

## MINDFULNESS EXERCISES

# The Mindfulness CE Curriculum

## Complete Syllabus & Learning Objectives

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Four curated pathways · 37.5 CE homestudy credits/contact hours · 19 modules · 16 senior faculty

Self-paced homestudy for licensed and license-eligible mental health and healthcare professionals

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| <b>Pathway I</b>   | Foundations in the Neuroscience of Mindfulness and Habit Change            | 9.5 hrs  |
| <b>Pathway II</b>  | Teaching Mindfulness with Integrity and Skill                              | 8 hrs    |
| <b>Pathway III</b> | Emotional Integration: Shame, Grief, Compassion & Empowerment              | 8.5 hrs  |
| <b>Pathway IV</b>  | Trauma Sensitivity, Clinical Safety & Adaptation for Complex Presentations | 11.5 hrs |

**Continuing Education is sponsored by Mindful CECs.** Mindful CECs is approved by the American Psychological Association to sponsor continuing education for psychologists. Mindful CECs maintains responsibility for these programs and their content. Mindful CECs is a provider approved by the California Board of Registered Nursing, Provider Number CEP17985 — for 9.5 (Pathway I), 8 (Pathway II), 8.5 (Pathway III), and 11.5 (Pathway IV) contact hours.

Participants are responsible for determining whether this program meets the CE requirements of their licensing board or certifying organization.

## How the CE pathways work

**Format.** Self-paced homestudy: recorded video sessions taught directly by the named faculty, plus reference materials. No cohort dates, no live sessions to schedule. Enrollment provides immediate, lifetime access.

**Completion requirements.** Review each program in full, then complete a comprehensive assessment with a passing criterion of at least 75%. The assessment may be repeated if necessary. CE certificates of completion are issued immediately upon passing, dated the day you pass.

**Your certificate.** Shows the program title, CE hours awarded, completion date, and the sponsor approval statement — retain it for your renewal records in case of audit. Most boards use self-reporting.

**Audience & level.** Designed for licensed and license-eligible mental health and healthcare professionals, including psychologists, social workers (LCSW, LSW), counselors (LPC, LCPC, LMHC), marriage and family therapists, nurses (RN, NP), and other healthcare professionals. Instructional levels are noted per pathway.

**Enrollment & fees.** Pathways are available individually (\$149–\$227) or as the complete four-pathway bundle (\$497) at [mindfulness Exercises.com/ce-credits/](https://mindfulness Exercises.com/ce-credits/). A 30-day refund window applies per the Mindful CECs cancellation policy (see [mindfulness Exercises.com/ce-policies/](https://mindfulness Exercises.com/ce-policies/)).

**Employer / stipend use.** This syllabus is formatted for professional-development approval requests: it lists each module's instructor, contact hours, and filed learning objectives.

**Accommodations & grievances.** ADA accommodations: email [info@mindfulcecs.com](mailto:info@mindfulcecs.com). Grievances: same address, within 30 days.

**Conflict of interest.** Instructors may have authored publications relevant to the subjects covered and may teach additional programs; they might reference these during a course and may receive compensation if participants purchase them. **Commercial support:** these programs received no commercial support.

# Foundations in the Neuroscience of Mindfulness and Habit Change

Neural mechanisms of change, attention, reward learning, and self-construction

**9.5 CE homestudy credits/contact hours** · Level: Intermediate · Faculty: Richie Davidson, PhD · Rick Hanson, PhD · Judson Brewer, MD, PhD

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Establish the scientific and neurobiological foundation of evidence-based mindfulness — from the plasticity of well-being to the reward-learning mechanisms underlying anxiety and habit.

## Module 1: The Neuroscience of Mindfulness and Well-Being

Richard J. Davidson, PhD · 1.5 hrs

Davidson's four-pillar framework (awareness, connection, insight, purpose); neuroplasticity, attention regulation, and resilience as rapid recovery from adversity.

Learning objectives — at the end of this module, participants will be better able to:

- Identify the four core dimensions of well-being (awareness, connection, insight, and purpose) and describe how each dimension relates to neuroplasticity and contemplative practice.
- Explain the concept of resilience as a form of 'rapid recovery from adversity' and describe associated neuroscience research findings demonstrating differential recovery patterns in meditation practitioners.

