

Frequently Asked Questions:

Q: How do you learn mindfulness?

A: Like any new skill, the best way to learn mindfulness is to practice. It is common to experience difficulties staying present or get easily distracted when first practicing mindfulness. Don't give up!

Q: Who can benefit from MBCT?

A: MBCT is particularly helpful for those coping with mild to moderate depression. In MBCT, the provider will work with you to become more accepting of your thoughts.

Q: Is MBCT a religion?

A: Many of the principles and practices of MBCT have been inspired by Buddhist traditions. However, MBCT is generally taught in a secular, non-religious manner. Benefits of mindfulness are directly linked to the practice itself, rather than religion or a religious belief system. Similar to yoga classes offered at fitness centers, MBCT is generally delivered without religious terms or rituals.

Q: What if I fall asleep during the exercise?

A: This is a common occurrence among all levels of practice. Your body may simply require rest, a basic fundamental need. Try not to judge what is happening. You may find more benefit by focusing on rest in the present moment.

Who We Are

The Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences' Center for Deployment Psychology (CDP) trains military and civilian behavioral health professionals to provide high quality, culturally-sensitive, evidence-based behavioral health services to Service members, Veterans and their families.

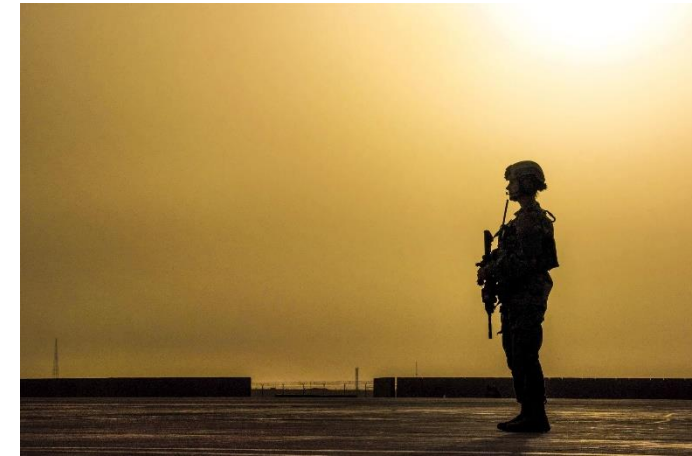


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<https://www.defense.gov/observe/photo-gallery/igphoto/2001481811/source/GovDelivery/>

Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy for Depression

What is Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy for Depression?

Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) is a therapy recommended by the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Defense for depression. Research supports the effectiveness of MBCT as one of the preferred treatments for uncomplicated mild-to-moderate Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) and for patients at high risk for depression relapse. MBCT blends cognitive behavioral therapy concepts and techniques with mindfulness meditation, imagery, and practical exercises. MBCT requires 8 weekly sessions that are typically offered in 90 to 120-minute group sessions. However, MBCT can also be delivered individually if needed.

MBCT is also recommended in combination with appropriate psychiatric medications in the treatment of severe, chronic, or complex forms of depression.

Benefits of MBCT

- Increased awareness of negative thought patterns
- Development of a kinder, gentler approach to yourself and others
- Recognition of “red flags” that may lead to a depressive episode
- Increased focus on the here and now



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MBCT is a short-term psychotherapy for treating symptoms of depression, which may include:

- Feeling sad, depressed or hopeless
- Experiencing loss of interest or pleasure in activities
- Feeling worthless or having extreme guilt
- Being irritable or agitated
- Having difficulty making decisions or concentrating
- Experiencing loss of energy or feeling fatigue
- Having an increase or decrease in appetite or sleep

What are the Goals of MBCT?

The main goal of MBCT is to develop a nonjudgmental awareness of your thoughts, feelings, and physical reactions. You will be encouraged to be open, curious, and accepting of experiences in the present moment. MBCT teaches you to observe thoughts without judgment. This approach allows you to detach from negative thoughts and see them as objects rather than absolute truths. Mindfulness techniques are helpful for those prone to depression or anxiety since they teach you how to be in the present rather than focusing on past problems or worrying about future events.

What Will I Be Doing in MBCT?

Over the course of 8 weekly group sessions, you will:

- Practice different meditations, yoga, and other mindfulness techniques
- Learn to be more present, in the “here-and-now”
- Learn to observe your thoughts and feelings without judgement

These new skills will help relieve your depression and lead to a better quality of life. It will be important for you to practice the new skills learned in session in your everyday life to help you feel better.