

# THE GREATER GOOD GUIDE TO Mindfulness

A RESOURCE FOR MEMBERS OF THE GREATER GOOD SCIENCE CENTER

It's been 30 years since Jon Kabat-Zinn launched his Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction program at the University of Massachusetts Medical Center. What began as a bit of a lark—an attempt by a molecular biologist to bring Buddhist meditation (minus the Buddhism) into the mainstream of medicine—has grown into a genuine social movement, with variations of the MBSR program developing everywhere from elementary schools to hospitals to the halls of Congress. At the same time, a growing body of research has documented the physical and psychological health benefits of practicing mindfulness, even for just a few weeks.

Still, the term “mindfulness” is likely to raise more than a few questions. For starters: What, exactly, is it?

“Simply put, mindfulness is moment-to-moment awareness,” writes Kabat-Zinn in his groundbreaking book *Full Catastrophe Living*. “It is cultivated by purposefully paying attention to things we ordinarily never give a moment’s thought to. It is a systematic approach to developing new kinds of control and wisdom in our lives.”

Kabat-Zinn has made it his life’s work to promote secular applications of mindfulness. In his presentation at the recent Greater Good Science Center event, “Compassion, Mindfulness, and Well-Being,” he explained that mindfulness can be cultivated through formal meditation, but that’s not the only way.

“It’s not really about sitting in the full lotus, like pretending you’re a statue in a British museum,” he said. “It’s about living your life as if it really mattered, moment by moment by moment by moment.”

Kabat-Zinn used his GGSC talk, part of the Center’s “Science of a Meaningful Life” event series, to elucidate the practice and the purpose of mindfulness, and to reflect on the extraordinary growth and influence of his MBSR program.

So far, more than 18,000 people have completed the eight-week program, where they practice basic mindfulness techniques, from sitting meditation to an exercise in eating mindfully, and consider how to draw on these practices as they navigate the challenges of everyday life. Many enroll because they are suffering from ailments ranging from high blood pressure to depression to cancer. Research shows that most of them enjoy significant improvements in their



Greater Good Science Center Faculty Director Dacher Keltner (left) with Jon Kabat-Zinn following Kabat-Zinn’s presentation at the GGSC event, “Compassion, Mindfulness, and Well-Being.”

physical and mental health: less pain, higher self-esteem, more excitement about life, and a greater ability to relax and cope with stress. They even show fewer symptoms of physical illness.

But as Kabat-Zinn told the audience at his GGSC talk, the applications of mindfulness go far beyond its medical value.

“People who come and understand what we’re doing, the first thing they say is ‘Oh my God, this isn’t about stress reduction,’” he said. “This is about my life.”

Indeed, the broad, everyday relevance of mindfulness is demonstrated by how widely it is being embraced in new programs across different sectors of society. School-based programs teaching mindfulness to kids have taken off over the past few years; mindfulness-based programs are also gaining traction in prisons and among substance abuse counselors. These programs and many others have used MBSR as a model, and they’re fueled by the increasing number of studies that link mindfulness to emotional balance and stronger immune systems, among other benefits. Whereas just a handful of studies with the word “mindfulness” in the title were published 25 years ago, now that number is approaching or exceeding 100 each year.

We offer this guide as a companion to Kabat-Zinn’s GGSC talk (video of which can be found at [www.greatergoodscience.org](http://www.greatergoodscience.org)), highlighting resources, research, and some of the many innovative applications of Kabat-Zinn’s MBSR program.

While by no means comprehensive, we hope it provides a better sense of what mindfulness is, what its benefits are, how it’s practiced, and how you might cultivate more of it in your own life.

## What is mindfulness?

“Simply put, mindfulness is moment-to-moment awareness,” writes Jon Kabat-Zinn in his groundbreaking book *Full Catastrophe Living*. “It is cultivated by purposefully paying attention to things we ordinarily never give a moment’s thought to. . . .

“We practice mindfulness by remembering to be present in all our waking moments.”

