



Recovery Pathways Service

Why not try...



Mindfulness

connect... be active... take notice... keep learning... give...





Mindfulness can be good for your wellbeing by:

- Slowing down and taking time to notice
- Focusing your attention
- Recognising and managing how you're are feeling
- Learning to step back from unhelpful thoughts
- Increasing your enjoyment in everyday activities
- Finding ways to be kinder to yourself and others
- Seeing what choices are available to you

Anyone can do it and you can't get it wrong.

Mindfulness is a natural human ability and we have all enjoyed mindful moments when we have had a sense of being fully engaged and present with our experience, whether it's a well-timed brew or a beautiful view.

With practice we can learn to be more aware of our experience in the present, rather than being caught up in worries and anxiety about the past or the future.

You don't have to try and experience any otherworldly states, sit cross legged, or ring any bells. Just a small amount of practice most days can make changes over time. If you don't enjoy it then try something else.



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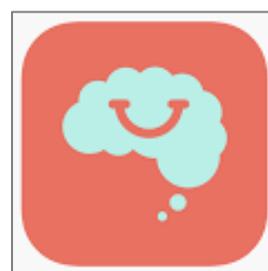
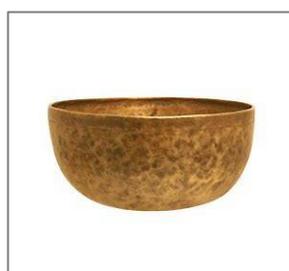
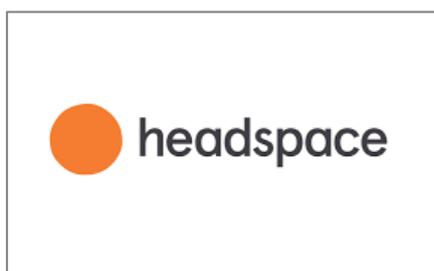
Week One

What is this mindfulness thing and how can I get started?

Mindfulness is a practical skill, similar to swimming, knitting or riding a bike, you have to do it in order to learn, then practice to become better at it. One of the best ways to learn a new skill is from someone who has lots of experience and knows how to share it with people who are just getting started. So, in this first week we are looking at the three of the most popular apps that can help get you started.

As with anything in life, it's not for everyone. When starting with mindfulness you're aiming for a pleasant or at least fairly neutral experience. If you find any of the practices disturbing or distressing in a way that feels intolerable to you, it is important to trust your own judgement and put it aside for another day.

The apps we will look at are: Headspace, Insight Timer and Smiling Mind.





Meditation and Sleep Made Simple

This app was developed by an advertising executive and a Buddhist monk so it's got all of the wisdom you need delivered in a way you can understand. Great for getting into the habit of practicing on a daily basis and shows such a thorough knowledge of what mindfulness practice is all about and the pitfalls you might experience as a beginner. It's also created in the UK so has a familiar feel that is sometimes lacking from other English speaking parts of the globe.

Cost

Free to sign up in exchange for your email address or you linking in via other apps such as Facebook, Spotify, etc. The free version is completely fine as it is and there is more than enough to get you started and keep you going for weeks or months. If you want to subscribe to 'Headspace Plus', there is a monthly fee of £9.99 or a yearly fee of £49.99.

Courses

The Basics - this course is made up of 10 sessions and you can choose a male or a female voice. There are 10 sessions in total and for each one you can choose between a 3, 5 or 10 minute practice. You can also download all 10 of the beginner sessions (202MB of data) so you use off-line too. You don't have to wait for tomorrow for the next session but the general advice with mindfulness is to start small and build it up, so best to leave any practice wanting more rather than it feeling like a chore.

You also have the options to set a reminder for the next practice, enable 'Mindful Moments' notifications and let the app track your progress. Try them out and see if you find them a help or a hindrance.





Insight Timer

This app describes itself as the largest free library on Earth and is made up of many different teachers and practices. You can select practices based on the teacher, the length of the practice or what you want to do such as a breathing meditation.

Cost

Free in exchange for your email address. When you sign in for the first time just skip over the subscription option and you are right into the main dashboard. This app is really committed to delivering free mindfulness teaching and practice and unlike a lot of others it doesn't dangle a carrot of giving you the first session of a course free then asking you to subscribe for the rest.

Courses

There are good Beginners' Kits for: Learning to Mediate, Managing Stress, Coping with Anxiety and Improving your Sleep amongst others. Or you can just choose individual practices or teachers that you like. There is a wide range of teachers on here from the quite cosmic sounding to the more down to earth, so you might have to do a bit of searching to find what works for you and then save those for next time.

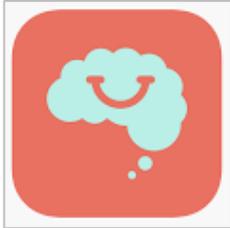
Saving the things you like

There are 40 000 different things on this app, thankfully it lets you bookmark your favourites by clicking on the heart symbol in the top right corner after the practice. You can access all the things you've bookmarked in the startup screen by clicking on the heart symbol at the bottom. You need to save things on a site this big or you'll spend all day trying to find something again.

Other features

You can set a timer with bells at different intervals, track your meditation progress, listen to talks and see how many other people around the world we meditating with you.





Smiling Mind

Developed by psychologists, educators and health professionals, it's a 100% not for profit and all the practices are delivered in a down to earth conversational way.

Cost

This one asks for your email address to register and is completely free with no options to subscribe for more access. When you sign up it will ask you a series of questions to gauge what previous experience you have and what you might want to get from the app. There are also some wellbeing questions so that the app can track your progress. Before each practice it asks a couple more but you can skip them if you don't want to answer.

The app also asks what you are interested in from managing stress, mindfulness at work, attention & concentration, sleep, improving relations, mindful eating and others. It then comes up with some helpful suggestions that you can add to your programs or say no thanks to these and browse all the programs.

Courses

Intro to Mindfulness - has 2 modules with 3 sessions in each. The first module has short animations that explain what it's all about and the second module has some short practices. The first is just 1 minute long.

There are a range of other courses including; Digital Detox, Mindfulness Foundations, 21 Night Sleep Program and lots more. Anything you like in the app can be bookmarked by clicking on the heart symbol in the bottom right hand corner and the app will save it to your favourites. And you can download any of the sessions so that you can practice offline.

There are also programs for kids, families, work and schools



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Improving Lives



These apps are just some that we have tried out and would recommend to get you started. There are lots more to choose from so why not try finding some of your own. Keep a record of the ones you've tried and what you liked and disliked about them to find the ones that work for you.

App	Practice/course	Liked	Disliked



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