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## **Dealing with Difficult Thoughts and Emotions Through Mindfulness Techniques**

### **Outcomes Summary**

December 22, 2025

The “Dealing with Difficult Thoughts and Emotions Through Mindfulness Techniques” workshop series ran from October 7<sup>th</sup> to November 25<sup>th</sup>, 2025 (8 weekly 1 ½-hr. sessions on Zoom), and was extended by 2 additional sessions until December 9<sup>th</sup>.

It was quite a small group. Beyond the introductory session, 3 attended, with a 4<sup>th</sup> joining at the 3<sup>rd</sup> session. One who attended the first session and was unable to attend the rest due to schedule conflicts, was sent the Powerpoint presentations.

#### **Outline of Weekly Topics**

1. How Can Mindfulness Help?
2. Grounding and Orienting to the Present
3. Mindfulness-Awareness and Mindfulness in Everyday Life
4. Birthright of Goodness: Discovering Inner Resources
5. Self-Judgment vs. Kindness: Making Friends with Yourself
6. Disengaging from Thoughts
7. Stress, Anxiety & the Power of Pausing
8. A New Way of Relating to Feelings and Emotions

#### **Extension**

9. Attention in the Age of Digital Distraction
10. Finding the Inner Compass

Each session included: check in, Mindfulness instruction/guidance and practice, presentation on the day’s topic, discussion, Q&A.

Between sessions, participants were emailed links to relevant articles/videos, and assigned readings from *Anxiety, Stress & Mindfulness* by Andrew Safer.

#### **Quantitative Evaluation**

- 1) Strongly Agree 2) Agree; 3) Neither Agree nor Disagree; 4) Disagree; 5) Strongly Disagree

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	PRE	POST	PRE	POST	PRE	POST
<b>Participant</b>	<b>1.</b>		<b>2.</b>		<b>3.</b>	
1. When I start thinking of something that concerns me, I can't get it out of my mind.	2	2	2	3	1	3
2. I tend to be impulsive, taking action and then regretting it later.	1	2	3	3	4	4
3. Multitasking is a great way to get a lot done.	3	4	5	4	3	5
4. I get distracted easily and have a hard time focusing on a task.	2	2	2	3	2	2
5. My mind never stays in one place and keeps jumping from one thought to the next.	2	3	1	3	1	2
6. I think over and over about things that have already happened.	1	1	1	2	1	4
7. I keep projecting my concerns for the future.	2	1	2	4	2	4

8. This pattern of not being fully present in my experience is normal for me.	2	2	2	4	3	4
9. I don't believe that I can make a difference in my life.	2	3	5	5	4	4
10. I don't have confidence in my ability to deal with the stressful things that happen to me.	2	2	3	4	2	2
11. Staying in the present hurts so much that I prefer to run away from what is unpleasant.	1	2	3	4	4	4
12. I don't usually know what to do to bear with my discomfort and sense of vulnerability.	1	4	3	4	2	3
13. I have difficulty accepting things as they are.	1	2	4	4	4	4
14. I have difficulty dealing with troubling emotions.	1	2	2	2	2	3

15. I often don't feel grounded in my body.	1	1	1	2	3	4
16. I'm not usually aware of what things or events trigger my anxiety.	3	3	3	4	4	3
17. I feel like I have no control over my thoughts, moods, and feeling.	2	2	2	4	1	4
18. I get stuck with the storylines that can make me feel anxious and I don't know how to pause or interrupt this pattern.	3	4	2	4	1	4
19. My "go to" is to avoid or suppress difficult emotions.	3	2	4	2	2	3

35

44  
26%

50

65  
30%

46

66  
43%

**33% average improvement**

## Qualitative Evaluation

Four participants completed the post-evaluation on the last day of the program.  
(Three completed the 10-workshop series; one completed the two-workshop extension.)

1. What are some of the main points about "mindfulness" that resonate for you and your everyday life?

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*"Being aware of my breath, goodness in things and people around me, the present moment is here and I am in it, I am here in my body and am grounded."*

*"Thoughts come back and forth, you decide what to do with them by using specific" [incomplete].*

*"Knowing the relationship to my thoughts and actions. Being an observer to them vs being directed by them."*

*"Solace, control, satisfaction"*

2. Which mindfulness-in-everyday-life practices are you finding helpful, and in what way?

*Grounding in my body, breathing, "panoramic mind", "beginner's mind", "thinking"*

*Sitting practice. Help to refocus on your body and environment; really good to cope with punctual feelings.*

*Walking outside, head and shoulders, walking stairs, walking to/from my car. Allows a pause/space/gap in between thinking and action.*

*Head & Shoulders, breathing - particularly the exhale, the pause. All of these allow me to not only recognize a downward spiral, but provide tools to hit pause before the negative feelings, powerful emotions and self loathing take me down the rabbit hole. It all begins and ends with me.*

3. How helpful has this workshop series been for you? (0 = not helpful; 10 = extremely helpful)

10 (2), 9 (1), 6 (1). **Average: 8.75.**

4. a. Have you been able to do some meditation practice at home?

Yes **(100%)**

b. If yes, about how many times a week?

5+ Times: 2

4-5 Times: 1

1-3 Times: 1

5. Do you think other people could benefit from learning about mindfulness — both meditation and the other practices?

Yes (2), very much so, yes sure.

6. How helpful did you find the links to articles/videos that were sent between sessions? (Scale: 1-10)

4, 8, 9, 10 Average: **7.75**

7. How helpful did you find the book, *Anxiety, Stress & Mindfulness*?

7, 9, 10 (2) Average: **9**

8. Do you intend to come to Monday night meditation at least once, to check it out?

Yes: 2; Maybe: 2

9. Do you have any suggestions on how this workshop series could be improved?

No. Very pleased with the workshop in every way.

None.

Difficult question. This was my favourite, it felt the most natural. I liked the format and the intimacy - felt safe to share and learn.

### Participant Reflections (Submitted)

**“The mindfulness** course actually came to me more as a relief than anything else. I have struggled with anxiety and panic for many years, the long-term fallout of trauma. The methods Andrew taught approached such phenomena differently: instead of the proverbial push to “just let things go” we were shown how to “let things be”: without judgment, without comment, while continually being welcomed back to breathing, to breath.

Over the course of ten weeks, I learned to welcome that steady breath as my own, and with it a deeper sense of my being grounded, human and alive. Discovering this alternative approach to dealing with thoughts and feelings has helped me more than I can say.”

**"I genuinely** enjoyed this experience that I embraced, partly like a challenge, partly as an opportunity because I had never experienced this kind of journey.  
My conclusion is that mindfulness is a latent tool that everyone has inside, and it's quite easy to bring it back to the surface. It was a great discovery for my everyday life.

My hope is that I can improve my practice with time...

Lastly, the thing that surprised me the most was how comfortable I was sharing my thoughts, and having a reflection ready every single time. That's definitely not like me!"

### **Greatest Changes**

Following are the statements that showed the greatest changes (average), pre to post.

#### **Question 5:**

"My mind never stays in one place and keeps jumping from one thought to the next."

PRE: 4.....POST: 8.....100%

#### **Question 12:**

"I don't usually know what to do to bear with my discomfort and sense of vulnerability."

PRE; 6.....POST: 11.....83%

#### **Question 17:**

"I feel like I have no control over my thoughts, moods, and feelings."

PRE:5.....POST: 10.....100%

#### **Question 18:**

"I get stuck with the storylines that can make me feel anxious and I don't know how to pause or interrupt this pattern."

PRE: 6.....POST: 12.....100%

-end-