

As you prepare to become a teacher of mindfulness, you will want to anticipate the questions that will be posed by your participants. Use this lesson as a FAQ.

### **Where did mindfulness meditation come from?**

Mindfulness practice is grounded in the rich history of Buddhist traditions. Jon Kabat-Zinn is the founder of the Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction or MBSR program. Other foundational teachers to mindfulness include Jack Kornfield, Joseph Goldman, and Sharon Salzberg. The repetitive practice of non-judgmental attention to the breath supports the development of mindfulness practice.

### **How do I tune out noise and distractions from within and/or the environment?**

Go with it. Accept it. Do not fight the noise and distraction by attempting to tune it out. Instead, work with it. Allow it. Receive it. You may find that the mind will calm once you accept your mental restlessness.

### **Is it normal to experience changes in my moods, sleep, or dreams?**

The changes you are observing are part of the process. The emotions and dreams may be opening up as a result of your slowing down. You may find that, over time, your mood is improving as you learn to accept your present experience. If you find yourself falling asleep when you are trying to meditate, take some shifts in your lighting or positioning to see if that helps you to stay in the moment of your meditation.

### **How do I connect to my breath?**

Try sensing the rise and fall of the belly as you breath. Some people find it helpful to sense into the movement of the diaphragm or chest. Others find it helpful to feel the air move in and out of the nostrils.

### **How do I develop and sustain a meditation practice?**

Set a realistic practice time period each day of at least 10 minutes of formal practice. Many begin with guided audio. As a teacher, daily practice is ideal. Take care of your own learning by joining a community, finding your own teacher, or attending a retreat.

Reflection Questions

How do you work with distractions in your mindfulness practice?

What physical sensations do you notice around your belly, chest and nostrils as you breath in and out? Are they pleasant or unpleasant?

What are your habits for sustaining your formal mindfulness practice? How might your habit be improved?

Recommended Supplemental Reading

Jon Kabat-Zinn. Full Catastrophe Living: Using the Wisdom of Your Body and Mind to Face Stress, Pain, and Illness. Revised and Updated. 2013. New York: Bantam Books.