



PandaA

賽馬會「樂天心澄」
靜觀校園文化行動

Jockey Club "Peace and Awareness"
Mindfulness Culture in Schools Initiative

Mindfulness Introduction & Experiential Workshop



Let's learn about
mindfulness together!

Facilitator's Manual

Organised by



Faculty of
Social Sciences
The University of Hong Kong
香港大學社會科學學院

社
科
人
Scientist

Funded by



The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust

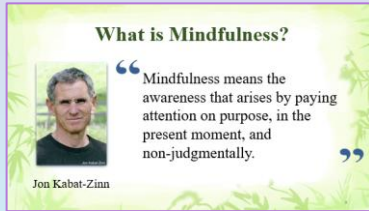
Workshop Flow



1. Introducing the Content of the Workshop 5 mins



2. Effectiveness of Mindfulness 5 mins



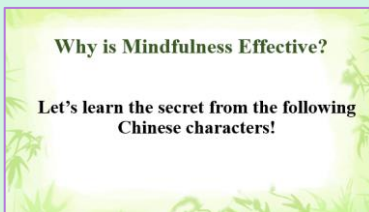
3. What is Mindfulness 5 mins



4. A Taste of Mindfulness Play Audio Guide 5 mins



5. Living in the Present 10 mins Play "What is Mindfulness"



6. Why is Mindfulness Effective? 20 mins Play Two YouTube Videos



7. Frequently Asked Questions about Mindfulness 5 mins Play "FAQ about Mindfulness"



8. Ways to Continue Exploring 5 mins



Background

This Mindfulness Introduction & Experiential Workshop was designed by the Jockey Club “Peace and Awareness” Mindfulness Culture in Schools Initiative (JC Panda) from the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Hong Kong. JC Panda, funded by The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust, was launched in 2019 to promote mindfulness culture in secondary schools, primary schools, and special schools, benefiting tens of thousands of students, parents, and educators.

Objectives of the Workshops

This workshop serves to give participants an initial understanding and experience of mindfulness, sparking interest for continued exploration and learning, such as taking formal eight-week courses or using mobile app for practice.

Teaching Materials for the Workshop

1. *Facilitator’s manual*
2. *Presentation slides (ppsx file)*
3. *An audio guide on mindfulness practice*
4. *Two videos produced by JC Panda*
5. *Two YouTube video URLs*

Facilitators of the Workshop

The workshop can be conducted by teachers or counselors in schools, who should have a basic understanding of mindfulness, e.g., having completed an eight-week MBCT, MBSR, or **.b Foundations** Course. The basic training on mindfulness takes eight weeks while mindfulness teacher training takes years. **The facilitators of this workshop are not considered as mindfulness teachers.** They only practice mindfulness with their students according to the resources offered in the package, including the audio guides. If students would like to further learn about mindfulness, they can take **Paws b** or **.b** course. For more information, please refer to <https://www.socsc.hku.hk/jcpanda/mindfulness-programs-in-schools/>

Target Participants and Format of the Workshop

The target participants are secondary students, teachers, parents, or the general public. The number of participants can range from 5 or 6 people to several dozen.

Duration of workshop

The workshop takes approximately an hour.

Usage of the Resources

The JC PandaA welcomes colleagues from the education and social welfare sectors to use this resource package, provided that they -

1. clearly acknowledge that the copyright of this resource package is jointly owned by The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust and The University of Hong Kong,
2. meet the relevant eligibility criteria,
3. use it to promote mindfulness culture to the public,
4. maintain the integrity of the package and shall not modify its contents,
5. register on the Initiative website before downloading and using it, and
6. comply with the relevant guidelines.

Format of the Facilitator's Manual

There are notes under each slide of the *facilitator's manual*. Guidelines to facilitators are in italics while facilitators' instructions to students are in regular font.



Welcome Participants

Thank you for joining today's mindfulness introduction and experiential workshop. I am the facilitator of today's workshop. I am not a mindfulness teacher, as I have only completed an 8-week course on mindfulness. It takes years of training to become a mindfulness teacher. Thanks to JC PandaA from HKU for designing this resource package, I can share and practice mindfulness with every one of you here today with the facilitator's manual, PowerPoint slides, videos, and guiding audio.

Please be reminded that this mindfulness workshop is not an official training workshop, but an introduction for us to learn and experience mindfulness together, making it easier for further exploration and learning.

[Click to proceed to the next slide]

Overview

- What are the benefits of mindfulness?
- What is mindfulness?
- Why is mindfulness effective?
- Is mindfulness religious?
- How can we continue learning mindfulness?



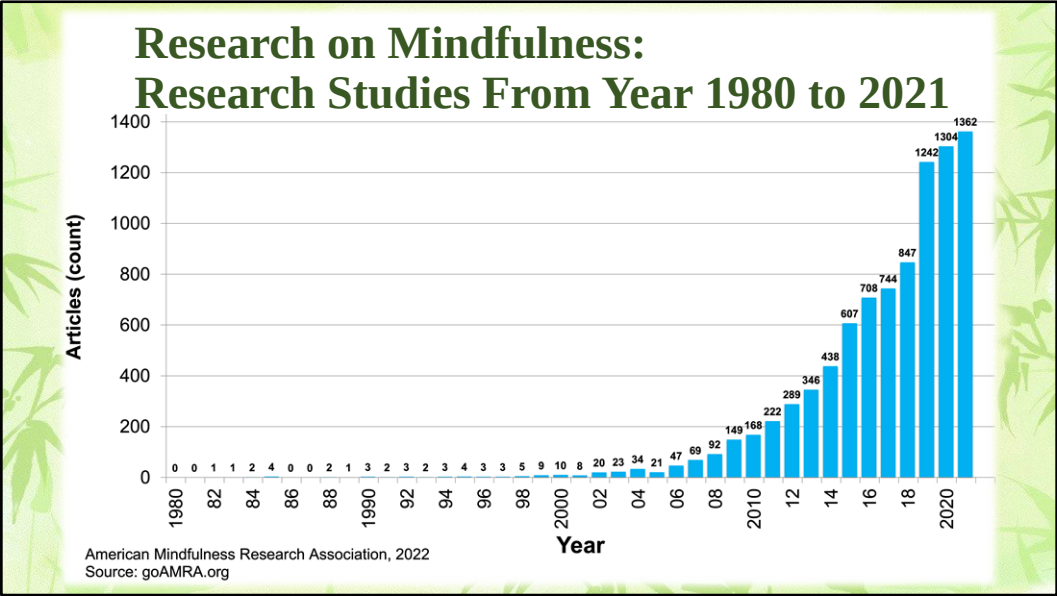
Introducing the Content of Workshop

In this workshop, we will explore the following topics:

- What are the benefits of mindfulness?
- What is mindfulness?
- Why is mindfulness effective?
- Is mindfulness religious?
- How can we continue learning mindfulness?

