

# What is a Mindfulness Program?

Stress affects pretty much all of us at some stage in our life, if not frequently. Significant anxiety affects about 2 million Australians each year and another 1 million of us will experience debilitating depression<sup>1</sup>.

Research indicates that stressful life events can contribute to depression<sup>2</sup> and that stress, anxiety and depression impact on our mind, emotions, body and behaviour. When our responses to the emotional pain are significant enough or last for a long time, they can create neurological, psychological and behavioural patterns that can be reactivated and repeat<sup>3</sup>. So we find we get stuck in loops of horrible thoughts, or depressive episodes recurring, or we find ourselves reacting the same way again and again, even when we really don't want to.

There are many things that can help people recover from or prevent stress, anxiety and depression. And part of the recovery and prevention process is to find your own way, what works for you. However, if you're interested in developing skills for managing difficult thoughts and feelings; for identifying when your stress or low mood is kicking in at an earlier stage, so that it's easier to manage, or; if you'd like to feel calmer, then one of the Mindfulness Programs we offer might be for you.

Our courses usually go for 8 weeks – with 2 or 2 and a half hour sessions each week. We teach the international best practice and evidence based programs for stress, anxiety and depression and they are educational, empowering and experiential. They take time and commitment but anything that's worth much in life takes that! We run our courses throughout Tasmania and they are funded by Primary Health Tasmania (so free) and available for adults who are experiencing mild to moderate difficulties. Some of our courses are face to face and some are available with a live teacher on the phone or internet, so can be done from the comfort of your own home.

Mindfulness meditation is the mechanism for finding some peace in our minds, bodies and lives as well as for developing insight into early warning signs and learning what is helpful and unhelpful. Mindfulness is attention training and awareness raising. It is a simple concept but not always easy, and it takes time. For some people they may even feel a bit worse initially or think "I can't do it" before it takes effect. That's why we have teachers who can guide, instruct and support.

You don't need to take our word for it though. To find out more about what the programs offer and how they work, you can google Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction or Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy. To make it easy, here are some links you can click on, with short videos from the experts:

<https://youtu.be/HmEo6Rl4Wvs>

<https://youtu.be/KG4xaA3y948>

<https://youtu.be/ytEFmXjWAoc>

Or if you have questions – give us a call on 0488 064 228!

*From the team at Mindfulness Programs Australasia!*

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<sup>1</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2008). National Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing. Summary of Results, 2007. Cat. no. (4326.0). Canberra. ABS.

<sup>2</sup> Phillips, Carroll & Der. Negative life events and symptoms of depression and anxiety. stress causation and/or stress generation. Anxiety Stress Coping. 2015 ; 28(4). 357–371

<sup>3</sup> Segal, Williams & Teasdale (2013) Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy for Depression. The Guildford Press. London