. Cathy has been teaching mindfulness interventions to NHS staff and patients and also to staff and students at Leeds Beckett University, where she worked as a Wellbeing Practitioner for 8 years. She has over 20 years’ experience in personal and professional development, with clients from a diverse range of ethnic and cultural backgrounds and individuals with disabilities, within a variety of contexts. Cathy's interest in mindfulness began whilst travelling in India and Nepal in 1993, visiting Dharamsala where she began learning about Buddhism and had the privilege of seeing the Dalai Lama. She returned to mindfulness practice in 2010 and has a personal practice, attends CPD and retreats and practices Dru Yoga. For more information about Cathy’s work see: [www.cathytheaker.com](http://www.cathytheaker.com)

Cathy and Sally Johnson, her colleague with Wharfedale Mindfulness set up a local group in 2016 which meets monthly to provide support for the continuation of mindfulness practice.

**Course details**

Mindfulness Bases Cognitive Therapy for Stress (MBCT for Stress).

The course will run onThursday evenings 7.00 – 9.00 upstairs at the Labour Rooms (there is accessibility via a stair lift), Walkergate, Otley, LS21 1HB.

The orientation session will be on 24 January and the 8 week course will run from 31 January – 28 March (no session on 21 February).

The day of practice will be from 10.00-3.30 on Saturday 16 March at Clifton Village Hall, Newall Carr Road, Newall with Clifton, Otley, North Yorkshire LS21 2ES. Accessible via a ramp.

The cost of the course is £200 which includes the taught hours, the day of practice, a course workbook and CD recordings to use at home between sessions.

Course facilitator: Cathy Theaker

To book a place, please complete the application form.

**If you have any queries please contact:**

Cathy Theaker: [cathytheaker@gmail.com](mailto:cathytheaker@gmail.com), tel. 07765 602314

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