Apart from these, we will also have the opportunity to practice mindfulness together. Let us begin today's journey!

[Click to proceed to the next slide]



Introducing Research Trends on Mindfulness

This graph shows the number of research studies on mindfulness over the past 40 years, from 1980 to 2021. In the early 80s, there were very few studies on mindfulness. However, over the past 20 years, the number of mindfulness research studies has increased exponentially.

These are the findings of the studies...

[Click to proceed to the next slide]

Effectiveness of Mindfulness

- Reduce stress, anxiety and depression
- Enhance immune system function
- Improve brain structure and functioning
- Increase quality of life and sense of well-being



The illustrations show a man with chronic pain (red lightning bolts on his shoulder), a woman with anxiety (red lightning bolts around her head while on a laptop), and a woman with physical and mental illness (a chaotic swirl of thought bubbles around her head).

Effectiveness of Mindfulness

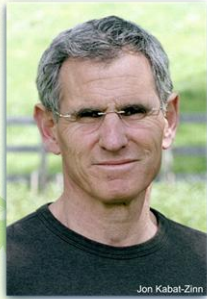
Mindfulness is effective in reducing stress, anxiety and depression; enhancing immune system function; improving brain structure and functioning; and increasing quality of life and sense of well-being.

Since numerous scientific research has demonstrated the benefits of mindfulness for physical and mental health, there has been growing interest in mindfulness in recent years.

So, what exactly is mindfulness?

[Click to proceed to the next slide]

What is Mindfulness?



Jon Kabat-Zinn

“Mindfulness means the awareness that arises by paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally.”

Definition of Mindfulness

Jon Kabat-Zinn pioneered the integration of mindfulness into clinical medicine and psychological counselling over 40 years ago. He developed the 8-week Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Program (MBSR) at the University of Massachusetts Medical School. Much of the scientific research on mindfulness over the past four decades has been inspired by his work.

This is how Kabat-Zinn defines mindfulness:

[Click to show the definition]

“Mindfulness is the awareness that arises through paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally.”

We understand each of these words individually, but they could be quite confusing when combined together in a sentence.

In fact, mindfulness can be difficult to understand merely through language and concepts: the definition that can be described, is not the true definition.

[Click to proceed to the next slide]

The definition that can be described, is not the true definition!

(道可道，非常道！)

- Mindfulness cannot be understood through language or concepts alone
- Mindfulness has to be understood through experience

Mindfulness has to be Understood through Experience

You might question: “The definition that can be described is not a true definition? Isn’t this too mysterious and abstract?” In fact, mindfulness is neither of those.

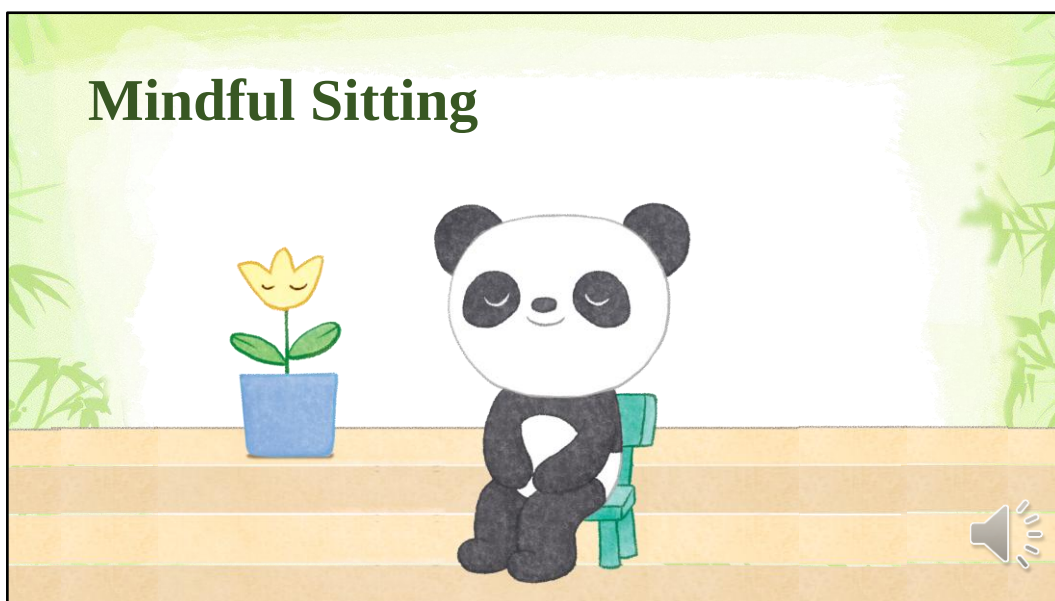
There are many things in this world that simply cannot be understood through language and concepts alone. Our thinking is very useful. Through it, we can understand many things, solve challenging problems, and generate creative ideas.

However, relying purely on thinking has its limitations. Some things could not be understood through thinking and analysis. Imagine a friend who has never tasted honey asks you what honey tastes like. What would you tell him? You might reply, “Honey is sweet”. He follows up, “How sweet, like chocolate?” You might answer, “Not really, it is not that bitter”. He tries again, “Is it as sweet as grapes?” You reply, “No, it is not that sour”. The more you explain, the more confused your friend becomes. So, you decide to be more “scientific”. You search online, find honey’s chemical formula ($C_6H_{12}O_6$) and showed it to him. Although this formula is accurate, it doesn’t help him understand what honey tastes like. In fact, it may confuse him even more. What is the best way to help your friend?

[Wait for participants to respond, most would say to actually taste it]

Exactly! Just taste it yourself! To experience it directly, not through language or concepts. Kabat-Zinn’s definition of mindfulness is like the chemical formula for honey: very accurate, but it cannot convey the lived experience of mindfulness itself. To truly understand mindfulness, we cannot rely on words and concepts, we need to practice, experience it directly, and feel it for ourselves.

[Click to proceed to next slide]



Experiencing Mindfulness Practice

Now let us practice mindful sitting together by following a guided audio.

[Click the speaker symbol in the lower right corner of the slide to play the audio file]

This audio file is about five minutes long and is embedded in the slideshow. However, if the computer is older or runs slowly or cannot play the audio, please consider playing the audio file in the resource package directly, or access it online through the following link:

<https://www.socsc.hku.hk/jcpanda/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/Mindful-Sitting.mp3>

While the participants are practicing, the facilitator should not just sit back and watch, please actively participate and sit quietly with the participants.