## Watch the Video

For more on mindfulness, check out the video of Jon Kabat-Zinn’s presentation from the Greater Good Science Center’s “Science of a Meaningful Life” event series at [www.greatergoodscience.org](http://www.greatergoodscience.org).

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Kevin Bjorke

Students practice mindfulness in the Oakland, California-based Mindful Schools program.

# Why Mindfulness?

MORE THAN 18,000 PEOPLE have completed Jon Kabat-Zinn's Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction since 1979; countless others have benefitted from the program as it has been adapted to different settings. Below four pioneers in the field explain how they have incorporated mindfulness and the MBSR program into their work, why they chose to do so, and what effects it has had on those they serve.

## Mindful Education

BY PATRICIA JENNINGS

I'm visiting a special education class for children with autism spectrum disorders, many of whom have problems with their motor skills. The students are practicing an activity meant to foster concentration and mindful attention: Holding a small bell, they must walk around a table without making it ring.

Everyone is sitting quietly focused on one boy, who I'll call "John," as he carefully grasps the handle of the bell. "He can't do it," whispers one, shaking his head. "Give him a chance," murmurs another. Diagnosed with Asperger's syndrome, John is plagued with severe motor tics. Despite this handicap, he walks slowly and deliberately, his eyes fixed on the bell, until he has made it all the way around the table. The bell never rings. "I did it!" he beams. The class applauds. Later his teacher tells me that this is the first time he's been able to control the incessant tics that make it difficult for him to use a pencil.

Like John's teacher, growing numbers of educators are exploring the use of mindfulness-based methods. Diverse contemplative traditions have long held that regular mindfulness practice increases awareness of one's internal and external experience and promotes reflection, self-regulation, and caring for others—the very factors that studies have identified as important to learning, and to developing supportive relationships. A growing body of scientific research on adults suggests that mindfulness truly does strengthen these skills. But researchers and educators are still determining how best to adapt mindfulness techniques for children and adolescents—not an easy task, since their mind-body processes function very differently than adults', depending upon their age and developmental stage.

During my 25 years as a teacher and teacher educator, I integrated mindfulness practices into my teaching. For instance, before recess, I invited my students to close their eyes and focus their attention on the chimes of a bell, then raise their hand when the ringing stopped. The room became silent in anticipation before they listened to the steadily quieting tone. Once everyone had raised their hands, I would whisper each child's name to excuse them.

For the past three years, as the director of contemplation and education at the Garrison Institute, a non-profit organization that explores the intersection of contemplation and engaged action in the world, I've been working with researchers to investigate whether and how these practices can be applied to educational settings on a wider scale.

I've seen quite a few promising programs. In one of them, called MindUP, elementary students learn to be mindful of their breathing, senses, thoughts, and feelings. For example, during a mindful eating exercise, children slowly and deliberately focus their sight, smell, and taste on experiencing a raisin or a piece of chocolate. When Kimberly Schonert-Riechl, a professor of education at the University of British Columbia, compared students participating in the program with those who were not, she found that students in MindUP showed greater improvements in their reports of happiness, well-being, and mindful awareness. Teachers reported that these children significantly reduced their aggression and disruptive behavior, and showed significant improvements in their social skills and attention levels.

Trish Broderick, a professor in the department of health and the director of the Stress Reduction Center at West Chester University of Pennsylvania, has developed another program, a mindfulness-based health curriculum for teens called BREATHE. The program includes in-class mindfulness-practice, time



Kevin Bjorke

## Practice for Parents

BY NANCY BARDACKE

In 1994 I attended a weeklong retreat for healthcare professionals interested in mindfulness meditation, led by Jon Kabat-Zinn. I had heard about Jon's pioneering work at UMass Medical Center teaching mindfulness meditation to patients suffering from a wide range of physical and mental health challenges; as a practicing midwife for more than 20 years, and a meditation practitioner since the early 1980s, I was deeply curious about how Jon's Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) course might apply to my work as a midwife and benefit the families I cared for.

