What is mindfulness?

Mindfulness is about being aware and present in the moment, with acceptance and without judgment. It is a practice that involves paying attention to your surroundings, and noticing or observing your emotions, thoughts and how your body feels. Anyone can practice mindfulness.

Benefits of mindfulness include:

- increased focus and attention
- reduced stress
- less anxiety
- a greater sense of calm.

Types of Mindfulness Programs

**Mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR)** is a program developed by Jon Kabat-Zinn and colleagues at the University of Massachusetts Medical School. The eight-week program aims to help people manage stress. It has been used for many conditions, including chronic pain, anxiety and panic, job or family stress and high blood pressure. The approach teaches mindfulness in eight weekly sessions that include yoga, body scans (lying down) and sitting and walking meditation. In-between sessions, participants use CDs to help with their own daily mindfulness practice. The program incorporates a day-long meditation at the end.

**Mindfulness-based cognitive therapy (MBCT)** was developed by psychologists as a way to help people stay well. It combines cognitive therapy methods with mindfulness and mindfulness meditation. The goal is to teach people to focus on accepting and observing their thoughts without reacting or judging them so that reactions become less automatic. It can be helpful with depression or anxiety, addictions and other conditions.

**Mindfulness-Based Relapse Prevention (MBRP)** is an eight-week mindfulness-based program developed to help people avoid relapse to addictive behaviours, specifically substance abuse. It was then adapted for people with gambling problems. It is similar to the MBSR and MBCT programs: the objectives of the lessons are alike, as are the mindfulness practices being taught, such as mindful eating, body scans, mindful breathing and mindful walking.

If any of this information is incorrect or outdated, or if there are additional organizations or programs that would be helpful to include, please e-mail the information to us at access.resources@camh.ca.

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Community Mindfulness Programs in Toronto

Visit the Mindfulness Toronto website (mindfulnessstoronto.net), and click “Find a program” for a listing of other mindfulness programs in the city.

The Centre for Mindfulness Studies
180 Sudbury St., unit C2, Toronto, ON
www.mindfulnessstudies.com
647 524-6216

Services offered: Mindfulness-based therapeutic programs, including self-compassion, coping with anxiety and depression, eating awareness training, meditation training for adults with ADHD, cognitive-behavioural therapy, chronic pain management

Eligibility: Adults with mental health or chronic health conditions such as anxiety, depression, ADHD, insomnia, eating disorders, addiction or chronic pain

Referral: Call, e-mail or visit the website for information; bursary applicants must be referred by physician, therapist or social worker; referral form available online

Fee: The fees vary based on program, and some may be covered by extended health insurance: costs are $520 for an eight-week MBCT program, $468 for an online eight-week MBCT program, $80 for a half-day Mindfulness for Beginners course and $150 for a full-day Mindfulness for Beginners course

The Etobicoke Children’s Centre
65 Hartsdale Dr., Etobicoke, ON
www.etobicokechildren.com/group-services
416 240-1111 ext. 2315

Services offered: 10-week MBSR for parents and children

Eligibility: Parents/caregivers and children who experience ongoing stress individually and in their relationship; must be a client of the centre

Referral: Sessions are offered in the fall, winter and spring, please call for start dates; pre-registration is required and only one child per family may attend the child group

Fee: Free

Note: Light supper is provided; groups start at 5:15 p.m.; some childcare is available with advanced notice

Dr. Heidi Walk – Mindfulness Meditation
390 Dupont Ave., suite 201, Toronto, ON
heidiwalk.com
416 652-7337

Services offered: MBSR group, retreats, yoga and meditation classes

Referral: Referral from a physician is requested

Fee: $200 fee for materials and services (not covered by OHIP)

Meditation for Health
720 Spadina Ave., suite 509, Toronto, ON
meditationforhealth.com

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416 413-9158  
info@meditationforhealth.com  

