



Mindfulness is an integrative, mind-body based training that enables people to change the way they think and feel about their experiences, especially stressful experiences.

Through cultivating mindful awareness, we discover how to live in the present moment rather than brooding about the past or worrying about the future.

What is mindfulness?

Mindfulness means paying attention in a particular way:

- on purpose,
- in the present moment, and
- non-judgmentally

Mindfulness originates from ancient Buddhist traditions, although transitioned into the Western world when Jon Kabat-Zinn developed the Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction program at the University of Massachusetts Medical Centre. Although initially developed to help people suffering with chronic physical pain and long-term medical conditions, it has now been shown to assist with a range of problems relating to both physical and mental health.

What are the benefits of mindfulness?

Studies indicate that people who regularly meditate are happier and more contented than average. More specifically, regular mindfulness meditation has been linked to:

- Reduced levels of anxiety, depression and irritability
- Increased ability to control addictive behaviour like drug and alcohol dependence
- Increased ability to regulate emotion
- Improved memory and faster reaction times
- Increased mental and physical stamina
- Improved attention, job performance, productivity and satisfaction
- Increased ability to manage stress
- Reduced indicators of chronic stress, e.g. hypertension and blood pressure
- Reduced impact of serious conditions like chronic pain and cancer
- Improved immune system functioning, assisting to fight off cold, flus and other diseases
- Improved general wellbeing
- Better-quality relationships

Darwin (Head Office)

P. (08) 8941 1752

F. (08) 8941 0746

easadarwin@easa.org.au

Alice Springs

(08) 8953 4225

easaalicesprings@easa.org.au

Katherine

P. (08) 8941 1752

F. (08) 8941 0746

Toll Free (NT only)

1800 193 123

www.easa.org.au

Mindfulness

How does mindfulness work?

- It helps you become more aware of your experience in the present moment, by tuning into moment-to-moment changes in the mind and the body
- It helps to cultivate acceptance which in turn can reduce suffering by eliminating the secondary, 'unnecessary' layer of suffering we create when we judge or struggle with our experience

How can I develop skills in mindfulness?

- Attend counselling or therapy with a practitioner who has skills in mindfulness
- Sign up for a Mindfulness Program, such as Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction
- Develop skills in mindfulness yourself via use of self-help books, smart phone applications and websites (see below for examples)

Further information

Some self-help mindfulness programs:

- "Mindfulness: A practical guide to finding peace in a frantic world" (2011) by Danny Penman and Mark Williams. Available in hardcopy from book stores or audiobook format on iTunes.
- Smiling Mind: smilingmind.com.au/

You can find out more about mindfulness at the following sites:

- Centre for Clinical Interventions: www.cci.health.wa.gov.au/ ("What is mindfulness?")
- Oxford Mindfulness Centre: www.oxfordmindfulness.org/about-mindfulness/
- ACT Mindfully: www.actmindfully.com.au/mindfulness

Also see our tip sheets on:

- Stress Management
- Work-Life Balance
- Lifestyle Management