

Making Mindfulness training fit for purpose.

Mindfulness has become a very popular concept over the past few decades and we have seen it move out of the clinical applications of therapy and coaching into main stream health and well being as well as helping to develop resilience in the workplace.

As this interest grows and there is an increasing demand for Mindfulness training it brings with it a whole new set of problems. The main one being the quality of the training delivered and if such training is fit for purpose.

It is one thing to run a programme for those interested in doing Mindfulness on a daily basis and making it part of their life. It is quite another to make Mindfulness functional for highly stressed and over worked staff who have only a passing interest and need convincing of its benefits.



For those already sold on the benefits of Mindfulness there is not an issue but for many in the work place the idea of using Mindfulness is often seen as “flakey” “New Age” or some new management initiative to get more productivity.

My approach to Mindfulness has always been the same there is an art and a science to both the practice and teaching of the subject. I have often found that Mindfulness training can deliver the core what to do but often when trainers are asked more in-depth questions as to how it works they often struggle to give coherent answers. It is this shortfall that often leave a lot of people still with the idea that it is just a lot of new age hot air.

If we are to make Mindfulness functional for the workplace we need to address a number of core issues. The first is to remove many of the misperception around Mindfulness such as:


The Art and Science of Mindfulness

Some common myths and misperceptions



The Art and Science of Mindfulness

- ✿ It is a religion / you need to be religious
- ✿ It is a form of therapy
- ✿ It is hippy / think happy thoughts kind of thing!
- ✿ It is all about stopping thinking
- ✿ It is a relaxation technique
- ✿ You need to do hours of daily practice



Many of the points listed require further explanation but overall all hold true. Mindfulness does not need to be linked to religion and it is not a form of therapy (it is a very useful tool in therapy but not a therapy on its own). The most important point on our list with regards to making Mindfulness functional for the busy modern workplace is the last point that it does not need to involve hours of daily practice.

The person often cited as the key figure in bringing Mindfulness into clinical western practice - Jon Kabat Zinn states:

Mindfulness Practice - Not all about time

For those seeking balance in their lives, a certain flexibility of approach is not only helpful, it is essential.

Mindfulness practice has little to do with clock time.

Five minutes of formal practice can be as profound or more so than forty five minutes.



P123 - Wherever you go - there you are.

Keeping the idea of short / easy to follow exercises for both an introduction and daily practice of Mindfulness is an essential point if we want to get more people involved who are not necessarily completely sold on its wide benefits.

In both my clinical practice as a therapist and a trainer I seek to utilise short exercises often only a minute or so long to help people buy into the benefits of Mindfulness but also maintain practice when life is just too busy.

Martin is a trainer and psychotherapist delivering training in Mindfulness as well as applying it in a clinical setting. For further information on his workshops and training programmes have a look at his web site www.taking-control.co.uk or contact him directly on 07 973 410 010.

