

Getting Started

You do not have to be a Zen Master to be a Mindfulness Teacher. You will want to think about where you are in your learning, your setting, your students, and what you want to accomplish as a mindfulness teacher. The purpose of mindfulness is to relieve the suffering of others. Ideally, the core of all good mindfulness teaching is a heartfelt sense of compassion for people's suffering. As you enter this field of work, take the time to define your intention, your "Why".

To learn more about the importance of knowing your "Why", view this video with Simon Sinek.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IPYeClfXpxw>

Why are you becoming a mindfulness teacher?

Getting started can be as simple as 1 – 2- 3.

1. Know Yourself
2. Know Your Context
3. Know Your Clients

Step 1. Know Yourself

Where are you in your experience with mindfulness?

How do you develop your mindfulness practice?

Step 2. Know Your Context

In what setting are you going to offer the mindfulness instruction? Is it a school? Clinic? Community education program? A wellness studio? Costs?

Establish clarity on the terms of service, costs, timelines, liabilities and mission for this work. What questions do you need to ask?

Construct an informed consent statement for your clients that explains the benefits and risks to participating in this training.

Step 3. Know Your Clients

“Who is my audience?” Is this a general population or specific group?

Selecting Participants

How are participants coming to your program? If you are in a clinical or work environment, do you have a criterion for participation in the program? How many people will you allow into the program (minimum and maximum enrollments)?

Sample Template for a Course or Program Description

Title:

Program Description:

Instructor(s):

Dates:

Times:

Location:

Cost:

Materials:

This program is intended for ... *(Describe the audience or participant, age restrictions, etc. Describe any physical requirements to participate in the course (For example, Bring a mat, etc.)*

Questions? Contact:

Sample Registration Form

Program Name:

Dates:

Participant Name:

Address:

Email:

Mobile:

Phone:

How did you learn about this course or program?

Optional: Statement of Informed Consent Risks and Benefits

(Example

Mindfulness practice has been known to have the benefits of improved concentration, stress reduction, and management of mild symptoms for pain, headaches, depression, anxiety, or gastrointestinal discomfort.

The mindfulness meditation exercises may bring forth memories, emotions, experiences that may be uncomfortable. Some people may experience changes in their sleep or dreams. Seek counseling assistance if you are having negative or distressful reactions. If you are in treatment, consult with your mental health provider before beginning this course. Advise your mental health professional of changes.)

Informed Consent Signature:

Optional: Statement of commitment to attend and participate

(Example

I agree to fully attend all sessions and to participate to the full extent that I am able. I will provide advance notice of any extenuating circumstances, such as illness or transportation failure, in advance of scheduled sessions.)

Commitment Signature:

Payment Information:

2 Things to Keep in Mind to Begin Planning Your Program content

1. Select themes and content that are appropriate to your students

What are the themes and content that you will select for your population of students?

2. Developing a balance between being flexible with your students while adhering to the session curriculum

Where are the points that you anticipate you will need to be flexible as you think about the needs of your students and the curriculum content?

Reflection Questions

What is the match of your experience to your client audience?

Where will you seek mentoring or support as you move forward?

How will the preparation of the course description help you to clarify your teaching intentions?

What are your questions as you move forward?