



This booklet can be made available in other languages or formats such as large print, audio or Easy read. Contact 01225 362900

### How effective is MBCT?

MBCT has been shown to be most effective in helping people who have suffered three or more previous episodes of depression, reducing the risk of relapse. People said they were better able to notice when their negative thoughts were spiraling out of control, and were able to step back from these thoughts.

### Other useful information

'The Mindful Way Through Depression: Freeing Yourself from Chronic Unhappiness' by Williams, Teasdale, Segal and Kabat-Zinn (2007)  
The Guilford Press ISBN: 1-57230-706-4

Mindfulness based cognitive therapy  
[www.mbct.co.uk](http://www.mbct.co.uk)

National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence [www.nice.co.uk](http://www.nice.co.uk)

## Contact us

For more information about MBCT, please ask to speak to the psychological therapies manager in your area.

For information on Trust services visit [www.awp.nhs.uk](http://www.awp.nhs.uk)

## PALS

To make a comment, raise a concern or make a complaint, please contact the Trust's Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS).

Tel: 01225 362900  
Free phone: 0800 073 1778  
Email: [awp.pals@nhs.net](mailto:awp.pals@nhs.net)

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Avon and Wiltshire Mental  
Health Partnership  
NHS Trust

# Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT)

**A treatment to help prevent  
relapse of depression**

**You matter, we care**

## What is Mindfulness?

Mindfulness is ability to pay deliberate attention to:

- your experience from moment to moment
- what is going on in your mind, body and day-to-day life and doing this without judgement.

This might not sound like a helpful thing to do. But learning to do this in a way which suspends judgement and self-criticism can have surprising results.

## Mindfulness based approaches

Mindfulness based approaches help people develop skills which can help with the challenges of daily life and physical and psychological health problems. They are not related to being religious or any religion.

The two main approaches are:

- Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR). This has been used for over 25 years, helping people with a wide range of physical and mental health problems.
- Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT), which is based on MBSR.

## Who is Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) for?

The aim of MBCT is to reduce relapse for people who keep experiencing depression. The pattern of thinking which makes people vulnerable to depressive relapse is called 'rumination'. This is when the mind repetitively re-runs unhelpful thoughts.

## What does it do?

MBCT teaches

- skills to help you step back from habitual "automatic" unhelpful patterns of thinking.
- you to intentionally shift to a different way of being with all kinds of experience.

It does not focus on changing or controlling the content of thoughts or other experiences.

Step by step it helps you learn to view physical sensations, thoughts, and feelings as events that can simply be observed and acknowledged, moment by moment.

## What is involved in MBCT?

You will be invited to attend eight weekly classes with other people who have recovered from depression but are at risk of relapse.

These classes involve a range of meditations to help you to become more aware of the present moment, including getting in touch with moment to moment changes in the mind and body.

You will also be given meditation CDs to practice at home between sessions. We will ask you to reflect on your experience of this at the next MBCT session. This regular meditation practice is essential.

The sessions also include basic education about depression and exercises to show the links between thinking and feeling, and how people can look after themselves when depression threatens to overwhelm them.

## How could I benefit from MBCT?

MBCT can help you:

- feel more able to deal difficult thoughts, feelings and bodily sensations that contribute to depression
- become more able to notice and allow distressing mood, thoughts and sensations to come and go, without having to battle with them
- make helpful choices about how you look after yourself
- feel calmer when facing life's challenges.