Sitting on the floor with 125 other health care providers that week, I developed a deep appreciation for how the MBSR course helped people access inner resources of strength, resilience, and well-being. And in one flashing moment, I knew what I needed—or, more accurately, felt compelled—to do: bring this way of teaching mindful awareness to expectant couples. Though I couldn't have articulated it then, what I now know is that mindfulness can help these couples through the often stressful changes that are a normal part of pregnancy, prepare them for the profoundly transforming experience of childbirth, and navigate the joys and challenges of parenthood with greater compassion, equanimity, and self-acceptance.

In 1998, after teaching the MBSR course myself for several years, I began morphing it into the Mindfulness-Based Childbirth and Parenting (MBCP) program, which I currently teach at the Osher Center for Integrative

for students to de-stress, and instruction on managing thoughts and feelings. Piloted among a group of 123 high school senior girls enrolled in a private parochial school outside of Philadelphia, results showed decreases in negative emotion, fewer somatic symptoms like aches and pains, less overtiredness, and a greater ability to relax, regulate their emotions, and let go of distressing thoughts.

Though we still need more research, these results so far suggest that the skills—and the benefits—of mindfulness can in fact be made widely available to kids of different ages and backgrounds. We're seeing evidence that children have a natural capacity for quieting their mind and focusing their attention, skills that can build self-control and enhance their ability to learn. In the process, it may help kids like John achieve their highest potential—in school and in life.

**Patricia Jennings, Ph.D.**, is the Director of Contemplation and Education at the Garrison Institute and holds a research faculty position at the Prevention Research Center at Pennsylvania State University.



Emilie Raguso

Couples participate in Nancy Bardacke's Mindfulness-Based Childbirth and Parenting (MBCP) program.

Medicine at the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF), Medical Center. While the eight-week MBCP course includes much of what is taught in a traditional childbirth class—such as the physiology of labor, positions for birthing, and breastfeeding—the foundation of the class is the mindfulness practice. Expectant parents who sign up for the course commit to a daily formal meditation practice with the CDs that I provide. The program involves yoga, mindfulness in daily life, ways to use the mind to work with pain in labor, a daylong retreat, and a reunion after all the babies have been born. When the course is over, participants often stay connected, forming a community of self-reflective parents committed to the ongoing work of raising their children with wisdom, kindness, connectedness, and care.

I have now taught mindfulness skills to several thousand expectant families, and the results I've seen have far exceeded anything I could have anticipated. Parents report that the practice of being in the present moment was vital for their birth experience, as well as for the intense time of caring for a newborn. For many, it became a cornerstone of their parenting. As one new parent told me, "The practice helped me learn how to manage not only the contractions of labor—but the contractions of life!"

We are now finding initial empirical evidence to back this up: Results from an uncontrolled pilot study conducted by myself and Larissa Duncan, an assistant professor of family and community medicine at UCSF, published in a new special issue of the *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, suggests that pregnant women who take the MBCP course experience reductions in pregnancy-related anxiety and depression, and increases in mindfulness and positive emotion during pregnancy. They also report using mindfulness as a way to cope with stressful aspects of the pregnancy, childbirth, and early parenting.

Teaching mindfulness skills to expectant parents has certainly expanded my own view of childbirth preparation. I've learned that the wonderfully open and receptive time of pregnancy provides a rich opportunity to cultivate skills for self-reflection, emotional regulation, and stress reduction—skills that are vital to the lifelong adventure of parenting, family-making, and indeed, life itself.

**Nancy Bardacke, CNM, MA**, is a mindfulness teacher, assistant clinical professor in the department of family health care nursing at UCSF, and founding director of the Mindfulness-Based Childbirth and Parenting (MBCP) Program ([www.mindfulbirthing.org](http://www.mindfulbirthing.org)). Her book, *Mindful Birthing: Training the Mind, Body and Heart for Childbirth and Beyond* (HarperCollins), has an expected publication date of early 2011.



“Obama is the first mindful president that we’ve had in my lifetime, maybe ever,” said Jon Kabat-Zinn in his Greater Good Science Center talk. “He’s got a lot of different qualities that seem to indicate that he is emotionally balanced.”

