

Practising Mindfulness

Meditation to Mindfulness Workshop Schedule

SECTION ONE - MEDITATION

10:00

Introduction:

- Expectations, goals, and the necessity of commitment and determination is discussed
- The importance of mental health and mental fitness
- Resistance to change and how we overcome this is touched on here and expanded on later

10:30

Correct Posture in Meditation:

- How we sit in order to be comfortable yet alert during meditation is now discussed, demonstrated, and experienced. Although some find the association of crossed-legs, cushion and mat useful, chairs are also provided

Correct Breathing in Meditation:

- How we breathe is something that is often overlooked. As a semi-autonomic function we're able to bring the process of breathing into our conscious awareness. As such, the use of controlled breathing in meditation is now discussed, demonstrated and experienced. Controlled breathing is used at the start of meditation, becoming less controlled, developing into a rhythmic and relaxed style

11:30

The Breath Awareness Technique:

- How to meditate
- In order to gently introduce students to the art of meditation, just one method, used for focusing attention, is now discussed and experienced
- Thoughts and feelings feedback is important now, as any unconscious resistance, can be picked up on and questioned at this early stage

12:00

Raising Awareness to the Nature of Thought:

- Questions:
What is thought? - Practical exercise
What are beliefs?
What am I thinking?
How are thoughts generated?
Where is the mind (with these thoughts) the majority of the time?
Are we thinking about the past or imagined futures?
Are our thoughts fantasy?
What bearing does this have on any coping mechanisms we might have?
What is happening for us in the present moment?
- After group discussion - based around these questions - we now bring together what we've learnt so far
- Sitting correctly, focusing on our breathing, the first five minute meditation session begins. Because this is guided, it is quite often found to be a new, and profound experience for participants
- Thoughts and feelings feedback

13:00 Lunch

SECTION TWO - MINDFULNESS

13:45

Mindfulness from Meditation:

- A second five minute meditation session is now experienced
- Thoughts and feelings feedback
- The Mindfulness Labyrinth - practical exercise
- What is mindfulness and the consequences of its opposite?
How does the regular practice of meditation lead to mindfulness?
- Issues relating to compassion, opinions, the ego and non-judgement are now discussed

14:30

Managing Stress and Enhancing Well-being from Mindfulness:

- How does mindfulness reduce stress - how does negative analytical thinking create it?
Stress tolerance very much depends on the individual. Fear has a large bearing on this, and so raising awareness to the nature of our thoughts, and then keeping them under our conscious control, is the epitome of stress management. Mindfulness skills are key.
How we create our own difficulties becomes increasingly apparent through mindfulness. How this enables us to change and improve general quality of life is discussed
- Third five minute meditation session begins

15:00

Building Mindfulness from Daily Meditation:

- Keeping the mind predominantly present-moment-focused is something that grows with time. This ability builds through daily meditation practice. Through anchoring our minds, to the calm focus found during meditation, we increasingly draw our conscious attention to the nature of our thoughts
- Time permitting, relaxation, mindful movement, and mindful walking exercises, will also be covered

15:30

- The fourth and final meditation session begins (ten minutes)

15:45

- We are reminded of the importance of determination, self-discipline and commitment, at this stage. Daily meditation is a must if we're to increase and develop mindfulness skills
- Presentations

16:00

- Positive suggestions to close