## Module 2: Attention, Neuroplasticity & the Cultivation of Well-Being

Rick Hanson, PhD · 2 hrs

Default mode network, interoception, and the insula; positive neuroplasticity and how repeated mental states convert into lasting traits.

Learning objectives — at the end of this module, participants will be better able to:

- Describe how mindfulness practice reduces activity in brain regions associated with mind-wandering, rumination, and self-focused thinking, including the default mode network.
- Explain the process of positive neuroplasticity, including how deliberately cultivating beneficial mental states through repeated practice has been linked to lasting changes in neural structure and function through state-to-trait learning.

## Module 3: The Process of Selfing: Neuroscience & the Construction of Identity

Judson Brewer, MD, PhD · 1.75 hrs

fMRI and real-time neurofeedback findings on self-referential processing; dependent origination and open/closed experiential states.

Learning objectives — at the end of this module, participants will be better able to:

- Describe the current understanding on neurological mechanisms by which the brain constructs and maintains a sense of self — including the roles of the DMN, mPFC, and PCC — and explain how mindfulness practice can reduce activation in these self-referential networks.
- Apply the framework of dependent origination and open/closed experiential states to identify how craving, clinging, and behavioral reinforcement contribute to habitual identity formation in clinical and educational contexts.

## **Module 4: Mindful Eating: Neuroscience & Awareness-Based Interventions**

Judson Brewer, MD, PhD · 1.75 hrs

Homeostatic vs. hedonic hunger, the dopamine reward loop, and a three-step framework for working with eating habits without relying on willpower.

Learning objectives — at the end of this module, participants will be better able to:

- Explain the neuroscience of eating behavior, including the distinction between homeostatic and hedonic hunger, the role of dopamine posited in reinforcement learning, and why willpower-based approaches are often found to be ineffective.
- Apply a three-step awareness-based framework for addressing eating habits: mapping habit loops, updating reward value through mindful attention, and cultivating curiosity as an alternative to reactive eating.

## **Module 5: Unwinding Anxiety: Habit Loops & Reward-Based Learning**

Judson Brewer, MD, PhD · 2.5 hrs

Anxiety as a habit loop; the Rescorla-Wagner prediction error model; cultivating curiosity and kind awareness as a 'bigger, better offer.'

Learning objectives — at the end of this module, participants will be better able to:

- Explain how anxiety operates as a habit loop through reward-based learning mechanisms in the brain.
- Apply a three-step awareness-based framework for working with anxiety in professional practice.

# Teaching Mindfulness with Integrity and Skill

Pedagogy, ethics, developmental adaptation, and positive states as a teaching resource

**8 CE homestudy credits/contact hours** · Level: Introductory–Intermediate · Faculty: James Baraz, MA · Donald Rothberg, PhD · Susan Kaiser Greenland, JD · Rick Hanson, PhD

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Move beyond what mindfulness is into how to teach it skillfully — the internal stance, ethical foundations, and developmental adaptations that distinguish a competent practitioner from a competent teacher.

## Module 1: Teaching Mindfulness with Integrity: Presence, Attention, Ethics

James Baraz, MA · 2 hrs

The single most important moment in practice; humility, embodied presence, and translating mindfulness for secular professional and clinical settings.

Learning objectives — at the end of this module, participants will be better able to:

- Describe the foundational elements of mindfulness instruction — including attention regulation, awareness of present-moment experience, and the skillful, self-compassionate response to mind-wandering — and how these principles can be communicated effectively in secular professional and clinical settings.
- Explain how ethical integrity and the cultivation of positive mental qualities support psychological well-being and inform the responsible teaching and application of mindfulness in professional settings.

## Module 2: Teaching Loving-Kindness (Metta): Foundations & Methods

Donald Rothberg, PhD · 2 hrs

Phrase-based and radiating approaches; the traditional sequence of beings; recognizing activation and modifying practice with skill.

Learning objectives — at the end of this module, participants will be better able to:

- Describe the traditional sequence used in loving-kindness practice and identify evidence-based components of structured loving-kindness interventions.
- Explain and apply methods for integrating loving-kindness practice into daily life contexts, including professional and healthcare settings.