[After the audio finishes, click to proceed to the next slide]



Mindfulness is Living in the Here and Now

When you were practicing just now, was your attention always on your breath?

[Waiting for responses from participants, some will surely say no.]

Many people find their minds wandering when they practice mindfulness, including myself! Including myself. The mind naturally drifts to recall past events or worry about future concerns. It is difficult to keep the mind in the present moment.

In fact, we are often absent-minded in our daily lives.

[Click to proceed to the next slide]

Have you ever...?

1. missed the bus/MTR stop you were supposed to get off at
2. been unsure if you used body wash when you're showering
3. intended to send a text on your phone/computer, but ended up doing something else

Absent-Minded Experiences

Have you experienced any of the following? If so, please raise your hand.

[Click to reveal the first sentence and read it aloud]

Missing your bus/MTR stop that you were supposed to get off at?

[Wait for participants to raise their hands, the facilitator can also raise her/his hand]

[Click to reveal the second sentence and read it aloud]

Being unsure whether you already used body wash when showering?

[Wait for participants to raise their hands, the facilitator can also raise her/his hand]

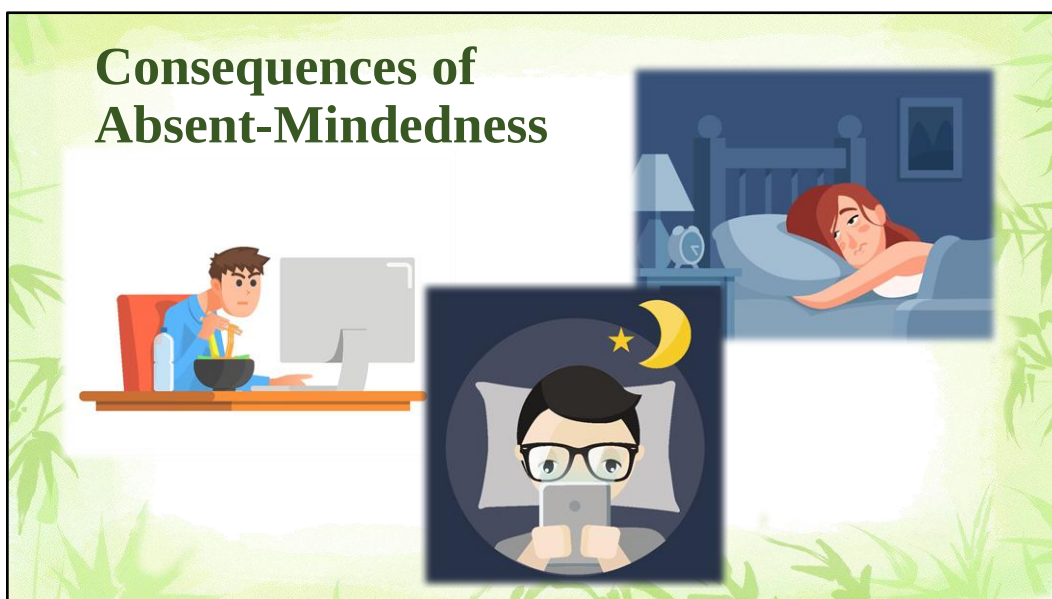
[Click to reveal the third sentence and read it aloud]

Intending to send a message, but then turning on the phone/computer and then did something else?

[Wait for participants to raise their hands, the facilitator can also raise her/his hand]

You see, we are often distracted and not fully present in what we are doing in the moment. What are the consequences of this?

[Click to proceed to the next slide]



Consequences of Absent-Mindedness

[Click to display the image of eating while working]

When you eat while working and staring at the computer screen, you don't know what you're eating. You can't concentrate on your work, and you're more likely to develop digestive problems.

[Click to display the image of lying in bed looking at the phone]

When you want to go to bed at night, but you continue scrolling through your phone, you may end up with insomnia.

[Click to display images of insomnia]

Mindfulness is an invitation to you to focus fully on what you are doing right now and live in the present moment.

I would like to share an interesting story with you all.

[Click to proceed to the next slide]

One day, a visitor came to ask the Zen master: "Do monks need to work hard at their practice?"
 The Zen master replied: "Of course we have to work hard."
 The visitor asked, "How do we work hard?"
 The Zen Master replied: "When hungry, eat; when tired, sleep."
 The visitor said, "Most people are like this. So aren't they working as hard as monks?"
 The Zen Master replied: "It's different. Most people don't truly eat when they eat- their minds are filled with endless desires and distractions. They don't truly sleep when sleeping-their minds are caught up in countless worries and calculations."

三十六世大珠慧海禪師



"Records of the Transmission of the Lamp"

The Story of Zen Master Huihai

This is the story of Zen Master Huihai from the Song Dynasty.

One day, a visitor came to ask the Zen master: "Do monks work hard at their practice?"

The Zen master replied: "Of course they work hard".

The visitor asked, "How to work hard?"

The Zen Master replied: "When hungry, eat; when tired, sleep".

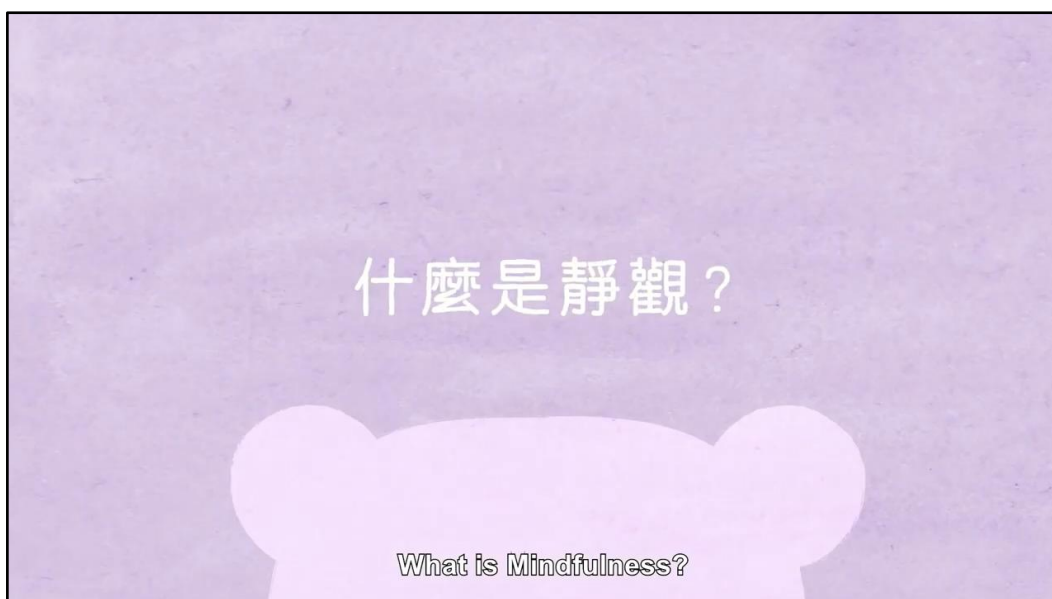
The visitor said, "Most people do so, does that make them as hardworking as monks?"

