



# Mindfulness Northwest

Evidenced-based Stress Reduction Training Customized  
for Healthcare Practitioners, Leadership and Staff

## Mindfulness for Healthcare Professionals

### Stress Resilience and Burnout Prevention

Mindfulness for Healthcare Professionals (MHP) is an intensive stress reduction and burnout prevention training program containing the core elements of the renowned Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) curriculum customized and extended for Healthcare practitioners, leadership and staff.

Levels of stress and burnout in the healthcare profession have been exacerbated in recent decades by significant changes in how health care is delivered and administered. Extensive research has shown that mindfulness training, and the MBSR and MHP curricula in particular, can have significant positive impacts on participants' job satisfaction, their relationships with patients, co-workers and administration, and their focus and creativity at work. The data, both third party and our own, specifically show that participants' feelings of stress and burnout are greatly improved by the end of the course. (See "MHP: Evidence-based" below.)

### Training Results

After this training, participants should be able to:

1. Employ formal and informal mindfulness training techniques in both preventive and responsive ways in high stress situations;
2. Understand the three primary components of burnout and implement mindfulness practices to reduce risk of burnout along these axes;
3. Identify helpful and unhelpful thought patterns when they arise, and apply mindful problem solving, emotional regulation, and meaning-focused coping strategies, both at work and at home;
4. Be more present, compassionate and engaged with patients in ways that promote better patient outcomes;
5. Show change in mindfulness, perceived stress, and burnout as shown in standardized measures administered pre- and post-training.

### Program structure

There are five meetings: four class sessions of 2.5 hours each and one 6-hour extended session.

Each meeting includes: (1) information on the scientific and contemplative basis of mindfulness, (2) hands-on mindfulness training exercises, (3) reflection and introspection on participants' experiences in and out of class, and (4) skillful facilitation of conversations between participants. The course is experiential and interactive.

*As Director of Faculty Wellness at the University of Washington Medical School I have repeatedly hired Mindfulness Northwest to teach groups of physicians.*

*The classes were full with waiting lists from the day after they were announced.*

*The principal instructor, Tim Burnett, has an amazing ability to connect well with his students. He is very skillful at communicating the theoretical concepts of stress, coping and mindful communication. He clearly walks the walk and is very able to connect the theory with the practice. The class reviews were uniformly positive, and mostly glowing, with many participants signing up for more than one session.*

*From an administrative viewpoint, Mindfulness Northwest was extremely professional, well organized and easy to deal with. We offered both introductory and continuing mindfulness training.*

**Claudia Finkelstein, MDCM Director of Faculty Wellness Programs  
Clinical Associate Professor of Medicine**



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**Learning Community Model:** We have found that bringing participants together in a safe and interconnected classroom community itself helps healthcare professionals recognize how isolated and stressed they have become.

**Continuing Education:** While we are unable to grant CMEs directly, in sites with a Washington State Medical Association accredited sponsor the course has been approved for CMEs every time. We are happy to provide all of the needed documentation for a successful CME application.

## MHP: An Evidence-based Stress Resilience and Burnout Prevention Curriculum.

**Stress and Burnout are serious problems.** Physicians and other healthcare providers are under extreme and growing risk for burnout, and psychological distress as a result of on-the-job stressors. In 2012, Shanafelt et al. reported that nearly half of physicians report at least one symptom of burnout. In 2015, Shanafelt did a follow up study that demonstrated burnout and satisfaction with work-life balance in US physicians worsened significantly from 2011 to 2014.

The evidence is growing that this burnout comes at a cost not only to the physicians, but to their patients, colleagues, and families (McClarrerty 2014).

In a 2009 paper, Freischlag & Shanafelt report that burnout has:

- **Professional consequences:** medical errors, poor judgment and adverse patient outcomes;
- **Personal consequences:** depression, anxiety, substance use, and suicide; and
- **Organizational consequences:** disruptive behavior, lower patient satisfaction scores, and increased malpractice risk.