**Services offered:** Nine-week MBSR group offered in two parts: part one is a two-hour orientation plus five weekly three-hour group sessions on weekdays, part two is four weekly three-hour group sessions on weekdays and a day of mindfulness (6.5 hours on a Saturday)  

**Eligibility:** People seeking self-care treatment of anxiety, sleep disturbance, chronic pain and other stress-sensitive symptoms  

**Fee:** $195 for part one, and $295 for part two for materials and other non-OHIP services; remainder is covered by OHIP if referred by a doctor  

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**The Mindful Mood Centre**  
2243 Queen St. E., 2nd floor, Toronto, ON  
www.mindfulmood.com  
416 686-2138  

**Services offered:** Structured workshops to help people deal with anxiety and depression, including a MBCT Mindful Living workshop (for people who are well but have a history of anxiety, depression or adjustment disorder) or a Compassionate Living workshop (for people with anxiety, depression or adjustment disorder)  

**Eligibility:** Must be in active individual therapy to be in a group  

**Referral:** See website for referral form  

**Fee:** Sessions are covered by OHIP, except for a $60 fee for handouts; there are fees for missed sessions  

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**The Mindfulness Clinic**  
700 Bay St., suite 2200, Toronto, ON  
www.themindfulnessclinic.ca  
416 847-7118  

**Services offered:** Group classes, workshops, mindful psychotherapy, a half-day mindfulness workshop for app users  

**Fee:** Fee varies by program: half-day mindfulness workshop is $99 for one person or $149 for two people  

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**Mindfulness Everyday**  
20 Guildwood Pkwy., PH03, Scarborough, ON  
www.mindfulnesseveryday.org  
416 267-4707  

**Services offered:** MBSR workshops, retreats, mindful parenting, MBSR for teens, website resources  

**Fee:** Cost varies based on program: MBSR workshop is $385 (slightly cheaper if you register early)  

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**Mindfulness Meditation Toronto**  
The Healthy Joint, 540 Mt. Pleasant Rd., 2nd floor, Toronto, ON  
www.mindfulnessmeditationtoronto.com  
647 391-7172  

**Services offered:** Eight-week core course with Dr. Judy Turner, retreats, corporate programs  

**Referral:** No referral needed  

**Fee:** $525 for eight-week course  

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Mindscape – with Elaine Markowitz
Across Toronto, ON
www.mindscapes.ca/mindscapes
416 995-0061
info@mindscapes.ca
**Services offered:** Seven-week MBSR group, individual and couple MBSR upon request
**Fee:** $400

NNC for Mindful Solutions
1201 Dundas St. E., suite 909, Toronto, ON
neuronovacentre.com
416 461-4333
**Services offered:** Mindfulness-Based Chronic Pain Management course
**Referral:** Physician referral required
**Fee:** Course material is $93.64, workbooks are between $45 and $50

Peel Aboriginal Network
208 Britannia Rd. E., unit 1, Mississauga, ON
www.peelaboriginalnetwork.com/PAN/Services_Programs.html
905 712-4726
**Services offered:** Programs include Reiki, drumming circles, full moon ceremonies and other forms of Aboriginal meditation
**Eligibility:** Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people welcome
**Referral:** None
**Fee:** Free
**Note:** Some programs require advance sign-up

Ryerson University
905 851-5853 (contact: Roy Himtsa)
**Services offered:** 20-week mindfulness workshop that is two hours per week
**Eligibility:** People with signs of dementia
**Fee:** Free
**Note:** Home practice is a requirement

START Clinic for Mood and Anxiety Disorder
32 Park Rd., Toronto, ON
www.startclinic.ca/services/mindfulness-based-stress-reduction-cognitive-therapy-groups
416 598-9344
**Services offered:** MBSR/cognitive therapy groups; the MBSR program includes eight weekly two-hour sessions and one six-hour day of mindfulness
**Eligibility:** Must be 18 or older
**Referral:** No referral needed
**Fee:** $560; not covered by OHIP

