



WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) groups

MBSR (mindfulness-based stress reduction) is an 8-week group program developed by Jon Kabat-Zinn that teaches mindfulness: paying attention to the present moment, on purpose and without judgment. It's a structured skills program, not psychotherapy, with significant mental health benefits.

WHO IT'S FOR, AND WHO IT'S NOT

- A fit for stress, chronic pain, chronic illness, or anxiety. Secular and evidence-based.
- The time commitment is real: about 45 minutes of home practice, six days a week.
- Not psychotherapy, and not for acute crisis or active suicidal thoughts. In crisis? Call or text 988.

What it's used for

Originally developed for chronic pain and stress-related conditions.

Now studied for anxiety, depression, cancer, PTSD, diabetes, and clinician burnout.

WHAT TO EXPECT

- 1** Eight weekly sessions of 2.5 hours, plus a full-day Saturday retreat.
- 2** Guided meditation, gentle movement, group inquiry, and brief teaching each week.
- 3** You'll get guided audio and a workbook. Home practice is substantial and expected.

MBSR has one of the largest evidence bases of any mindfulness-based program.

- A 2023 meta-analysis of 32 randomized trials found MBSR improved **depressive symptoms**, more so in major depression.¹
- A 2024 review of military veterans found reductions in depression and PTSD symptoms after MBSR.²
- For healthcare professionals, a review of 30 studies found MBSR improved burnout, stress, anxiety, and depression.³

MAKING THE MOST OF IT

- **Do the home practice.** Most benefit is between classes.
- **Drop the striving.** There's no doing it wrong.
- **Give it a few weeks.** Effects build with reps.

QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE YOU JOIN

- 1** Is the instructor certified, and through which program?
- 2** Is this the full 8-week curriculum, or an abbreviated version?
- 3** What does it cost? Is there a free or sliding scale option?

Ready to find a group?

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If you're in crisis, call or text 988.

The Group Guide is a directory, not a clinic. This handout is general education, not medical or mental health advice. Listings are written by group leaders and are not endorsements. Confirm details, cost, and fit with any group you contact. Sources on page 2.



Sources

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) groups · references keyed to the numbers on page 1.

- 1 Ding, F., Wu, J., & Zhang, Y. Can mindfulness-based stress reduction relieve depressive symptoms? A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Journal of Pacific Rim Psychology* (2023).
- 2 Li, W. W., et al. The effectiveness of MBSR on depression, PTSD, and mindfulness among military veterans: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *SAGE Open Medicine* (2024).
- 3 Goodman & Schorling. Systematic review of MBSR for burnout, stress, anxiety, and depression among healthcare professionals (30 studies, 2021).

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