



Changing Minds

The good life is a process, not a state of being.

Mindfulness

Jon Kabat-Zinn describes mindfulness as “a means of paying attention, in a particular way, on purpose, in the present moment, nonjudgmentally”. The benefits of being fully present in the moment, and fully aware, allows us to become less emotionally reactive and overwhelmed by our life. Infusing a mindfulness practice in your life is literally brain changing. Neuroscience has shown that the practice of mindfulness meditation increases the size of our left prefrontal cortex (Wolf & Serpa, 2015), which is the part of the brain responsible for regulating our positive emotions (Davidson, 2012), among many other positive neurological changes and benefits.

A mindfulness practice can help you with the following:

- Lowering stress levels
- Sleeping better
- Reducing anxiety
- Increasing your ability to manage and moderate emotions
- Improving your memory and your ability to focus
- Developing strategies to manage chronic physical pain

Mindfulness can be practiced *informally* in your everyday life and *formally* through meditation.

Mindfulness Workshop Series Options: (see following pages for workshop descriptions)

- **An Introduction to Mindfulness:** 2Hr Workshop | 10 -20 Participants | \$50/Participant
- **Koru Mindfulness Meditation:** 4 Weeks | 75 Minutes/Session | 10-12 Participants | \$150/Participant
- **Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR):** 8 Weeks | 2.5 Hrs/Session | 10-12 Participants | \$550/Participant *Please note that some extended healthcare insurance plans will cover this cost.



*Almost everything will work again
if you unplug it for a few minutes, including you.*

An Introduction to Mindfulness

This 2 hour, informational and experiential, workshop will provide the opportunity for you to learn more about mindfulness meditation, the neurobiological benefits of practicing mindfulness and opportunity actually try it out and see if it fits for you.

The following is a brief outline of what you can expect:

- **Teaching:** A brief introduction to how your brain works, as it relates to mindfulness; as well as, what neuroscience says about the benefits of mindfulness meditation.
- **Experiencing:** Guided mindfulness meditations using different anchors for attention such as breath, words, movement, etc.
- **Discussions:** Helpful metaphors and *thought pattern strategies* for stress reduction.



KORU

mindfulness

Course Outline

Welcome to Koru! During this workshop series you will be introduced to the practice of mindfulness and learn several skills, including meditation, for managing stress and enriching your life. Mindfulness is about developing the ability to be fully attentive to all the moments of your life, reducing the amount of time you spend worrying about the future or fretting about the past. An important aspect of mindfulness is developing a non-judgmental, accepting, even curious, attitude about your moment-to-moment experience. The more you develop this attitude, the less you will feel overwhelmed by changes and challenges in your life.

Koru is designed to introduce you to the practice of mindfulness and get you well on your way to developing this important skill. Like learning any new skill, it takes practice to get comfortable with mindfulness. We invite you to devote yourself to the study and practice of mindfulness over the next four weeks, and we challenge you to stay curious about what evolves for you as you persistently and patiently practice living mindfully.

The First Class

Skill: Belly or diaphragmatic breathing: Belly breathing is a calming skill that you can use to calm yourself if you are feeling anxious or to quiet your mind to help with sleep. You will be taught to breathe deeply, inhaling by using your diaphragm to push your stomach out rather than using the muscles of your chest wall to fill your lungs.

Skill: Dynamic breathing: Dynamic breathing is a very active skill that you can use if you are restless, anxious or tired, and need to a way to focus your attention and energize your body. People use dynamic breathing when they are tired or worried and still have lots of work to finish.

Meditation: Body scan: In this meditation you will learn to use physical sensations in the body to anchor your awareness in the present moment.

The Second Class

Skill: Walking meditation: When practicing walking meditation, you learn to use as your anchor to present-moment awareness the sensations in your feet as you slowly walk across the floor. People use walking meditation when they are too sleepy or too restless to meditate sitting still.