The Zen Master replied: "No, most people don't truly eat when they eat, their minds are filled with endless desires and distractions. They don't truly sleep when sleeping, their minds are caught up in countless worries and calculations".

To truly eat when eating and truly sleep when sleeping means to fully pay attention on the present moment and live completely in the here and now. This is mindfulness.

Here is an animation that summarizes what mindfulness is.

[Click to proceed to the next slide]



Playing the Animation "What is Mindfulness"

This is an animation produced by JC PandaA. The main character is a panda named Ching Ching who loves practicing mindfulness. Now let us listen to his explanation of what mindfulness is.

[Click the slide to play the animation]

This animation is about one minute long and is embedded in the slideshow. However, if the computer is older or runs slowly and cannot play the video, please consider playing the video file in the resource package directly, or access it on YouTube through the following link: <https://youtu.be/mV37MHiyFRI>

[After the animation finishes, click to proceed to the next slide]



Forms of Mindfulness Practice

Mindfulness practice can help us pay attention to our present experiences, such as the state of our body and mind. These practices include mindful sitting, body scan, mindful walking, mindful eating, and mindful stretching.

Although it is not easy to focus on the here and now, these practices are quite straightforward. Just like the sitting practice we did, we only need to focus on our breath. When our mind wanders, there is no need to judge or blame ourselves, simply bring the attention back to the breath with patience. But how can such a simple practice reduce stress, anxiety and depression, and enhance the quality of life and well-being?

[Click to proceed to the next slide]

Why is Mindfulness Effective?

**Let's explore the wisdom captured
in two Chinese characters!**

Why Mindfulness is Effective

Explaining the effectiveness of mindfulness involves complex neuroscience. However, here we can understand why mindfulness is effective from two Chinese characters.

[Click to display the text]

[Click to proceed to the next slide]

Why is Mindfulness Effective?

念

今 + 心
Now + Heart

念: The Heart in This Moment

The first character is "念" (niàn), which means "mind" in Chinese.

[Click to display the character "niàn"]

In mainland China and Taiwan, many people use the term “正念” (zhèng niàn) to refer to mindfulness practice. The character “niàn” consists of two parts. The upper part “今” (jīn) means “now” and the lower part “心” (xīn) means “heart” or “mind”. Together, they represent focusing wholeheartedly in the present moment, in other words, living in the here and now. But why is living in the present therapeutic? We will invite Po, the main character from the “Kung Fu Panda” movie, to explain.

[Click to proceed to the next slide]



Playing a Clip from "Kung Fu Panda"

Has anyone here seen the “Kung Fu Panda” movie?

[Ask participants to raise their hands]

Those who have watched it will probably remember that Po sold wonton noodles with his adoptive father before becoming a kung fu student. Later, a kung fu master noticed his potential and hoped to train him to become the Dragon Warrior. However, Po struggled at first.

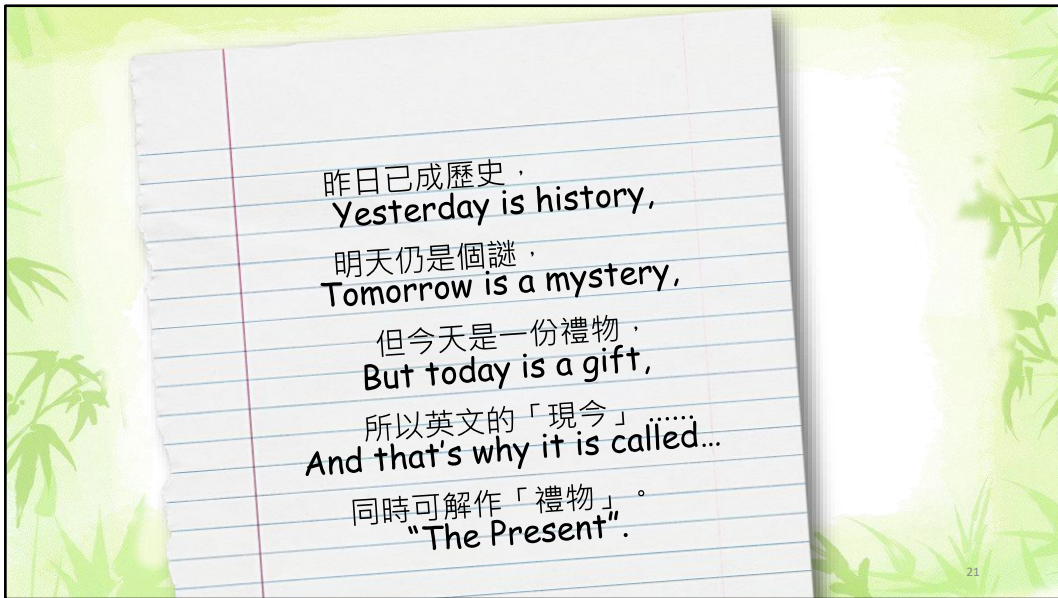
Po was heavyset and loves to eat, and his kung fu skills were far behind those of his five senior peers: Tigress, Monkey, Mantis, Viper, and Crane. Po was under a lot of pressure which prevented him from concentrating on practicing kung fu. He was constantly worried that he would never become the Dragon Warrior, and he often thought about returning home to sell noodles with his father.

Under stress, Po relieved his anxiety by eating. While he was stuffing his stomach full, his master found him and offered him some advice. Let's see what wisdom the master shared.

[Click the play icon in the lower right corner of the slideshow to connect to the video on YouTube. The URL of this video is as follows:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bhJ1rXVGAv0>]

[After the video finishes, click to go to the next slide]



Master's Advice

The master shared a piece of advice with Po: "Yesterday is history, tomorrow is a mystery, but today is a gift, and that's why it is called 'the present'".

Anxiety refers to the worries about the future, and depression often involves rumination about the past. When a person can live in the present moment, they can cut off the fear of the future and regret of the past. If you live well today, tomorrow will have hope. If you don't live well today, no matter how glorious yesterday was, you will still feel that things are not what they used to be. Live fully in the present, and tomorrow will shine, while yesterday will not have been in vain.

In mindfulness practice, we train ourselves to focus on the present moment. No wonder mindfulness can effectively reduce stress, anxiety and depression, and enhance the quality of life and well-being!

[Click to proceed to the next slide]

Why is Mindfulness Effective?