## Treating the Wounds of War

BY BARBARA L. NILES, AMY K. SILBERBOGEN, AND JULIE KLUNK-GILLIS

In the spring of 2005, veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan began to trickle into the VA Boston Healthcare System, the system of veterans’ hospitals in the greater Boston area, seeking treatment for emotional problems, including Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Veterans with PTSD often experience intrusive memories and nightmares, feel emotionally numb, and show symptoms of hyperarousal, such as intense anger and the need to constantly be on the lookout for danger. At the time, a growing body of research suggested two important findings: that tens of thousands of veterans were suffering from these mental health problems, and that, despite treatment available through the military and the Department of Veterans Affairs, only a minority were willing to seek treatment.

We wanted to find some way to help these veterans readjust to civilian life, but we knew we had to overcome some of the barriers that often kept them from seeking treatment, such as inconvenience and the stigma associated with mental health care. As we investigated various approaches, we found that Jon Kabat-Zinn’s Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction program had proven

to be effective at alleviating chronic pain and depression, two common problems for veterans with symptoms of PTSD. What’s more, when practiced regularly, research suggests mindfulness can also calm the body and mind, making it a good fit for addressing the hyperarousal symptoms of PTSD, such as intense irritability and trouble sleeping.

**Instead of looking behind trees for threats, the veterans began to notice the trees themselves, seeing them as if for the first time.**

To make this program more accessible to veterans, we decided to use a “telehealth” method and deliver part of the treatment over the phone. We secured funding from the Samuels Institute for Information Biology to conduct a small pilot research study to see if veterans with PTSD could benefit from a mindfulness intervention delivered this way. In eight sessions of treatment (two in-person and six over the phone), we covered some basic concepts of mindfulness with a group of 17 veterans. For instance, we helped them

learn to pay closer attention to their sensations, thoughts, and emotions so that they would be more present in each moment; individuals with PTSD tend to be extremely avoidant, often failing to acknowledge or engage in their emotional experiences and their surroundings. Veterans also received a mindfulness education handbook, covering core concepts of mindfulness, and CDs of guided mindfulness exercises, along with instructions to practice for five to 20 minutes per day.

When these 17 veterans completed their weekly sessions and came in for a six-week follow-up visit, we were pleasantly surprised that most of them had read the handbook and practiced using the CDs much more than we had asked them to (an average of 130 minutes per week). We were also happy to find that they reported being highly satisfied with the mindfulness treatment and experienced some relief from their PTSD symptoms afterwards. They were less likely to have intrusive memories of traumatic events, for instance, and they didn’t feel as numb emotionally as they had before; a comparison group of veterans, who received a different treatment for PTSD, didn’t show a reduction in their symptoms. However, the changes in PTSD symptoms among the mindfulness group didn’t last through the six-week follow-up period, suggesting the need to maintain one’s mindfulness practice in order to continue to enjoy its positive effects.

Still, these 17 veterans reported some important changes in their day-to-day lives that were not necessarily captured by our standardized measures. Some told us how they weren’t always on edge like they used to be: Where they used to look only for danger, some of the veterans began to notice their environments in new ways. While walking outside, for example, instead of looking *behind* trees for threats, they began to notice the trees themselves, seeing them as if for the first time. Others mentioned how they weren’t as quick to anger as they used to be; they started to notice and acknowledge their emotional reactions rather than immediately acting on them.

This study offered evidence that veterans could really tolerate and benefit from a mindfulness intervention. Because it was a pilot study, we are looking for ways to replicate these preliminary findings in a larger population—perhaps with “booster” sessions after the eight weeks to ensure that the effects of mindfulness endure. While the traumas of war are not easily overcome, we believe mindfulness—either alone or along



Lowell Correctional Institute

Elizabeth Cohen (second row, far left) with a class of graduates from the mindfulness class she has lead since January of 2007 at the Lowell Correctional Institute for Women in Ocala, Florida.

with other research-proven treatments—can offer veterans some relief, encouragement, and hope.

