

# FAQS

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## What is the difference between mindfulness training and meditation?

“Mindfulness” means living in the present moment, observing life calmly and responding thoughtfully. “Meditation” is the ancient practice of thoughtless awareness. It involves utilizing breath and quiet focus to achieve more clarity.

Mindfulness training is a modern version of meditation that reduces stress and sharpens focus. It does this by changing the way the brain responds to thoughts and sensations. Our brains can be trained to manage stress in a healthier manner, and mindfulness training is the best tool for the job.

There are many ways to train mindfully: apps, online programs, in-house sessions, even on your own. MeditationWorks delivers quick, effective mindfulness training in a distraction-free environment to your door.

## What are MeditationWorks mindfulness training sessions like?

Our mindfulness training sessions are 10 minutes long. You will be led to focus on your breath while allowing thoughts and sensations to pass without judging or reacting to them. By doing this, you train your brain to respond to stress and daily challenges in a more effective way. And best of all, you are back to work in 15 minutes!

You can select your preferred session via our MeditationWorks app and change it depending on availability up until they begin. You can even choose to receive a reminder. Come as you are to our MindWorks mobile unit, parked conveniently at your company or school's door, and take a seat.

## What is your mobile unit like and why is it necessary?

Regardless of how hard we try to resist, there are too many distractions at work and home making mindfulness difficult. A washing machine full of clothes, Facebook feeds to scroll, emails to answer, the dog begging for a walk. We're inundated by triggers saying, "Do this. Then go do that." With MeditationWorks you can practice distraction free.

Our mobile unit is the ultimate dedicated mindfulness space. Every detail of the sleek and stylish interior was designed exclusively to promote relaxation and help you focus. Once inside, you can sit comfortably, free of electronic devices and interruptions, and fully engage in mindfulness practice.

## What benefits will I achieve?

- Reduce stress levels
- Improve focus and cognitive abilities
- Make fewer mistakes
- Control emotions
- Lower blood pressure
- Lower heart rate
- Reduce and even prevent disease
- Sleep better
- Worry less
- Boost immune system
- Build willpower
- Improve creativity
- Cultivate better relationship and communication skills

## And how?

Remember a time you were stressed out and were told to take a deep breath? That one deep breath automatically triggers the human relaxation response. It does this by lowering your blood pressure and heart rate, while decreasing stress hormones and their harmful effects. We give you 100 of those breaths every session!

By focusing on your breath (the task at hand during our sessions) you "exercise" areas of the brain that allow you to focus on the task at hand at work. This helps you complete tasks more efficiently with less distraction and stress.

Your brain literally changes shape. It increases density in the frontal lobe (decision making, focus, etc) while decreasing density in the amygdala (fear, reaction, etc,) allowing you to stay present and aware of what's going on around you. The frontal lobe also generates compassion and acceptance, improving your ability to relate to others. You'll sleep sounder, eat healthier, and have more energy. Mindfulness cannot change the stressful world we live in, but it will change the way you see and respond to it.

### How do you know this is going to help us?

One word: Science! Multiple studies from Yale, Harvard, UCLA, Stanford and more have proven the benefits. Mindfulness training is a viable and beneficial (and basically the best) stress management tool! And since mindfulness is an ongoing practice, MeditationWorks developed a program that fits easily into your work/daily schedule.

### Who is your teacher and what makes him great?

**Justin Barnes**, co-founder of Blue Yoga, has been practicing and teaching mindfulness-based yoga for over 15 years. His dedicated, creative and authentic style attracts thousands of students year after year.

Justin developed MeditationWorks' mindfulness training program into unique 10-minute sessions, proven the ideal duration for attainability and effectiveness. His calm, engaging approach reduces stress and sharpens focus in a concentrated and convenient manner.

The session's core provides simple structure that is crucial to success, but what's really special is the take-away message at the end of each session. They change weekly, ranging from "random acts of kindness" to "the power of one deep breath" and everything in between. Having a new message every week will keep you coming back!

## Why don't I just practice mindfulness on my own?

Practicing mindfulness requires sitting, breathing, and observing thoughts and sensations without reaction. It seems simple, but the demands of modern life make it difficult to do. Text messages, email notifications, and calls disrupt concentration. Add that to the file waiting on your desk, or the dog begging for a walk, or the memory of a stressful event in the very room you're trying to meditate in. It's nearly impossible to find some peace. Most people struggle with technique, distracted by constant and often irresistible temptations around them, as well as feeling unsure they are "doing it right."

MeditationWorks provides creative expert instruction in a calm dedicated space where people can practice together. Meditating alone is isolating, while practicing in a group provides invaluable support and emotional connection. And after a few minutes in our mobile unit, everyone will feel better.

## What skills do I need to practice mindfulness?

Mindfulness training is a one size fits all stress reduction and focus-building tool. Anyone who can sit and breathe can practice.

## How long do I have to participate to achieve benefits?

After just one session, your heart rate and blood pressure will decrease. You will feel more relaxed and alert throughout the day. After just 8 weeks, MRI scans reveal increased activity and density in the higher order areas of the brain and decreased activity and density in the primitive areas. Stress and anxiety reduces, and people feel happier and healthier. With repetition, thoughtful reactions to stress and challenges become permanent, providing noticeable improvements in overall health and wellness.

## What if I don't have time to come to my session?

The brief break you take in a MeditationWorks training session will have a positive effect on how you use the rest of the time in your day. Think of it as a break you are already taking. But it's a better break!

## Why can't I bring my phone with me?

Cell phones, even when turned off, are extremely distracting. A new study revealed they are as addictive as cigarettes and alcohol. You will find taking a brief break is actually a relief. Says Dr. Bill Thorton, professor of social psychology: "Unless you're an advisor to the president and we have a national emergency, you can wait to get a text."

## What if I can't sit cross-legged?

Our mobile unit has comfortable seating for all participants.

## What if I can't sit still?

Reacting to our urges to move is all part of the practice. Each time you feel jumpy, simply return your attention to your breath. It's OK to shift or reposition, knowing that with practice, your urges will diminish.

## What if I feel an itch?

Not scratching an itch is a great opportunity to train the brain to be less reactive. Observe the sensation and take a deep breath. The itch will eventually fade and disappear. And if you just have to scratch, no big deal. Another opportunity will arise soon!

### What if my mind races?

Humans have naturally wandering brains! Simply acknowledge the thought you are racing to and gently return your attention back to the breath. This may happen many, many times during our training. Each time you return to the breath, you strengthen your ability to respond in a more thoughtful manner.

### What if I hear noise outside the mobile unit?

Roaring engines, sirens, and loud-talkers walking by provide excellent opportunities to train mindfully. Each “acknowledge that sound and return to my breath” moment is like a bicep curl for your brain, strengthening your ability to simply observe your world thoughtfully with less stress and reaction.

### What if I don't want to “om”?

There is no chanting, or sound making of any kind required.

### What if it's snowing or raining?

MeditationWorks' mobile unit is heated and cooled and will always be set to the optimal temperature. We will shovel any snow, meet with you with umbrellas, and provide a cozy blanket in inclement weather.

### Won't this put me to sleep?

No! In fact, it does opposite. You will return to work refreshed and invigorated! Mindfulness has been scientifically proven to make you feel more alert and aware than a 20-minute nap... Seriously!