## Module 3: Teaching Mindfulness to Children

Susan Kaiser Greenland, JD · 2 hrs

Activity-based framework (Attention, Balance, Compassion); developmental adaptations from preschool through adolescence; scope of practice for school-based work.

Learning objectives — at the end of this module, participants will be better able to:

- Describe an activity-based framework for teaching mindfulness to children, including core qualities (attention, balance, compassion) and associated life skills.
- Identify developmentally appropriate adaptations of mindfulness practices for different age groups, including focused attention techniques for younger children and open awareness practices for older children.

## Module 4: Joy & Happiness: Positive Neuroplasticity & Inner Resources

Rick Hanson, PhD · 2 hrs

The HEAL model (Have, Enrich, Absorb, Link); cultivating self-compassion, contentment, and felt sense of being cared about as durable inner resources.

Learning objectives — at the end of this module, participants will be better able to:

- Describe the two-stage neuroplasticity process for converting beneficial experiences into lasting psychological traits through sustained attention, somatic awareness, and reward value amplification.
- Identify key psychological resources (such as self-compassion, feeling cared about, and contentment) that can support individual needs for safety, satisfaction, and connection.

# Emotional Integration: Shame, Grief, Compassion & Empowerment

Difficult emotions, relational repair, compassion, identity, and belonging

**8.5 CE homestudy credits/contact hours** · Level: Introductory–Intermediate · Faculty: Christopher Germer, PhD · Francis Weller, MFT · Myra Walden, MA · Bob Wentworth, PhD · Fiona Brandon, MPS, MA, LMFT

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Develop the affective and relational competencies at the heart of mindfulness-informed clinical work — the emotional terrain that conventional CE rarely teaches with depth.

## Module 1: Understanding Shame and Self-Compassion

Christopher Germer, PhD · 2 hrs

Shame vs. guilt; the three healing paradoxes; recognizing and responding to backdraft and emotional overwhelm in clinical settings.

Learning objectives — at the end of this module, participants will be better able to:

- Differentiate shame from guilt based on psychological and neurobiological characteristics, including cognitive, emotional, physiological, and behavioral components.
- Apply self-compassion principles as an evidence-based approach to address shame-related distress in professional practice, including recognizing emotional overwhelm (“backdraft”) and development of appropriate safety responses.

## Module 2: Mindfulness and Grief: Sorrow, Loss & Communal Contexts

Francis Weller, MFT · 2 hrs

The Five Gates of Grief; cultural barriers to mourning; grief and gratitude as complementary forces and the link to clinician burnout.

Learning objectives — at the end of this module, participants will be better able to:

- Describe cultural and communal factors that shape grief expression, including barriers to mourning in individualistic Western contexts.
- Explain how communal and ritual approaches to grief can support sustained emotional capacity in both personal and professional contexts.

## Module 3: Self-Empathy & Self-Empowerment: A Needs-Based Approach

Myra Walden, MA & Bob Wentworth, PhD · 2.75 hrs

A seven-step Nonviolent Communication process — observation, judgment, somatic awareness, feelings, needs, mourning, inner silence — for emotional clarity and intentional action.

Learning objectives — at the end of this module, participants will be better able to:

- Describe a structured self-empathy process that integrates observation, emotional differentiation, somatic awareness, and needs recognition based on Nonviolent Communication principles.
- Apply needs-based awareness practices to a challenging situation to help reduce emotional reactivity, increase empathy, and enhance capacity for an intentional response.

## **Module 4: Mindful Sensitivity & Tonglen: Buddhist-Informed Clinical Practice**

Fiona Brandon, MPS, MA, LMFT · 1.75 hrs

Pleasant, unpleasant, and neutral feeling tones; Tonglen as a silent in-session self-regulation tool to buffer against compassion fatigue.

Learning objectives — at the end of this module, participants will be better able to:

- Describe the clinical applications of Mindful Sensitivity — structured awareness of pleasant, unpleasant, and neutral experience — as a therapeutic tool for supporting metacognitive awareness, affect regulation, and reduced emotional reactivity.
- Apply Tonglen, a compassion practice of giving and receiving, within clinical settings to support therapeutic presence, nervous system regulation, and empathic distress prevention across diverse client presentations.