**Barbara Niles, Ph.D.**, is a staff psychologist in the Behavioral Science Division of the National Center for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder within the VA Boston Healthcare System. **Amy K. Silberbogen, Ph.D.**, is a clinical psychologist and the director of the VA Boston Psychology Postdoctoral Fellowship Program at the VA Boston Healthcare System. **Julie Klunk-Gillis, Ph.D.**, is the assistant director of the PTSD Clinic and a staff psychologist in the Center for Returning Veterans at the Brockton VA, which is part of the VA Boston Healthcare System.

## Mindfulness Behind Bars

BY ELIZABETH COHEN

“A black wall comes over me like before—rage.” Sandy’s chest is heaving and her voice rising thinly as she remembers a confrontation she had the previous week. Sandy is no stranger to rage. It’s why she has landed in the Lowell Correctional Institute for Women in Ocala, Florida, where she’s serving a 40-year sentence for murder.

Lowell C. I. is where I met Sandy, a participant in the Mind-Body Stress Reduction program that I and others have been teaching since January of 2007. Our program has adapted Jon Kabat-Zinn’s Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction program for the ever-chang-

ing circumstances of a penal institution. We have now completed 11 eight-week voluntary classes, with roughly 120 women in each class, from this prison of 2,800 inmates, where the average education level is 6th grade.

In the program, women are introduced to mindfulness practices such as sitting and walking meditation, mindful yoga, and focused attention on their breathing. They also participate in group discussions about the challenges of these practices, the multiple effects of stress, and how to respond less impulsively to the stresses in their lives. They are learning to meditate in rough circumstances. Most are in noisy dorms, doubled-bunked with more than 80 other women—a mix of violent and non-violent offenders—and lack air-conditioning even in Florida’s hot, steamy summers.

And yet the women report significant changes over the course of our program: an ability to pause before acting, a greater awareness of their body and emotions, and the ability to manage anger, anxiety, and panic more effectively, often choosing to walk away from altercations and even de-escalate highly charged situations. We also hear repeatedly from participants that the program helps them fall asleep more easily, feel less tension in their bodies, experience more moments of calm and peace, become more accepting of themselves and others (even those who are often “in their face”), and focus more on education in prison. Their accounts echo the results of a 2007 study published in *The Prison Journal*, in which researchers brought MBSR into the Massachusetts prison system and found significant improvements in inmates’

self-esteem, as well as lower hostility and mood disturbance.

The benefits of a program like ours extend well beyond the prison walls. In a system where incarcerating women costs Florida taxpayers about \$20,000 per head annually, and where more than 40 percent of women released from a Florida prison will be convicted of another offense within five years, we desperately need effective and economical strategies for reducing recidivism rates. Our observations so far suggest that the program may not only help women manage feelings of anger, depression, anxiety, and helplessness in prison; it may provide the social and emotional skills they need to function in society after their release. Also consider that of the 116,000 women in state or federal prisons nationwide, over three-quarters have children under 18, whose chances of ending up in prison themselves are high. We are offering tools that women can use not only in how they relate to themselves, but in how they relate to their children.

The classes are not a panacea. We are gardeners sowing seeds that may take years to grow. Yet the results so far are unmistakable. Sandy, for one, has reported moments of happiness for the first time in years. Now when she talks about the rage she feels toward someone else, her story has a different ending. “I remember my breath,” she says, “and know that whatever I am feeling has nothing to do with her. I can back off.”

**Elizabeth Cohen** has been teaching meditation and mindful approaches to well-being, including MBSR, to Central Floridians in a variety of settings since 1996.



Kevin Bjorkie

# Tips for Teaching Mindfulness to Kids

BY MEGAN COWAN

**H**ow can we build the quality of mindfulness in our children, our classrooms, and our schools?

The Oakland-based Mindful Schools program, of which I am a co-founder and co-director, teaches children in public and private elementary, middle, and high schools how to be more mindful of their thoughts and actions. As of the fall of 2009, Mindful Schools had brought our five-week in-class mindfulness training to over 7,000 children in 26 schools, 22 of which serve low-income children. The program is secular, extremely cost-effective, and uses short, interactive exercises that are tailored for children. Both quantitative and qualitative responses from teachers, principals, and students have indicated that our program greatly improves the classroom and the overall school environment.

