

What Is Mindfulness?

Mindfulness is all about learning to direct our attention to our experience as it unfolds, moment by moment, with open-minded curiosity, kindness and acceptance. Rather than worrying about what *has* happened or *might* happen, it trains us to explore and respond skilfully to whatever *is* happening right now.



Brain imaging studies show that mindfulness practice alters the structure and function of the brain. These changes appear to be linked to improved concentration, mood regulation and ability to choose appropriate responses. They have also been connected to improved immune function.

What's the point of mindfulness?

In adults, mindfulness training has been shown to improve health and wellbeing. People of all ages report after taking a mindfulness course that they have found they can learn more effectively, think more clearly, perform better and to feel calmer, less anxious and less depressed. Mindfulness-based Cognitive Therapy is now recommended by the National Institute of Clinical Excellence and GPs are referring adults on 8 week courses to reduce stress and help prevent recurrent depression. It is increasingly being used in business to improve staff wellbeing and satisfaction, in sports training to improve performance, and with children and young people and in schools to enhance wellbeing and learning.

How do people learn mindfulness?

Mindfulness is best learned in a highly practical way, through experience rather than talk. We gradually learn to direct our attention in a more focused and friendly way to whatever is actually happening - whether it be our breathing, the sensations in our body, thoughts and feelings, or everyday activities such as walking and eating.



Is it difficult?

At first the mind wanders constantly, but with practice we learn to sustain our attention and direct it more skilfully. This helps to break the hold of unhelpful habits of thinking and the impulse that can arise from these. With practice we can learn to notice and respond to all aspects of life with greater choice and care. But, as with all new skills, it does take practice!

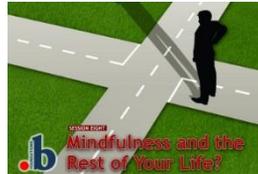
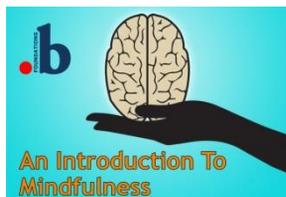


**What
mindfulness IS**

- Paying attention to things as they happen
- A life-skill
- For some, a whole way of being
- Evidence-based

What is .b Foundations?

.b Foundations is an 8-week training (plus taster session) designed specifically for teachers and adults in the school community who wish to learn the foundations of mindfulness. The training has been trialled and proven effective in over thirty schools across the UK.



What makes .b Foundations distinctive?

.b Foundations was carefully crafted by the Mindfulness in Schools Project team, including Sarah Silverton (an experienced mindfulness trainer from Bangor University), to be accessible and effective for busy staff in a workplace setting.

What are .b Foundations' objectives?

For participants to be able to use mindfulness to:

- Feel happier, calmer and more fulfilled
- Get on better with others, including pupils and colleagues
- Work more effectively by bringing increased awareness to the process
- Increase resilience in the face of stress and difficulties.

What does .b stand for?

.b stands for “stop, breathe and be”. Where adults experience **.b Foundations**, and their pupils **.b** (age 11-18) or **paws .b** (age 7-11), the school community can have a shared **.b** mindfulness language.

Who teaches .b Foundations?

.b Foundations teachers are qualified to teach mindfulness to adults and have undergone additional training in order to deliver **.b Foundations**.

After .b Foundations, can I teach mindfulness to others?

.b Foundations is for adults to experience mindfulness and develop their own practice, rather than a training to teach mindfulness to others. However, those who take this course and feel inspired to continue to practise, could go on to take further courses to teach **.b** and **paws .b** to students.

“The course has had an extremely positive effect on our school community and I recommend it to others warmly.

Kevin Knibbs, Headmaster,
Hampton School

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For further information
email enquiries@mindfulnessinschools.org
or visit www.mindfulnessinschools.org/courses/b-foundations/