怒

奴 + 心
Slave + Heart

怒: *Slave to Emotion*

The second character that explains the effectiveness of mindfulness is anger, or “怒” (nù) in Chinese.

[Click to display the character “nù”]

The character anger also consists of two parts. The upper part is “奴” (nú), which means “slave”; the lower part “心” (xīn), which means “heart.” Together, they convey that when a person becomes angry, they become a slave to their own emotions. In the state of uncontrolled anger, we may do things we later regret.

The following short video illustrates why, when we are consumed by anger, we become slaves to our emotions and do things we later regret.

[Click to proceed to next slide]



Playing a Video on “Road Rage”

Click the play icon in the lower right corner of the slide to access the video on YouTube. The URL is:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NfHvTOhjlzI>

[After the video ends, the facilitator can explain the background to the participants]

This is a short video produced by the Georgia Department of Transportation in the USA which warns drivers against road rage. Road rage occurs when people become angry over minor incidents while driving, leading to conflict such as verbal or physical altercations, which can sometimes be life-threatening.

The man in the video is American boxing champion Evander Holyfield. The angry driver probably had no idea he was going to encounter Holyfield. While the ending of the video is humorous, road rage can have serious consequences and is not a matter to be taken lightly.

[Click to proceed to the next slide]

It Could Have Been Worse



In 2018, a bus in Chongqing fell from a bridge into the Yangtze River



Since a passenger hit the bus driver with her phone

Serious Consequences of Uncontrolled Anger

[Click to display a news photo of a bus falling into a river]

In 2018, a bus fell from a bridge into the Yangtze River in Chongqing. All 15 people on the bus, including the driver and all passengers, drowned.

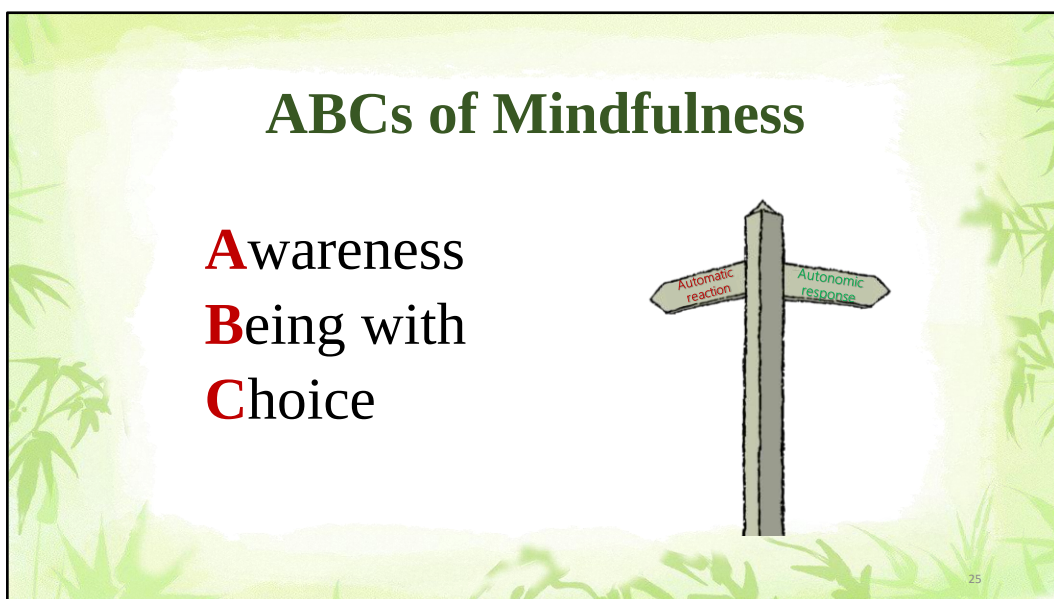
[Click to display a screenshot of the video of the passenger attacking the driver]

The accident was caused by road rage. A passenger wanted to get off the bus before crossing the bridge, but the driver refused to stop. In anger, the passenger hit the driver with her phone. As the driver tried to dodge, he lost control of the bus, which fell into the Yangtze River. As a result, everyone on board drowned.

If that passenger had practiced the mindful breathing practice we just completed, even if it was just for a short duration of five seconds to calm down, she might not have become a slave to her emotions. No one on the bus would have died, including herself.

Mindfulness practice allows us to calm down and not be slaves to our emotions.

[Click to proceed to the next slide]



The ABCs of Mindfulness

Mindfulness invites us to calm ourselves first, be aware of our current experience (awareness), be with it (being with), and then make a wise choice (choice).

Awareness, Being with, and Choice form the ABCs of mindfulness.

To become aware of your present experience, you need to observe calmly without judging or reacting immediately. If we immediately resist what is happening, we cannot break free from automatic reactions. Only when we can accept what is occurring can we observe it with a calm mind and discover possibilities. When your mind is clear, you can truly see the situation before you and then make wise decisions. This is an “response” as opposed to an “reaction”.

Take the bus tragedy as an example. If the passenger had calmed down and carefully observed what was happening on the bus and within herself, and avoided making an immediate reaction, she might have anticipated the danger of assaulting the driver and thought of more effective ways to handle missing her stop.

When we act while emotionally disturbed, we make “reactions” that are beyond our control. Mindfulness helps us stop automatic reactions and instead make “responses”.

[Click to proceed to the next slide]

《大學》「知止而後有定，定而後能靜，靜而後能安，安而後能慮，慮而後能得。」

“The Great Learning”

When you know where to stop, you have stability.

When you have stability, you can be tranquil.

When you are tranquil, you can be at ease.

When you are at ease, you can deliberate.

When you can deliberate, you can attain your goals.

The Universality of the ABCs of Mindfulness

The ABCs of mindfulness mirror the ancient wisdom found in many philosophies or religions.

[Click to display an excerpt of "The Great Learning"]

“The Great Learning” is a classic text from Chinese Confucianism dating back two thousand years.

It contains this passage: “When you know where to stop, you have stability. When you have stability, you can be tranquil. When you are tranquil, you can be at ease. When you are at ease, you can be deliberate. When you can deliberate, you can attain your goals”.

This passage reveals the same principle as the ABCs of mindfulness, that only when a person’s mind is calm can s/he see truly and think clearly.

[click to proceed to the next slide]

《莊子》「水靜則明燭鬚眉，平中準，大匠取法焉。水靜猶明，而況精神。聖人之心靜乎，天地之鑒也，萬物之鏡也。」

‘Zhuangzi’

When water is still, a person's face can be seen clearly. The stillness of water is the standard that craftsmen follow.

When water is still, it becomes clear, just as our spirit can become clear.

The heart of a sage is tranquil—it is the mirror of heaven and earth, reflecting all things as they truly are.

