

MBCT Thumbnail Session Rationale and Outline (Segal, Teasdale & Williams, 21013)

SESSION 1: Awareness and Automatic Pilot

- Mindfulness starts when we recognize the tendency to be on automatic pilot
- Commitment to learn how to step out of it and become aware of each moment
- Practice in purposefully moving attention around the body shows how difficult/easy this can be

SESSION 2: Living in Our Heads

- Further focus on the body begins to show more clearly the chatter of the mind
- This chatter tends to control our reactions to everyday events
- Situation + interpretation = Emotion
- Categories of experience vs. a description of the bare sensations

SESSION 3: Gathering the Scattered Mind

- With greater awareness of how the mind can often be busy and scattered
- Taking awareness intentionally to the breath offers the possibility of being more focused and gathered
- Mindful movement: stretching / walking

SESSION 4: Recognizing the Territory of Aversion

- The mind is most scattered when it tries to cling to some things and avoid/escape others
- Mindfulness offers a way of staying present by giving another place from which to view things
- To help take a wider perspective and relate differently to experience
- Getting to know the territory of your depression

SESSION 5: Allowing/Letting Be

- Relating differently involves bringing to experience a sense of allowing it to be without judging or trying to make it different
- Such an attitude of acceptance is a major part of taking care of oneself and seeing more clearly what, if anything needs to change

SESSION 6: Thoughts Are Not Facts

- Negative moods and thoughts that accompany them restrict our ability to relate differently to experience
- It is liberating to realize that our thoughts are merely thoughts
- Recognizing the same pattern of recurring thoughts can help you dis-identify from your thoughts without resorting to disputation
- If thoughts still have a strong pull on awareness then choosing to work with them with an attitude of investigation, curiosity and kindness

SESSION 7: How Can I Best Take Care of Myself?

- There are specific things that can be done when depression threatens
- Take a breathing space first and then decide what action if any to take
- Each person has their own unique warning signs of relapse
- Participants in the group can help each other in making plans for how best to respond to the signs

SESSION 8: Maintaining and Extending New Learning

- Maintaining balance in life is helped by regular mindfulness practice
- Good intentions can be strengthened through links to a positive reason for taking care of oneself