

## Wednesday Lunchtime Breathing Space - Mindful Stress Management

The idea is to give you a break to load your batteries and get ready for dealing with the everyday stressors of daily and working life.

The tools used are Mindfulness exercises, short Meditations and creating awareness about what stress is and how it can be prevented and dealt with as it occurs during the day.

The course is aimed at **anybody** that would like to get to know more about how mindfulness and stress tools influence the experience of stress.

If you already have experience with meditation or mindfulness you still will gain a lot from doing the exercises along with the group.

### What will happen at these weekly meetings?

There will be a fixed agenda each time: Arrival before 12:30.

We start with a **body awareness** exercise, followed by **mindful relaxation**.

After that a talk of **stress management tools**, and ending with a short guided **meditation**.

We finish each time at 13:30. Each time will be different, but all the time following the principles of mindfulness and easy to implement stress management coping strategies.

### Body awareness and Stress

Each day, all the time, the body tells us via thousands of small messages how it is doing. When we are busy we ignore some or all of these messages, because we are focussing on something else. When we get severely stressed it is often the case that we have overheard the messages from the body for a long time, and we might have gotten *used to not listen to the body at all*. It is almost as if head and body are not connected any more. This is why body awareness is so important when addressing stress. Both as treatment of existing stress and for preventing stress to accumulate.

### Mindfulness relaxation

When you're stressed, a lot or just a little bit, the body is ready to defend itself. It gets tense, the muscles are working overtime, blood leaves the inner organs and the digestive system, and the brain stops functioning as well, because the stress hormones effectively shuts the brain down.

Mindfulness relaxation helps the body relax, and *daily relaxation can help restore* some of the bodily functions that have been affected by the stress.

### Stress Management

How to prevent getting influenced by stressful circumstance, how to manage stress? First of all you have to make sure that your body is in a good condition. This includes getting sufficient rest during the day, sleep during the night, moderate exercise and proper nutrition. Make sure that your mind is well rested, take time to relax the mind with activities you like. A range of coaching tools can help you manage the stressors in your life, prioritise, make decisions, choosing for self-care and other good choices helping you to create the good life for yourself.

### Meditation

Just sitting, not doing anything, just being can rest your body and mind better than sleep. Noticing the thoughts, emotions and sensations that come and go during a meditation with kind interest while you keep returning to focus on e.g. the breath. **Kindness and acceptance** are key :-)