Finally, research suggests that when physicians are running low on empathy, their patients take longer to recover from illnesses and are less likely to adhere to treatment (Rakel et al. 2011, Canale et al. 2012).

**Mindfulness training is a part of the solution.** Several research and pilot studies using mindfulness-based training for physicians, residents, and medical students have demonstrated improvement in quality of life and well-being for participants, and significant reductions in symptoms of burn-out, depression, total mood disturbance and anxiety (Krasner & Epstein 2009, Luken & Sammons 2016, Regebr et al. 2014, Hassed et al. 2009, Rosenzweig et al. 2003).

## From participants

I did not realize how burned out I was until I filled out the physician burnout survey just before the first MHP class. I had been going to work and having a bad day each day, but had not made the connection that I was having a bad day every day. I really was not enjoying my job, not even the time spent with patients, which had always been the fun part of it. Within 2 weeks of starting the MHP class, I started enjoying patient care again, and with regular meditation, the millions of little daily annoyances stopped getting to me. Recently, I stopped meditating for a few weeks and began to feel the irritation creeping back (although I am at least still enjoying my time with patients). I started meditating again and am already feeling better.

The MHP course gave me a chance to develop stress-lowering techniques that I can incorporate into the usual course of my busy day as a resident. These methods have allowed me to provide better care for patients by being able to be more focused when I am speaking with them rather than worried about what I need to do when I leave the patient's room.

The focus that the course has on teaching students to be present in the moment has also helped me to better separate my work life from my home life which helps me feel more focused when I am at work and better able to foster personal relationships outside of work. I believe that other residents would benefit from the techniques taught in this course.



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## Mindfulness for Healthcare Professionals Works for Participants and Organizations

Our **Mindfulness for Healthcare Professionals** training includes all of the core elements of the well-studied Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction curriculum (*Kabat-Zinn 1990, 1982, 2002*) in a briefer and more concentrated format and is similar in scale to several mindfulness training interventions which have proven effective (*Fourtney et al. 2013, Schoroeder et al. 2015*).

Preliminary data we've collected suggests our course results in a decrease of symptoms of burnout, increased trait mindfulness, and decreased perceived stress. Specifically, the data show:

- an increase in mindfulness of 11%;
- a decrease in perceived stress of 21%;
- a reduction in depersonalization of 15%;
- a gain in emotional exhaustion 6%; and
- an increased sense of efficacy 8%.

**Mindfulness for Healthcare Professionals** has been offered since 2011 at the University of Washington Medical School, Everett Clinic, Evergreen Medical Center, Skagit Valley Regional Medical Center, PeaceHealth St. Joseph's Medical Center, and Providence and through the WPHP and SCCA.

Research bibliography available [on our website](#).

*Besides the excellent quality of their well-designed and well-executed mindfulness-based stress-reduction programs, we appreciated Mindfulness Northwest's businesslike approach and their responsiveness to the scheduling needs of our client organizations.*

**Jason Green, Founding Director**  
Washington Physicians Health Program Wellness Program

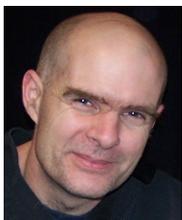
## From participants

Participating in MHP was great in a number of ways. I am pretty good at holding "curiosity" as a cornerstone of how I approach relationships with patients. It is a helpful way to ground myself and to not wander over into the world of judgment. The course reminded me to also be gentle with myself, well more so than I usually am, to notice when something came up or a practice was challenging, but not to get judgmental about it. And at the outset, I was facing an unknown future (and really whose is not?!) with a fair amount of fear. I cannot say the course eliminated the fear but it again reminded me of the stance of curiosity, openness.

The practices are useful, especially if I were to really adopt them as practices. And regardless of how attentive I am to incorporating them in my daily life, they are there for me to have and use, and they have been useful for me since the course.

Learning and practicing the various techniques will be really helpful for my work with patients and others who I advise.

## Contact Us



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