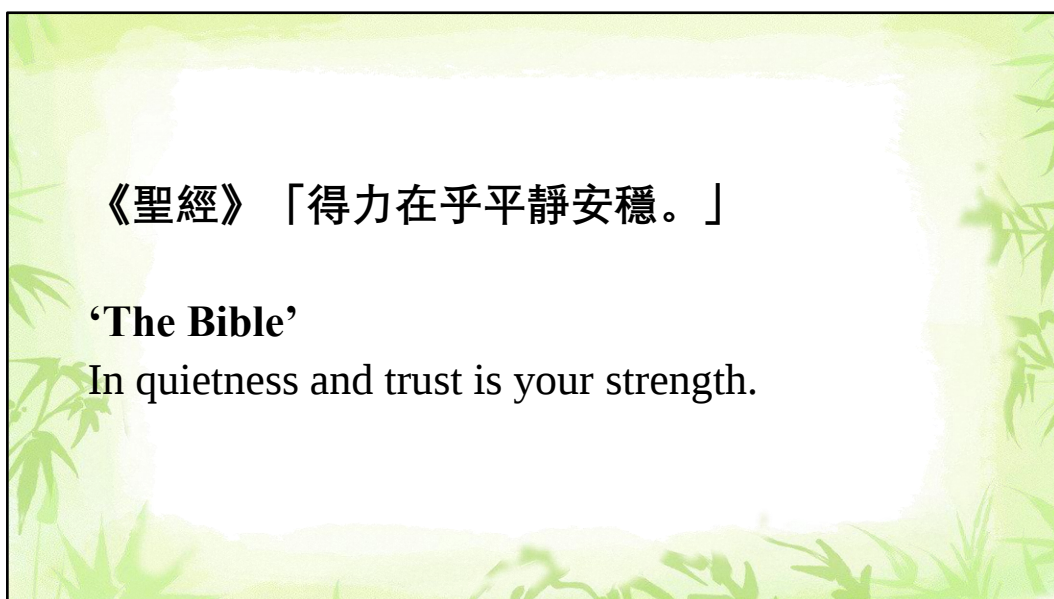
[Click to display an excerpt from "Zhuangzi"]

“When water is still, a person's face can be seen clearly. The stillness of water is the standard that craftsmen follow. When water is still, it becomes clear, just as our spirit can become clear. The heart of a sage is tranquil, it is the mirror of heaven and earth, reflecting all things as they truly are”

Zhuangzi believed that still water can reflect a person's face and features clearly, just like a mirror. Master craftsmen rely on the stillness of water when building houses. If still water can be so clear, what about the human spirit?

Zhuangzi himself answered: “The mind of a sage is very calm, like a mirror of heaven and earth, reflecting all things as they truly are”.

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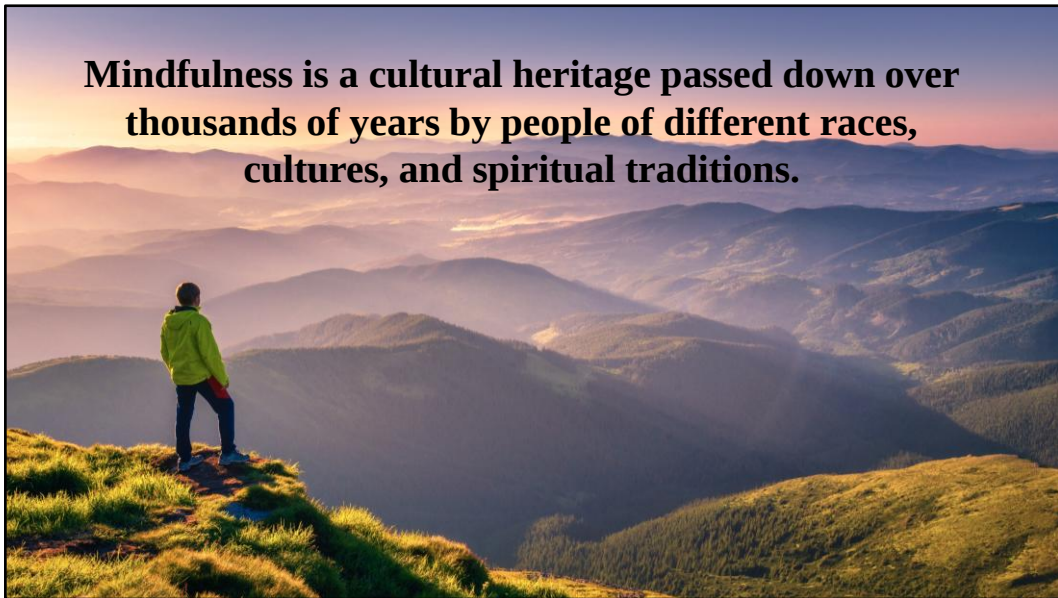


[Click to display an excerpt from the Bible]

The Bible, a sacred text of Western Christianity, also contains this passage: “In quietness and trust is your strength”.

A common misconception is that mindfulness is a practice unique to Buddhism. From the scriptures above, we can see that...

[Click to proceed to the next slide]



The Universality of Mindfulness

Mindfulness is a cultural heritage passed down over thousands of years by people of different races, cultures, and spiritual traditions.

There is no need to regard mindfulness as a practice exclusive to any particular religion. People of all races, cultures, and religious backgrounds can practice mindfulness.

[Click to proceed to the next slide]

Different Terms for Mindfulness Across Traditions

- Mindfulness 靜觀
- Right mindfulness 正念
- Zen 禪修
- Hesychasm 靜修
- Spiritual formation 靈修
- Contemplation 默想
- Vipassana 內觀
- Mystical meditation 冥想



Different Terms for Mindfulness Across Traditions

Different religious and spiritual traditions have their own terms for this kind of practice. Buddhists call it “Zen” or “Bhavana”, Catholics call it “Hesychasm”, and Christians call it “spiritual formation”.

The modern mindfulness practice founded by Jon Kabat-Zinn is non-religious and scientifically supported. Therefore, most mindfulness teachers in Hong Kong use a neutral term: “mindfulness”.

[Click to enlarge the term “mindfulness”]

However, people can certainly use terms like “right mindfulness”, “Hesychasm,” “spiritual formation,” or “contemplation” according to their own religious background. But there is one term that many mindfulness teachers discourage: “mystical meditation” or “冥想” in Chinese.

[Click to make the term “mystical meditation” disappear]

Because the word “mystical” carries supernatural connotations, such as “destined by fate” or “the netherworld”. Many mindfulness teachers, committed to a scientific and empirical, non-religious approach, avoid this term to prevent any associations with superstition or mysticism.