Here are some guidelines that Mindful Schools has created for educators who want to incorporate mindfulness into the school day, or for anyone who wants to teach mindfulness to children, based on our experiences with Mindful Schools.

**Purpose.** Because this is a tool that students can utilize throughout their life, it is important that the connotation of “mindful-

ness” remains accurate. Mindfulness, when applied appropriately, includes the qualities of awareness (paying attention to one’s experience through the senses and the mind); of non-judgment (not labeling things “good” or “bad” but rather observing with a neutral attitude); and of stillness in heart and mind (though the body may be moving). Although it may be tempting to use mindfulness as a disciplinary tool, mindfulness should not be used to demand a certain behavior. It inherently includes the quality of acceptance.

**Have your own mindfulness practice.** This will make you more effective at teaching mindfulness. We can only offer what we have developed ourselves.

**Choose a time for mindfulness.** We are creatures of habit! Try to always practice mindfulness at the same time. Many teachers find mindfulness helps their class settle down after recess or after lunch. Of course, you may do it more than once a day.

**Create the environment.** Make it clear that mindfulness is a special time: clear off desks, perhaps move to the carpet, or have all chairs face the front of the room. Ask students not to take bathroom breaks and refrain from talking and moving for a little while.

**Get the students involved.** The best way to make sure you remember to do mindfulness is to enlist the help of your students. Create a rotation schedule for “who gets to ring the mindfulness bell.” If you practice mindfulness at the same time every day, pretty soon you won’t have to remember—whoever’s turn it is will remind you!

**You share.** Because children respond well when we relay our own experiences, you can share with the students if, how, and when you are using mindfulness in your life. If you share a recent story of when you were overcome with emotion or used mindfulness to help you deal with an emotion, they can hear how it is applied.

**They share.** Many young students like to share what they’ve noticed or experienced during mindfulness, or maybe something that was challenging or distracting. Sharing also allows others to be aware of things to notice while practicing mindfulness that they may not have heard otherwise.

**Practice every day!** The sooner you begin integrating mindfulness exercises into your daily classroom routine, even for just a minute at a time, the quicker it will become a part of the classroom culture.

**Use the instructions and script** below for a daily mindfulness lesson; it can be done in just one or two minutes. If you like, you can get more creative and add more in-depth lessons, or practice for longer periods. You can do the same thing every day. A simple lesson to repeat daily is one minute of mindful listening and one minute of mindful breathing.

1. “Please get into your ‘mindful bodies’—still and quiet, sitting upright, eyes closed.”
2. “Now place all your attention on the sound you are about to hear. Listen until the sound is completely gone.”
3. Ring a “mindfulness bell,” or have a student ring the bell. Use a bell with a sustained sound or a rainstick to encourage mindful listening.
4. “Please raise your hand when you can no longer hear the sound.”
5. When most or all have raised their hands, you can say, “Now slowly, mindfully, move your hand to your stomach or chest, and just feel your breathing.”
6. You can help students stay focused during the breathing with reminders like, “Just breathing in ... just breathing out ...”
7. Ring the bell to end.

**Megan Cowan** is a co-founder and co-director of the Mindful Schools program ([www.mindfulschools.org](http://www.mindfulschools.org)), based in Oakland, California.

# How Mindful Are You?

Test your mindfulness by answering the following 20 questions on a scale of one to five, indicating how frequently you experienced each statement over the previous week (1 = never, 2 = rarely, 3 = sometimes, 4 = often, and 5 = very often), then checking the text at the bottom of the page to learn how to score yourself.

This scale, the Philadelphia Mindfulness Scale, was developed by researchers at La Salle University and Drexel University and was first published in 2008. A copy of the scale can be obtained from the lead researcher, LeeAnn Cardaciotto, by emailing [cardaciotto@lasalle.edu](mailto:cardaciotto@lasalle.edu).

