

Praise for the Mindfulness for Stress Course

At the end of every course we ask course participants to complete an evaluation form, which helps us to monitor the efficacy of each element of the course. Here are a few comments from the last course that we ran (April - May 2012). We can't give names to the quotes because the evaluation form is anonymous, to encourage people to be honest. All evaluation forms are kept in our office.

"Thank you so very much, my life and relationships have been greatly enhanced. Your warmth and kindness have made this course hugely enjoyable!"

"It has been fantastic. I would recommend to others, it is a course for self development which impacts on everyone around you in a positive way".

"Have thoroughly enjoyed the course. Learnt an enormous amount. Notes / CDs in a file is a great idea. Liked the talks and sharing between meditations. Would definitely recommend the course to friends and family. Gary is a very knowledgeable, patient and calming influence / teacher. Thank you."

"I have really enjoyed my time on the course and have learned a lot about myself and how I can think about and deal with my stress differently. Thank you for a really enjoyable, useful and enlightening course."

"The course was excellent. I will miss coming to it. I feel I have a variety of techniques now which will help me to be calmer and more positive. Thanks."

"I've found the notes and the journalling really helpful; also the CDs with the meditation practices have been invaluable. Overall I feel I've got so much insight into myself from attending this course - thank you Gary and helpers!"

"More likely to keep on using these techniques than other courses. Love the CDs. Good balance between theory and practice."

And on the evening of the final day of the course one of the participants sent this email:

"I just wanted to drop you a quick email to say thanks for the work you and the others put into the mindfulness course over the past few weeks, I have very much enjoyed it and feel like there is more to discover but at least I have my feet on the path now. I realised on the way home that I wish I'd added on the feedback form that your friendly, open and supportive approach was a big part of making the course such a positive experience for me."

In our evaluation form, we ask course participants to rate on a scale of 1-10 how important the course has been for them. **On the last course that we ran (April - May 2012) everyone who completed the form rated it 10, except one who gave it 9.**

We also ask if they feel they received something of lasting value from the course, with three possible answers: yes, no or not sure. **Everyone wrote yes.**

We then ask them to write a few words describing that they got from the course. Here are a few of their answers from the last course that we ran (April - May 2012):

"I've learned how to let go of the negative, stressful unhelpful thoughts and be more loving and accepting of myself in the present moment. The audio CDs were brilliant at giving me a structure in my meditations. I feel that now at the end of the course I'm in a place of non-judgment and acceptance of myself."

"I generally feel calmer. I have developed an awareness of myself and my emotions and my tendency to react in certain ways to particular situations and am now able to take a step back and choose how I respond to stress and certain events. I have more control of situations and my thoughts. I have learnt how to actually sit with my emotions instead of trying to push them away / change them. My partner says I am easier to be around!"

"I have got some techniques which I can use and which suit me. They also help with the kind of negative / debilitating kind of thinking to which I am prone."

"I think I was feeling very stuck in my life, especially after some major events in the last couple of years that challenged my sense of identity, and where I thought I was "going" in life generally - it seemed that thinking wasn't really helping, but the course has given me a fresh perspective and sense that I can move forward with new insights into my self, and live in a different way that will ultimately be more fulfilling."

"Insight into why I get into anxious state and techniques for dealing with it. Understanding of how to go about meditation in a very practical sense."

"Neural pathways information - very exciting. However I'm feeling, practice is beneficial. I like the variety of practices shown to us to do. My anxiety levels have dropped. I'm aware of my thoughts and able to let some go. I'm more mindful of things around me, and of doing daily tasks. However I'm feeling, it's OK."

Here are some comments from a course run in January - February 2012:

"I am 45 and rarely felt peace. I am the beginning of a journey and I have experienced peace. I realize how harsh I have been on myself and how little credit I have given myself. I feel confident that no matter what happens next I am going to have more quality in my life. I loved Gary's pace and delivery, knowledge and response to the group. I also enjoyed the input of the other helpers, which was always insightful and helpful."

"I'm really happy to have been part of this course. Now I have a resource to improve my sense of wellbeing and to help me in my life."

"This course was excellently taught, using a good combination of practical techniques, with the right amount of theory and paperwork. Small group exercises were good also. I feel I have learnt a lot and have not been overwhelmed with information. I am more aware of unpleasant bodily sensations of stress and am better able to deal with them during stressful situations. I feel calmer in myself and do not feel I have to be achieving all the time or looking for stimulants."

"Thank you for an excellent course and materials."

"Found the course beneficial, interesting, enlightening, life enhancing!"

Here are a few answers to the question Please state what you got from the course:

"I now have a 'tool kit' of mindfulness practice at my disposal to use whenever I want. How reassuring! My life is calmer and I am more in control."

"1. A real sense of awareness of what is going on for me. 2. An ability to get some distance from thoughts/emotions. 3. Opportunities for tranquillity - a refuge from daily stresses. 4. It's been a great relief to accept (not judge) thoughts, be they positive or negative. 5. A belief that I can be kind to myself and can use/develop the kindness meditation."

"That I can find more inner resource to sustain myself. Phew. Though already aware of many of these ideas, so useful to have all pulled together and consolidated and enhanced to a complete package."

The following is from an email from a participant on the last course (January - February 2012):

"Hi Gary,

I would like to thank you and your colleagues for a great final day (the whole course has been so informative and a great learning experience) that was the icing on an outstanding series of sessions. I will be incorporating all I have learned into my activities of daily living/work."

DF, Cognitive Behavioural Psychotherapist (PG Dip CBT)