

RELAXATION AND MINDFULNESS RESOURCES

RADIO PROGRAMMES

Deep Calm – Michael Mosely

5 programmes on five different ways of turning on the relaxation response.

These five ways include Breathing, Progressive Relaxation, Visualisation, Nature (Forest Bathing) and Music.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m001z66y>

The Music and Meditation Podcast with Lizzy Judd

Five series with over 85 programmes of 10-minute guided meditations from different people, some focusing on different issues or methods – covers meditations on a wide range of issues e.g. anxiety, sleep issues, guilt, forgiveness, manage fears, boosting creativity, starting the day, preparing for challenges etc.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m00175qd>

Ultimate Calm Podcast

Journeys into calm, explored through all forms of classical and ambient music. 48 episodes each an hour long.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/brand/m001cvck?page=2>

FILMS

Healing and the Mind

Ancient medical science told us our minds and bodies are one. So did philosophers of old. Now modern science and new research are helping us to understand these connections.

In *Healing and the Mind*, Bill Moyers talks with physicians, scientists, therapists and patients – people who are taking a new look at the meaning of sickness and health. In a five-part series of provocative interviews, he discusses their search for answers to perplexing questions: How do emotions translate into chemicals in our bodies? How do thoughts and feelings influence health? How can we collaborate with our bodies to encourage healing?

Healing and the Mind is a documentary series destined to influence how millions think about sickness and health. (1993)

BOOKS

Mindfulness: A Practical Guide to Finding Peace in a Frantic World Paperback – International Edition, 5 May 2011 by Mark Williams and Danny Penman

The Mindful Way through Depression: Freeing Yourself from Chronic Unhappiness by Mark Williams, John Teasdale, Zindel Segal and John Kabut Zinn

Full Catastrophe Living, Revised Edition: How to cope with stress, pain and illness using mindfulness meditation by Jon Kabut Zinn

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NHS RESOURCES

NHS general information on Mindfulness

<https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/self-help/tips-and-support/mindfulness/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-wellbeing-tips/how-to-meditate-for-beginners/>

This NHS guide provides information on how to meditate with video explanations and guided meditations

COURSES

Many of our local organisations do Mindfulness courses and Meditation courses – do check their websites.

Mind: Mind lists a variety of courses and gives general advice on finding the right course.

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/drugs-and-treatments/mindfulness/how-and-where-to-learn-mindfulness/>

The Oxford Mindfulness Centre This well-established centre offers a variety of online courses including free introductory courses in mindfulness and mindfulness-based stress reduction for depression and anxiety. This is a good place to start in exploring whether mindfulness might help your depression and anxiety.

<https://oxfordmindfulness.org/>

The City Lit runs affordable online and face to face courses regularly in London – these include mindfulness, meditation, stress reduction, breathing techniques etc.

See website: [City Lit Mindfulness and Stress Reduction Courses](#)

The Mindfulness Academy: <https://www.britishmindfulnessacademy.co.uk/> Range of online courses starting at about £150 for the 8-week course.

APPS

The Mindfulness App

Calm

Headspace

Insight Timer

USEFUL WEBSITES

Oxford Mindfulness Centre

Many resources available here, including free online courses.

<https://oxfordmindfulness.org/>

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The Wim Hof Breathing technique

<https://www.wimhofmethod.com/breathing-exercises>

This technique is more demanding than the more gentle breathing exercises taught during Yoga etc. but they can be very effective in helping with anxiety.

Here is one introduction on YouTube

https://youtu.be/tybOi4hjZFQ?si=_6DaAl2rLufdwhY7

WARNING ABOUT MINDFULNESS

Many people with depression benefit from mindfulness and meditation practices. However, it is important to realise that for some, mindfulness can worsen depression by making individuals more aware of negative feelings, potentially leading to overwhelming emotions or panic attacks. It may also blunt all emotions, both positive and negative, leading to a sense of numbness. Some people have reported a worsening of depression, anxiety, or even experienced new or severe psychological problems after practicing mindfulness. The danger is particularly high for those with a history of depression with trauma, and it can be exacerbated by the lack of warnings about these potential adverse effects in many mindfulness resources.

For people who find Mindfulness unhelpful, relaxation exercises may be preferable and may be helpful e.g. progressive muscle relaxation, forest bathing, breathing exercises.

Potential dangers of mindfulness for people with depression

- Intensified negative feelings:

Paying close attention to thoughts and feelings can amplify them, making existing depression feel more intense and overwhelming.

- Worsened depression and anxiety:

Research indicates that for some individuals, mindfulness can lead to an increase in depressive or anxious symptoms.

- Panic attacks:

The heightened awareness from techniques like body scans can lead to full-blown panic attacks in some individuals.

- Emotional blunting:

Over-regulating emotions can lead to a blunting of all feelings, including joy and happiness, which can be alienating.

- Unwanted psychological experiences:

Some people report adverse effects like confusion, disorientation, and even auditory hallucinations.

- Increased risk for those with a history of depression:

Individuals with a history of depression are at a higher risk for relapse, as being in a sad mood can trigger a flood of negative memories.