**Citation:** Cardaciotto, L., et. al. *The Assessment of Present-Moment Awareness and Acceptance: The Philadelphia Mindfulness Scale*. Assessment, Volume 15, No. 2, June 2008 204-223.

KEY: Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
1	2	3	4	5

1. I am aware of what thoughts are passing through my mind.  
1      2      3      4      5
2. I try to distract myself when I feel unpleasant emotions.  
1      2      3      4      5
3. When talking with other people, I am aware of their facial and body expressions.  
1      2      3      4      5
4. There are aspects of myself I don't want to think about.  
1      2      3      4      5
5. When I shower, I am aware of how the water is running over my body.  
1      2      3      4      5
6. I try to stay busy to keep thoughts or feelings from coming to mind.  
1      2      3      4      5
7. When I am startled, I notice what is going on inside my body.  
1      2      3      4      5
8. I wish I could control my emotions more easily.  
1      2      3      4      5
9. When I walk outside, I am aware of smells or how the air feels against my face.  
1      2      3      4      5
10. I tell myself that I shouldn't have certain thoughts.  
1      2      3      4      5
11. When someone asks how I am feeling, I can identify my emotions easily.  
1      2      3      4      5
12. There are things I try not to think about.  
1      2      3      4      5
13. I am aware of thoughts I'm having when my mood changes.  
1      2      3      4      5
14. I tell myself that I shouldn't feel sad.  
1      2      3      4      5
15. I notice changes inside my body, like my heart beating faster or my muscles getting tense.  
1      2      3      4      5
16. If there is something I don't want to think about, I'll try many things to get it out of my mind.  
1      2      3      4      5
17. Whenever my emotions change, I am conscious of them immediately.  
1      2      3      4      5
18. I try to put my problems out of mind.  
1      2      3      4      5
19. When talking with other people, I am aware of the emotions I am experiencing.  
1      2      3      4      5
20. When I have a bad memory, I try to distract myself to make it go away.  
1      2      3      4      5

**Your score:** Your level of mindfulness is determined by your combined levels of awareness and acceptance. To determine your awareness score, add up your responses to all the odd-numbered questions; the higher your score, the higher your level of awareness, with a score of 37 or more indicating above-average awareness. To determine your total acceptance score, first reverse your scores on all the even-numbered questions (so that a 1 becomes a 5, a 2 becomes a 4, etc.), then add up all these reversed scores. The higher your score, the higher your level of acceptance, with a score of 31 or more indicating above-average acceptance.

# Mindfulness Resources

## PROGRAMS

**The Center for Mindfulness in Medicine, Health Care, and Society**, founded by Jon Kabat-Zinn, offer a number of pathways for people to cultivate a sense of well-being, confidence, and creativity, including the renowned **Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)** program. [www.umassmed.edu/cfm](http://www.umassmed.edu/cfm), 508-856-2656

**The Garrison Institute** explores the intersection of contemplation and engaged action in the world. Its programs include trainings for teachers that help them encourage mindfulness in their students and research partnerships aimed at studying the use of mindfulness in American public schools (see page 2). [www.garrisoninstitute.org](http://www.garrisoninstitute.org), 845-424-4800

**Gateless Gate Zen Center** is a retreat and residency program that uses Buddhism, meditation, and other mindfulness studies or practices to reduce the likelihood incarcerated individuals will return to prison by helping them develop values and practical skills, such as self-discipline and impulse control, that are useful for a purposeful life. Abbot K.C. Walpole of the GGZC helped establish the Mind-Body Stress Reduction program at the Lowell Correctional Institute for Women (see page 5). [www.gatelessgate.org/prison](http://www.gatelessgate.org/prison), 352-222-0006

**The Hawn Foundation**, in collaboration with educators and researchers, has developed **MindUP**, a complete program for students in grades K-7 focusing on mindfulness, positive human qualities, optimism, and well-being. [www.thehawnfoundation.org](http://www.thehawnfoundation.org)