# Trauma Sensitivity, Clinical Safety & Adaptation for Complex Presentations

Adverse effects, trauma-informed adaptation, and high-acuity populations

**11.5 CE homestudy credits/contact hours** · Level: Intermediate · Faculty: Willoughby Britton, PhD · David Treleaven, PhD · Susan Bauer-Wu, PhD, RN · Vidyamala Burch, OBE · Oren Jay Sofer

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The advanced clinical competencies required to teach and apply mindfulness safely with vulnerable populations — adverse effects, trauma adaptation, serious illness, and chronic pain.

## Module 1: Adverse Effects of Mindfulness Meditation

Willoughby Britton, PhD

Britton's research on the prevalence, phenomenology, and predictors of meditation-related harm; informed consent and skillful response to disclosures.

Learning objectives — at the end of this module, participants will be better able to:

- Identify the prevalence, phenomenology, and risk factors associated with meditation-related adverse effects in mindfulness-based programs.
- Apply trauma-informed strategies for modifying mindfulness practices to reduce the likelihood of adverse effects and respond therapeutically to client disclosures of meditation-related harm.

## Module 2: Trauma-Sensitive Mindfulness, Part 1

David Treleaven, PhD

The trauma spectrum, the Four Rs framework, and why the same instruction that stabilizes one student can destabilize another.

Learning objectives — at the end of this module, participants will be better able to:

- Explain how trauma affects attention and arousal, and why mindfulness meditation may support regulation for some individuals while increasing dysregulation for others.
- Apply trauma-sensitive modifications to mindfulness instruction — including alternative attentional anchors, posture flexibility, and explicit permission strategies — to support safety and nervous system regulation in clinical contexts.

## Module 3: Trauma-Sensitive Mindfulness, Part 2

David Treleaven, PhD

Window of tolerance, resourcing as self-regulation, the volume knob framework, and stepwise introduction of trauma-informed content in group settings.

Learning objectives — at the end of this module, participants will be better able to:

- Apply the window of tolerance framework to assess and respond to signs of dysregulated arousal in individual and group mindfulness teaching contexts.
- Describe resourcing as a self-regulation strategy in mindfulness practice and explain how it supports nervous system stabilization.

## Module 4: Mindfulness for People with Serious Illness

Susan Bauer-Wu, PhD, RN

Adaptations for physical limitations, fatigue, and pain; managing distressing thoughts; restoring agency at end of life.

Learning objectives — at the end of this module, participants will be better able to:

- Describe the cycle of suffering in serious illness, including how physical symptoms may trigger mental interpretations, emotional responses, and physiological reactions that can intensify distress.
- Identify at least three adaptations of standard mindfulness practices for individuals with physical limitations, including alternatives to breath-focused awareness, modified body scan approaches, and sensory grounding techniques.

## **Module 5: From Resistance to Resilience: Mindfulness for Chronic Pain**

Vidyamala Burch, OBE

Primary vs. secondary suffering; the four diaphragms and Five B's of breath; releasing chronic tension patterns.

Learning objectives — at the end of this module, participants will be better able to:

- Describe the primary and secondary suffering models of chronic pain and explain how mindfulness-based attentional strategies can interrupt habitual resistance responses to reduce pain-related psychological distress.
- Apply whole-body breath awareness techniques, including diaphragmatic breathing and somatic grounding practices, to support physiological regulation in clinical and patient-facing contexts.

## **Module 6: Working with Chronic Pain: A Clinician's Framework**

Oren Jay Sofer

The spectrum from indirect (regulation) to direct (investigation) practices; self-compassion as the clinical bridge; introducing mindfulness to skeptical clients.

Learning objectives — at the end of this module, participants will be better able to:

- Describe the distinction between pain and suffering, and explain the role self-compassion plays as the clinical bridge that enables direct mindfulness-based engagement with painful experience.
- Identify a spectrum of mindfulness-based practices for supporting people with chronic pain, from indirect approaches that support nervous system regulation to direct approaches that cultivate mindful awareness of painful sensations.