

Dr Ruth Baer

University of Oxford

Wednesday, 12th October 2022

University of Reading



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Evidence-Based Psychological Treatment

Mindfulness-based cognitive therapy (MBCT)

Introduction:

MBCT is a family of evidence-based skills training programmes that combine mindfulness meditation practices with cognitive-behavioural exercises to reduce distress and increase well-being. Rooted in both contemplative traditions and psychological science, MBCT programmes are typically provided in group format with weekly sessions exploring a sequence of themes designed to build skills over time.

The original MBCT curriculum is an 8-week programme developed for the prevention of relapse in depression. Based on theory and research on the causes of depressive relapse, it has shown good efficacy in randomized trials and is recommended by the UK's NICE guidelines for people with a history of depressive episodes. Because it works with common psychological processes that contribute to many forms of distress, MBCT has been adapted for a variety of conditions, including anxiety, stress, illness, and pain.

As part of the Oxford Mindfulness Centre's mission to make mindfulness training more widely accessible, we have developed new MBCT programmes for the general population, including MBCT for Life (MBCT-L) and Mindfulness: Finding Peace in a Frantic World. These newer curricula teach skills for working wisely with life's difficulties, appreciating moments of joy, contentment, and gratitude, keeping our balance through life's ups and downs, and living with a greater sense of meaning and purpose.

Content

This one-day workshop provides an introduction to MBCT. After briefly exploring its history and origins, we will consider its theoretical foundations and the evidence base supporting its effects. Important topics in the research literature will be discussed, including outcomes, mechanisms of change, and potential adverse effects. Mindfulness practices and exercises will encourage an experiential understanding of mindfulness and the intended learning that may arise.

Learning objectives:

- Understand the theoretical underpinnings of mindfulness-based cognitive therapy (MBCT).
- Critique the evidence-base supporting the effects of MBCT in various populations and the mechanisms of change.



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- Become familiar with the family of MBCT curricula, including their general structure and learning intentions.
- Experience a variety of mindfulness practices and exercises and discuss the learning that can arise from them.

Training modalities

The workshop combines experiential learning with presentation and discussion. Participants will have an opportunity to experience short mindfulness practices and to reflect on how they can be used to facilitate learning.

Key references:

1. Segal, Z. V, Williams, J. M. G., & Teasdale, J. D. (2013). Mindfulness-based cognitive therapy for depression. Guilford.
2. Feldman, C. & Kuyken, W. (2019). Mindfulness: Ancient wisdom meets modern psychology. Guilford.
3. Williams, J. & Penman, D. (2011). Mindfulness: A practical guide to finding peace in a frantic world.

About the presenter:

Ruth Baer is Professor Emeritus of Psychology at the University of Kentucky and a mindfulness-based cognitive therapy teacher, trainer, and researcher at the Oxford Mindfulness Centre, University of Oxford. Her scholarly work focuses on assessment and conceptualization of mindfulness, effects of mindfulness-based interventions, mechanisms of change in mindfulness training, and professional training and ethics in the mindfulness field. She has contributed to the development of several self-report instruments for assessing mindfulness and related skills, edited three books for professionals on mindfulness-related topics, and written a book on mindfulness for the general public (Practicing Happiness). She serves on the editorial boards of several peer-reviewed journals and gives talks and workshops about mindfulness internationally. She has extensive experience in teaching and supervision of several evidence-based mindfulness programs.

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All workshops, unless otherwise indicated are intended for a cross/mixed ability audience, and are delivered online



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