

M.B.S.R.

Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction.

What to expect

M.B.S.R comprises of 8 weekly groups (2.5hrs) and one “day of mindfulness”: these facilitated sessions will support your mindfulness practice at home and in your day to day life. Home practice is with an app/ CD of guided mindfulness practices.

“MBSR uses a range of mindfulness practices to teach participants to cultivate an observant, accepting and compassionate stance towards their own internal experiences including cognitions, emotional states, body sensations and impulses.” [Openground website](#)

These practices will include:

- ☼ Mindfulness of the body and breath
- ☼ Mindful movement/ yoga and stretching
- ☼ Mindfulness of thinking, mind states and feelings
- ☼ Mindful living

By practicing these regularly, increased awareness of moment to moment experience is allowed to come forth. This allows people to explore their habits of mind and reactions that increase stress/ suffering.

MBSR is an experiential programme, in that the actual practices are key in order to actually experience or “know” mindfulness, rather than just talking or reading about it as a concept.

MBSR is not therapy, its aim is not to “fix” or “get rid of” anything as such but to bring awareness to what is here, explore it, “get to know it” so that we can have some choice about how we relate to it. The teacher’s role is to support a person’s exploration and investigation of their own direct experience of thoughts, feelings and body through the practices. MBSR is about empowering people to get in touch with their own inner wisdom as [Jon Kabat Zinn says](#)

“People are geniuses if we let them be”

Each week there will be a different theme. We will practice/ meditate together and then explore/ investigate our own direct experiences of this. The course has an educational/ skills based approach and will include brief lectures and exercises that support exploration of our experience of stress and distress.

Although the course comes out of a lineage of ancient wisdom practices (including but not exclusive to) Buddhism and yoga; it is a secular program and does not require any particular belief system. The content of the course and the way it is taught acknowledges both ancient wisdom and practices from many cultures alongside up to date modern neuroscience and western psychology.

The group for the Rangiora course is kept limited to a small size (max 12) to support participants getting the most from the course. It is a closed group so people can only be involved if they have registered and do the whole course.

The group process

M.B.S.R. is not therapy; you will not be asked to share anything you don't feel comfortable to do so. Instead you will be invited to investigate your direct experience of thinking, feelings and body sensations rather than sharing personal "stories" and content. This may feel a little odd at first but imagine we are: **observing and studying ourselves (mind and body) like scientists watching an animal in the wild, noticing what it does and when, what leads to what reaction, what it moves towards what it moves away from.... and doing all of this objectively, from a distance not to disturb, with curiosity and most importantly kindness and compassion.** We are exploring the "how" rather than the "what" of our experience, watching the movie of our lives rather than being in it.

What is talked about in group needs to be listened to with respect and kept confidential. We will talk about other things that are required in making the group safe and work well for people in the first session, so it may be worth having a think now about what is important to you.

Getting the most from the course

Attending all the sessions is really important, as they build on each other.

The home practice can feel a little daunting to begin with as we all have busy lives. Ironically, this is often why we are attracted to mindfulness in the first place; because of stress and pressure of doing too much, not having enough time to slow down and be. This may be an opportunity to try a different approach.

Mindfulness is a practice which requires practice! To strengthen our mindfulness in daily life and make changes to the brain we have to practice it ...not just know about it.

Research shows that the benefits of mindfulness are related to time spent practicing, the more we practice the more we benefit.

To make the most of this course, some form of daily practice is important (30-45 mins is optimal)

This may sound a lot, however many people have found that they recover this time in unforeseen ways and that the practice of mindfulness changes their lives in ways which make the investment of this time worthwhile

Looking after yourself

M.B.S.R. is not meant to be instead of clinical treatment/ therapy and if you are working with a clinician/ therapist/ health professional for physical or psychological difficulties then it is important you speak to them about doing the course. It is wise and good self care to check in with yourself to see if it feels like the right time to do this course and what your supports will be. **If you have any concerns please discuss with me during the pre course interview.** I am contactable by email throughout the course if you need support with regards to what is emerging on the course or difficulties with the practices.

There are some instances when MBSR may not be the best thing at that particular time for people: such as when we are going through any acute stressors such as recent loss, acute depressive episode or trauma. The intake process for the course allows an opportunity to explore if this is the right thing for you at this time.

Who is the teacher?

Kate Brandram-Adams RN(MH)

Kate is a Registered Mental Health Nurse and Registered Mindfulness teacher ([MTIANZ](#))

Kate has specialised in addictions and holistic approaches to wellbeing (integrating body, mind and spirit by using a number of modalities). Her passion is to combine modern day neuroscience with ancient wisdom practices. Uniting the art and science of supporting people to discover their own source of wellbeing and healing.

She has 25 years' experience as a mental health clinician and extensive experience of teaching groups.

Kate was trained to teach MBSR and mindfulness initially through Openground ([MTIANZ](#)) The main Australasian training institute. She receives regular clinical supervision by an experienced mindfulness teacher. Teaching Mindfulness is an ongoing journey and she continues to train and be assessed, being one of the first NZ clinicians to be registered and on the certification pathway.

Kate has a long term personal mindfulness and yoga practice which is fundamental to how she lives. This is supported and nourished by attending regular meditation retreats, personal development work with mindfulness therapists, a daily meditation/ mindfulness/yoga practice and support by experienced meditation and mindfulness teachers. It is a value of hers that she does not teach anything that she is not willing to experience herself and so her own journey with mindfulness allows her to teach with authenticity, integrity and compassion.

The Openground website (who I trained with before it became MTIANZ) is also a good resource on the course, the Q&A might be of interest.

<http://www.openground.com.au/australia-wide-courses.html>

<https://www.openground.com.au/mindfulness/science>

There are a lot of youtube videos on Jon Kabat Zinn talking about mindfulness and guided meditations if you want to get a feel for it. He has also written a number of books. "[Full Catastrophe Living](#)" being about the M.B.S.R. program.