Meditation: Gatha: A gatha is a series of words, sometimes referred to as a meditation poem that you use to help you focus your mind during meditation. Many students find that their minds wander so much that they can't keep their attention in the present for even a moment. A gatha provides you with a stronger anchor for your wandering mind. People use gathas when they feel very distracted and unable to settle their attention on their breath.

The Third Class

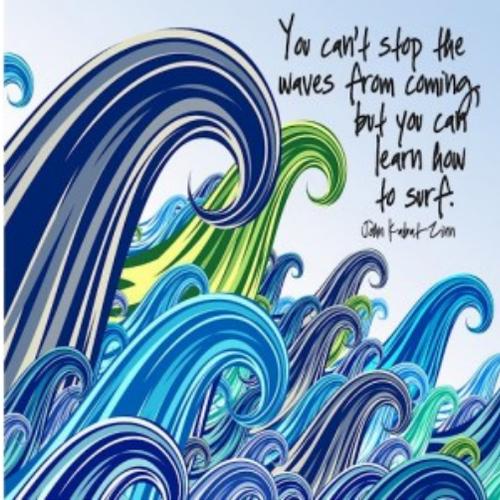
Skill: Guided Imagery: Guided imagery is a way of calming your body and mind if you are feeling particularly anxious or stressed. Using all of your senses, you imagine yourself in a comfortable and safe place, which allows your physiology to quiet and calm. People use guided imagery if they are dealing with high levels of stress or worry.

Meditation: Labeling Thoughts: An important aspect of mindfulness meditation is the ability to notice your thoughts and then, without judgment, release them, returning your attention to your object of meditation, most commonly the sensation of your breath as it enters and leaves your body. Labeling is a technique that makes it easier to release your thoughts and return to your present moment experience. People use labeling to strengthen their ability to stay non-judgmentally present with the goings-on in their busy minds.

The Fourth Class

Skill: Eating meditation: With eating meditation, you learn to pay very careful attention to all of the sensations involved in eating, as well as the thoughts and feelings you have when you eat. Eating meditation enhances the pleasure in eating and allows you to consume your food in a more healthy way, listening to the reactions and needs of your body.

Meditation: Labeling Feelings: This meditation builds on the labeling practice from last week, providing you a skill for managing strong feelings that may arise during meditation. Sometimes identifying the feelings that are underneath persistent or recurring thoughts can be very helpful, keeping you from getting carried too far away from the present moment.



Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction

The Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction program (MBSR) was designed by Jon Kabat-Zinn over 40 years ago. He wanted to share his own, life changing, personal experience with mindfulness meditation to help others **change the relationship they have with suffering, with challenging thoughts/emotions, physical pain and stress.**

The MBSR program teaches mindfulness through *practice*. We will explore, and practice, Mindfulness techniques, such as, meditation, mindful movement and stress management in a safe and small group environment. You will have daily homework to help these practices become part of your life. Please know that this is an intensive program has the potential to **help you respond, rather than react to life's stresses and struggles**, which is worth the effort!

The Program:

- Week 1:** Introduction to Mindfulness and Mindfulness-based Skills
- Week 2:** Perception – The Role Perception Plays in Shaping our Reality
- Week 3:** Cultivating Mindful Awareness – The Being vs Doing Mode
- Week 4:** Stress Part #1 – How Stress Impacts the Body/Mind Systems
- Week 5:** Stress Part #2 – Choosing How to Respond Rather than Reacting to Stress
- Week 6:** Communication Styles – Responding to Challenging Situations
- Week 7:** Learning to Action – How the Practice of Mindfulness Supports Wise Choices
- Week 8:** Going Forward – Strategies for Making Mindfulness a Part of Your Life

What's Included:

- Orientation via online or in person (30 minutes)
- 8 Weekly Classes, 2.5 hours
- PDF and Bound version of the handout
- 1 full day silent retreat (5.5 hours)

“Pain is inevitable. Suffering is optional” *Haruki Murakami*