**Horizon Communities in Prison** uses a consensual, multi-faith based approach to encourage prison inmates to discuss their life experiences in a trustworthy and supportive environment, transforming the prison into a place of growth rather than one of punishment. It serves as a co-sponsor of the Mind-Body Stress Reduction program at the Lowell Correctional Institute for Women (see page 5). [www.horizoncommunities.org](http://www.horizoncommunities.org), 407-252-6123

**InnerKids** is a non-profit foundation that uses mindful awareness programs to help under-served school children improve their conflict resolution and attention skills. [www.innerkids.org](http://www.innerkids.org), 310-440-4869

**The Mindful Awareness Research Center** at UCLA fosters and publicizes research to support the scientific benefits of mindful awareness, offering tools and classes to professionals in mental health, medicine, and K-12 education. <http://marc.ucla.edu>, 310-206-7503

**The Mindfulness-Based Childbirth and Parenting Program** offers classes and training for parents-to-be on using mindfulness to help in childbirth and early parenting (see page 3). [www.mindfulbirth.org](http://www.mindfulbirth.org), 415-353-7718

## BOOKS AND ARTICLES

*Everyday Blessings: The Inner Work of Mindful Parenting*, by Jon and Myla Kabat-Zinn. New York: Hyperion, 1997.

*Full Catastrophe Living*, by Jon Kabat-Zinn. New York: Delta, 1990.

*Wherever You Go, There You Are*, by Jon Kabat-Zinn. New York: Hyperion, 1994.

**Bowen, S., et al. (2009). Mindfulness-based relapse prevention for substance use disorders: Implementation and efficacy. *Journal of Substance Abuse*, 30, 295-305.** This study examined a mindfulness-based relapse prevention program for people in recovery for substance use disorders. Over four months, those in the program showed greater reductions in days of alcohol and drug use compared to those in a different program, along with significantly greater reductions in craving and a greater ability to act with awareness.

**Brown, K. W., Ryan, R. M., & Creswell, J. D. (2007). Mindfulness: Theoretical foundations and evidence for its salutary effects. *Psychological Inquiry*, 18(4), 211-237.** A review of studies of mindfulness, finding evidence that mindfulness does significantly improve mental and physical health, behavior regulation, and relationships.

**Burke, C. (2009). Mindfulness-Based Approaches with Children and Adolescents: A Preliminary Review of Current Research in an Emergent Field. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 18(3), 1062-1024.** This review of the emerging studies on the effectiveness of mindfulness programs for children, from pre-school age to high-school, concludes that mindfulness programs for kids are feasible and can improve concentration and well-being, but larger studies with better methods are still needed.

**Davidson, R. J., et al. (2003). Alterations in brain and immune function produced by mindfulness meditation. *Psychosomatic Medicine*, 65(4), 564-570.** A randomized experiment of healthy workers in the United States showing that those who took an eight-week mindfulness course showed increased activity in a brain area related to positive emotions and a stronger immune system response, with findings confirmed four months later.

**Duncan, L.G., & Bardacke, N. (2009). Mindfulness-based childbirth and parenting education: Promoting family mindfulness during the perinatal period. *Journal of Child and Family Studies* (in press).** This study of expectant mothers enrolled in the Mindfulness-Based Childbirth and Parenting Program found that they showed increased positive emotions and mindfulness and decreased pregnancy anxiety and depression, as well as reported benefits in early parenting.

**Napoli, M., Krech, P. R., & Holley, L. C. (2005). Mindfulness training for elementary school students: The Attention Academy. *Journal of Applied School Psychology*, 21, 99-125.** Given a 24-week training in exercises meant to boost mindfulness, students from grades 1-3 showed improvements in attentional capabilities compared to those who had not participated.

**Samuelson, M., et al. (2007). Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction in Massachusetts Correctional Facilities. *The Prison Journal*, 87, 254-268.** Comparing inmates in drug units before and after a mindfulness-based stress-reduction course, this study found that the prisoners showed less hostility and mood disturbance afterwards, as well as increased self-esteem.



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