[Click to proceed to the next slide]



Playing the Video “Frequently Asked Questions about Mindfulness”

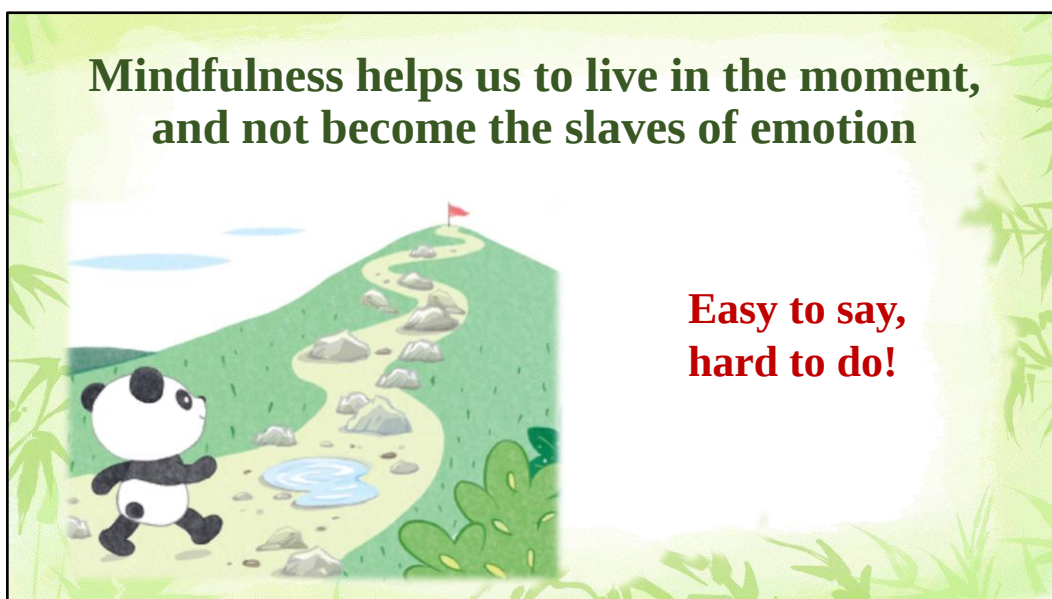
The Jockey Club “Peace and Awareness” initiative produced a video explaining the relationship between mindfulness and religion, and answering other frequently asked questions about mindfulness. Let's watch this video now.

[Click to play the video]

This video is about three and a half minutes long and is embedded in the slides. However, if the computer is older or runs slowly and cannot play the audio, please consider playing the video file in the resource package directly, or access it on YouTube through the following link:

<https://youtu.be/q24U09kY1Zo>

[After the video finishes, click to proceed to the next slide]



The Importance of Regular Practice

Mindfulness helps us live in the present moment and not become slaves to our emotions. However, this is easier said than done. When faced with a difficult situation and our emotions surge, it is hard to calm down.

[Click to display the phrase “Easy to say, hard to do”]

Kabat-Zinn once said: “Don't weave your parachute the moment you jump out of the plane”.

Practicing mindfulness requires regular practice. Only then can it help us when we face difficulties. So how do we practice?

[Click to proceed to the next slide]



The JC Panda Website

All audio guides and introductory videos have been uploaded to the JC Panda website. Please visit the “Videos and Audios” page by scanning the QR code to access these resources and explore mindfulness practices at your own pace.

However, the best way to learn mindfulness is through formal training courses.

[Click to proceed to the next slide]



賽馬會「樂天心澄」
靜觀校園文化行動

Jockey Club "Peace and Awareness"
Mindfulness Culture in Schools Initiative

- Adopting the 'train-the-trainers' approach
 - We aim to train school teachers to integrate **Paws b** and **.b** to their counselling classes, life education class, and homeroom sessions.
 - We also aim to train the school counsellors, such as educational psychologists and social workers, to deliver the 8-week **.b foundation course** for adults to teaching teachers and parents.
- Building a sustainable mindfulness culture in schools

Introducing the Courses Provided by JC PandaA

The Jockey Club "Peace and Awareness" Initiative has introduced a series of mindfulness courses to Hong Kong schools. There include a 12-session **Paws b** course for primary school students, a 10-session **.b** course for secondary school students, and an eight-week **.b foundation** course for teachers and parents.

This program employs a train-the-trainer approach. Teachers and school counsellors are trained to deliver the **Paws b** and **.b** programs to students in their schools. School counsellors are also further trained to teach the **.b foundation** course to teachers and parents in their schools.

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Information about JC Panda Initiative

If you are interested in learning more about mindfulness and its related courses or activities, you can visit the website, Facebook, Instagram, or YouTube account of the Jockey Club “Peace and Awareness” Initiative.

Today’s introduction and mindfulness experience is coming to a close. I hope today’s workshop gave everyone a basic understanding of mindfulness and inspired you to continue learning!

Thank you for your participation. I hope we have the opportunity to explore and practice mindfulness together in the future. Goodbye!

Important Information

Opportunities for further study in mindfulness

Listed on the last page of the facilitator's manual are some bibliographies for facilitators to further study mindfulness. However, the mastery of mindfulness cannot be accomplished in one stroke, nor by merely reading.

Suggestions for the Facilitators

1. We recommend the facilitators to experience the nourishment of mindfulness for themselves when they host this workshop. The more they can practice and embody mindful attitudes, the more their participants will be connected with mindfulness.
2. When recruiting participants, please only accept those who volunteer and do not conscript anyone who is not interested.
3. Do not have overly high expectations for this mindfulness workshop, thinking that it can treat any illness or solve any problem. Such a brief workshop cannot replace the treatment that participants should seek or are currently receiving.
4. The facilitators may respond to participants' questions according to the answers of "frequently asked questions" in the last few pages of this manual. However, if they find some questions difficult, they should not feel obligated to offer an answer, instead they could consult experienced mindfulness teachers.

Safety notice

Anything that is powerful can be harmful. A scalpel can either save or harm people, and so is mindfulness. The safety of mindfulness practice hinges on three conditions. First is the nature of the practice. Second is the state of participants. Third is the capability of the instructor. Generally, short practices are relatively safe, while practices with bigger dosages, such as those that are continuous and last for several days, must be led by qualified mindfulness teachers. Even brief practices may also be inappropriate for certain populations, such as those who have traumatic experiences, or have severe emotional issues. However, they can still practise mindfulness led by instructors with professional qualifications in psychotherapy. Therefore, should there be any difficulties, facilitators hosting this mindfulness workshop should consult an experienced mindfulness teacher or a counselling psychologist for assistance or referral.

FAQs about mindfulness

What is mindfulness?