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Toronto Mindfulness Community
Presbyterian Church, 662 Pape Ave., Toronto, ON (side entrance)
www.torontomindfulnesscommunity.org
torontomindfulnesscommunity@gmail.com
**Services offered:** Mindfulness practice every Friday at 7:30 p.m. (arrive by 7:20 p.m.), mindfulness courses and retreats
**Eligibility:** Everyone welcome
**Fee:** By donation

Toronto Memory Program
1 Valleybrook Dr., suite 402, Toronto, ON
www.torontomemoryprogram.com/stress-reduction
416 386-9761
**Services offered:** Eight-week MBSR for caregivers
**Fee:** Course is covered by OHIP; $100 fee for materials and refreshments

Women’s Health in Women’s Hands
2 Carlton St., suite 500, Toronto ON
www.whiwh.com
416 593-7655
**Services offered:** Brief counselling strategies (CBT, solution-focused, mindfulness, arts-based), groups and workshops on stress reduction and meditation
**Eligibility:** Racialized women who are 16 years and older from African, Caribbean, Latin American and South Asian communities; must be registered as a client

Hospital-Based Programs in Toronto
MBSR and MBCT are used in hospitals and other clinical settings to help patients cope better with chronic illness, pain, depression, stress and anxiety.

North York General Hospital – with Dr. Neil Levitsky, MBCT
343 Wilson Ave., suite 301, Toronto, ON
www.cognitivetoronto.com/MBCT_Group
416 515-7741
**Services offered:** Eight-week MBCT program offered Tuesdays at the Branson hospital site or Thursdays at the main hospital site
**Eligibility:** People who have had depression but are not currently depressed, or people with symptoms of depression, anxiety or difficulties with stress, insomnia, chronic pain
**Referral:** Physician should fax referral to 416 515-0241; assessment will follow
**Fee:** MBCT is covered by OHIP

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North York General Hospital – with Dr. Margittai, PsychSyt

2200 Yonge St., suite 909, Toronto, ON (evening MBSR group)
North York General Hospital, 4001 Leslie St., ground floor, classroom B (afternoon mindfulness-based interventions group for chronic health conditions)
www.psychsyt.ca
416 483-3778

**Services offered:** Seven-week evening MBSR group, nine-week afternoon mindfulness-based interventions for chronic health conditions

**Referral:** Download the MBSR referral form for mindfulness-based intervention program; for MBSR program, ask your doctor to fax a completed referral form to intake at 416 756-6671

**Fee:** $350 payment for materials; the rest is covered by OHIP

**Note:** Registrants are expected to attend every session, bring their OHIP card, sign-in at each visit, be punctual, stay until the end of each session and do about 60 minutes of daily “homework” in-between sessions

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**Toronto General Hospital, MBSR Program**

Peter Munk Building, 11th floor, room 100E, Toronto, ON
416 340-4452

**Services offered:** An eight-week course for patients, family members and staff who are experiencing various symptoms that are causing life distress, offered Monday afternoons and Monday evenings

**Eligibility:** Leave an e-mail or mailing address where they can send you an application

**Fee:** $75

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**Toronto Western Hospital**

399 Bathurst Street, 9th floor, east wing, Toronto, ON
www.uhn.ca
416 603-5747

**Services offered:** 10-week mindfulness-based cognitive-behavioural therapy program modelled after the MBSR program that integrates mindfulness meditation with cognitive-behavioural therapy

**Eligibility:** People with stress, anxiety and mood-related conditions

**Referral:** Your family physician or mental health professional can send a referral to the Community Mental Health program at the above address, along with postal code M5T 2S8

**Fee:** $75

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**Mindfulness Programs Outside Toronto**

Visit the Mindfulness Toronto website (mindfulnesstoronto.net), and click “Mindfulness Ontario” for mindfulness programs in Ottawa, Stratford, Hamilton and Halton/Peel.

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**Catholic Family Services Peel–Dufferin**

10 Kingbridge Garden Circ., 2nd floor, Mississauga, ON
60 West Dr., Brampton, ON

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