

Breathe. Notice. Now. (Overview)

MINDFULNESS OVERVIEW

Times of COVID have caused all of us changes in the way we live, work, and play. Across the globe, many of us have experienced uncertainty and overwhelm as we adjusted to the new “normal” and now moving post-pandemic, some uncertainties continue to linger.



In times of uncertainty or overwhelm, we can often struggle with difficult emotions (like anxiety and anger), negative thinking patterns (like catastrophizing) and overwhelming body sensations (like a tight chest or racing heart), and here's where mindfulness can help.

Mindfulness is simply a skill set that we all can learn and cultivate by paying attention to our experience of the present moment, which includes our body sensations, feelings, and thoughts. As part of being human, we will find some life experiences pleasant and others

unpleasant, sometimes even painful. Instead of “knee-jerk” reacting in less than optimal ways to the discomfort and unpleasantness, mindfulness teaches us to cultivate wiser, more compassionate ways to relate to these experiences. When we approach life mindfully, we can skillfully lean into the discomfort that accompanies difficult times and can experience them with less suffering and pain.

GOAL

Through the *Breathe. Notice. Now* workshops, you will learn the skill set of B-FIT mindfulness and other awareness-based practices to grow levels of self-awareness, build emotional self-regulation, develop a more complete understanding of self, to consequently more consistently bring your “A-Game” to life's experiences.

B-FIT mindfulness is a secular practice of mindfulness based on the Unified Mindfulness system. B-FIT (body, feelings, image thinking and talk thinking) mindfulness is based on the pillars of self-awareness and allowing-ness of our individual inner worlds. Increased awareness and allowing-ness builds our self-understanding in turn effects how we manage and express ourselves in the world around us. As we learn to better express ourselves, we can then learn to “be” with difficult feelings (i.e., anger, fear, sadness, etc.) and thoughts, rather than become them and cause greater harm and suffering to self and others. Simply, awareness and allowing-ness are at the foundation of building our capacity to become more mindfully, emotionally self-regulated.

Other outcomes outside of building emotional self-regulation that result from practicing B-FIT mindfulness includes experiencing a relative sense of calm, increased compassion, increased sense of fulfillment, enhanced intuition, and a more complete understanding of the human predicament in which all of us live (e.g., effects of cognitive bias).

SESSIONS

The *Breathe. Notice. Now.* sessions will run online through Zoom during the months of September and October on Monday evenings at 6:30 pm.

1.5 hr. Introductory Session (6:30 pm - 8:00 pm)

Monday September 12

Deeper Dive Sessions (6:30 pm - 7:30 pm)

Monday September 19

Monday September 26

Monday October 3

Monday October 17

with a 90-minute "Ask Me Anything" Session with Peter Marks (6:30 pm -8:00 pm)

Monday October 24

An example of a Deeper Dive Session:

- 10-minute greeting/grounding activity
- 20-minute discussion on B-FIT mindfulness
- 20-minute guided mindfulness practice
- 10-minute group process, discussion and wrap up

ABOUT THE FACILITATORS:

Adriana McVicker

- Adriana has over 20 years of experience working with children, adults, and their families.
- For the last 14 years, has worked with Community Living Windsor in various roles including direct support and in positions of management including support services, staff development, communications, community relations, and project management.
- Has facilitated in-class and online education and experiential practice of B-FIT Mindfulness for 5 years.
- Instructor with University of Toronto's Continuing Studies Program- Conscious Care and Support.
- Currently completing the Masters of Counselling Psychology program through Yorkville University.
- With education in counselling, developmental psychology, sociology and health sciences, Adriana deeply values using a comprehensive approach while providing quality supports for people and families.
- She has a sincere passion to help others and is a true believer that all of us are interdependent, and that we each carry a responsibility to help one another be the best we can.



Peter Marks

- Over 35 years of Human & Health Services' organization & leadership development to facilitate effective, conscious and compassionate care and support;
- University of Toronto, Continuing Studies, Instructor;
- International Mindfulness Facilitator in Canada, USA and Mexico since 1993;
- Co-Founder, Director and/or Consultant to twenty Autism/DD and mental health services systems throughout Ontario;
- Former Social and Health-Care Services development consultant serving over twenty First Nations communities across Ontario and the Yukon;
- Former Regional Director of Addiction Research Foundation;
- Former CEO of EAP Institute of Canada.



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