Jon Kabat-Zinn defines mindfulness as awareness that arises from paying attention to the present moment purposefully and non-judgmentally. It is the awareness of the internal and external experiences of the present moment. An internal experience can be your breath, bodily sensations, emotions, and thoughts. An external experience can be the surrounding environment, people, and things. Mindfulness is being mindful of the present experiences non-judgmentally. Being judgmental elicits emotional interference, and consequentially we are unable to calm down and observe clearly.

Is mindfulness practice the same as emptying the mind or not thinking at all?

Being mindful is not emptying the mind. During mindfulness practice, we pay full attention to a specific target. It can be our breath, bodily sensations, emotions, thoughts, or difficulties encountered, and it will not be nothing. We are not “mindless” but “mindful”. However, if we pay attention judgmentally, it is easy for us to become biased and emotional, and thus we cannot see or think clearly. Mindfulness is composed of three elements: A, B, and C. A is “Awareness.” B is “Being with.” C is “Choice.” Only when being aware of the present moment non-judgmentally, can we calm ourselves down, see clearly and make wise choices. The Chinese Confucian Classic “The Great Learning (*Da Xue*)” offers a notion similar to ABC: “*When you know where to stop, you have stability. When you have stability, you can be tranquil. When you are tranquil, you can be at ease. When you are at ease, you can deliberate. When you can deliberate, you can attain your aims.*” Only when one is calm, can one think clearly and make the best decisions.

Why practice mindfulness?

There are different reasons for people to practise mindfulness. Some enjoy practicing mindfulness as it allows them to pause and breathe in a busy day. Some studies revealed that attending a formal 8-week mindfulness course helps people cope with anxiety, stress, depression, etc. Other studies found evidence that practising mindfulness boosts one’s positivity and kindness. Furthermore, some found that practising mindfulness improves attention and memory, as well as academic, music, and athletic performance. What we have learnt today is not a formal 8-week mindfulness course, but several short practices. As such, the benefits might not be as powerful as shown in the research findings. Nonetheless, these short practices still offer a break-time and concrete methods to calm us down and take good care of ourselves.

Is mindfulness the same as Zen practice in Buddhism?

The practices provided in the facilitator’s manual are secular. Different religions may have their own practice of mindfulness. For example, Buddhists refer to mindfulness as “Zen” or “Sati” while Catholics and Christians refer to it as “Hesychasm” or “Spiritual Formation.” Some Christians and Catholics practise mindfulness to calm their mind before praying. As such, one does not need to view mindfulness as exclusive to a particular religion. In fact, mindfulness is a cultural heritage shared by different races, cultures, and spiritualities for thousands of years.

Is mindfulness the same as sitting meditation?

The practice of mindfulness can take different forms. Sitting meditation is only one of them. You can practise mindful sitting, standing, or even lying down. Mindful stretching is also included in the facilitator’s manual. You may learn more forms of practice in an 8-week mindfulness course.

Is practising mindfulness just a way of relaxation?

Although mindfulness practices do help us relax, that is not the only purpose they serve. In fact, mindfulness is also a life attitude which helps us learn to live at the present moment, to savour the good things in life, and to respond skillfully to the difficulties we may encounter. However, the current facilitator's manual only provides some short mindfulness practices that do not go deep to the level of life attitude. A formal 8-week course will explain more on how mindfulness practices offer not just relaxation but a life attitude.

Does the longer the mindfulness practice have the better outcome?

Some may enjoy doing a 45-minute mindfulness practice every day. Others may prefer to join a week-long mindfulness retreat and continuously practise throughout the entire retreat. For beginners, we recommend starting from short practices. This facilitator's manual offers short practices of only one to two minutes, or longer practices of six to seven minutes. Actually, short practices can also be effective. For example, the three-step breathing space is short but still has a calming effect. Nonetheless, it takes practice to reach the desired outcome. Practising mindfulness is similar to learning any sport: regular practice leads to better outcomes.

Is practising mindfulness safe?

Like most sports, the benefits of mindfulness are derived from progressive practice. If you have not tried mindfulness before or feel particularly vulnerable at the moment, we would not recommend you to undergo long or intensive mindfulness practices. In general, short practices allow you to explore mindfulness safely. Nonetheless, if you feel uncomfortable during the practices, please do not continue.

Are mindfulness practices suitable for everyone?

Although the mindfulness practices in this facilitator's manual are not long and are quite safe, mindfulness practices are not for everyone. For example, for those who have experienced trauma, the traumatic memories may flashback during the mindfulness practices. In this case, insisting on practising does not help. Even if they wish to continue trying, they should only keep practising under the supervision of a mindfulness facilitator with psychotherapy training and experience.

What should I do if I can't concentrate while practising mindfulness?

It is normal if your mind wanders. When your mind wanders, please do not blame yourself or think that you have done something wrong. Being aware of your wandering mind is also an awareness! You should celebrate your achievement. When you find yourself getting distracted, please be aware of where your mind has gone. Then, gently but firmly bring it back to your focus of attention. No matter how frequently you are distracted, you simply bring it back to the present moment. With repeated practice, you will learn to embrace yourself with an accepting, open, loving, and firm attitude.

What if I feel bored and irritated while practising mindfulness?

If you feel bored and irritated during practice, please pay attention to your feeling at the moment. See if you can observe the anxious feeling without trying to get rid of it. Please breathe with the feeling without judgment. This is a great opportunity to experience how to focus on the present non-judgmentally with love and firmness.

What if I feel sad while practising mindfulness?

If you feel sad while practising mindfulness, please observe these feelings with love and acceptance. However, if these feelings are too intense that the practice does not help, please do not continue. More importantly, if you are facing huge difficulties, please talk to someone, may it be your friends, family members, or helping professionals. Please share with others and don't bear it alone. Having a companion is helpful.

If I want to learn more about mindfulness, which books can I read?

林瑞芳：《靜觀自得：生命的祝福》（香港：皇冠出版社，2021年）。

林瑞芳、關匡宏、蘇文朗、曾家儀：《靜觀校園文化》（香港：香港大學社會科學學院，2022年）。www.jcpanda.hk/book

新生精神康復會：《靜觀生活30天——活在當下，讓身心靈更自由》（香港：蜂鳥出版社，2019年）。

Kabat-Zinn, J. (2011). *Mindfulness for Beginners: Reclaiming the Present Moment and Your Life*. Boulder: Sounds True. [With CD (Audio)]

Williams, M., & Penman, D. (2011). *Mindfulness: A Practical Guide to Finding Peace in A Frantic World*. London: Piatkus.

Teasdale, J., Williams, & M., Segal, Z. (2014). *The Mindful Way Workbook: An 8-week Program to Free Yourself from Depression and Emotional Distress*. [With CD(Audio)]. New York: Guilford.



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