

Mindfulness (and compassion!) for the menopause

Beth Longstaff



Session plan

'Practice makes possible'

What is mindfulness?

What is compassion?

How can they help with the menopause?

How do I find out more?

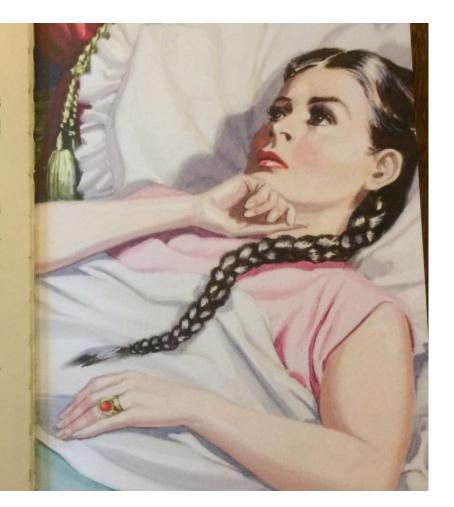


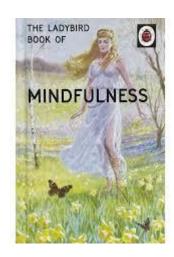
Mindfulness? Are you KIDDING?

Anna has emptied her mind and is just listening to the world around her.

She can hear the neighbours arguing, two ambulances, a burglar alarm, a child crying, and the sound of dubstep coming from a Subaru Impreza.

She is also concentrating on her own feelings, like her cystitis.





What can mindfulness help with?

Some specifics

- Stress reduction
- Regulating emotions including anger and anxiety
- Reducing depression relapse
- Improving memory, reducing brain fog
- Lessening impact of physical symptoms inc. pain
- Improving sleep



What can mindfulness help with?

Broader challenges

- Coming to terms with change and impermanence
- Honouring limits
- Rethinking old stories
- Self acceptance, self compassion



What is mindfulness?

Paying attention

...on purpose

...in each moment

...non judgementally

Jon Kabat Zinn



Myth busting

You don't need special clothes or to be able to sit cross

You don't need to be a Buddhist or religious in any way

You don't need to be able to empty your mind

It does need a bit of effort and practice

It won't replace your hormones





Meno II pause

3 step breathing space

From overwhelm to clarity

Sensation Emotion to do Urdequato Orgensation Sensation Sensation Though Sensation Emotion Urdensation Emotion Sensation Emotion Sensation do



Thought
Sensation
Urge to do
Thought
Sensation
Thought
Urge to do
Thought
Urge

Urge to do Sensation

Emotion

Urge to do



Thought

Thoughts are not facts

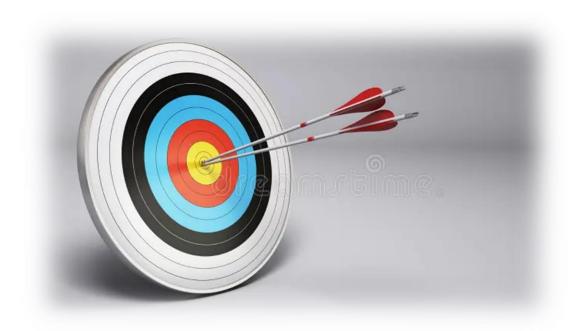
What are we believing...

...about the menopause
...about our symptoms
...about asking for help
...about what other people think

Are we willing to question our beliefs??



Working with the 'second arrow'





An anchor in a storm





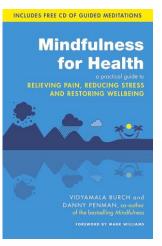




Meeting our body in a different way

Can we befriend our menopausal body?

Mindfulness and living with pain







Mindfulness AND compassion



What is compassion?

Sensitivity to suffering in self and others

Desire to prevent or alleviate suffering in self or others

Wisdom

Courage

Care



Meno II pause Compassionate guide

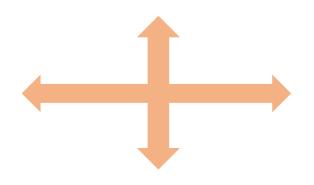
Bringing mindfulness to hot flushes

Thoughts

Everyone is looking, I look stupid, I can't cope, it's getting worse, I've got to get out



Want to escape, pulse racing, heat and redness increase, palpitations



Behaviour

Avoid situations, hide face, rush out of room, stop going to social events



Emotions

Embarrassed, ashamed, trapped, anxious, frustrated, upset



Bringing mindfulness to hot flushes

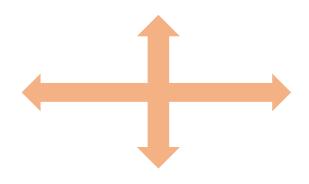
Thoughts

It's just a hot flush, it's a nuisance but it will pass. I can breathe through it. Nobody cares.

Physical sensations

Heat of hot flush. Cooling breath.

Air against skin. 'Feet, seat hands'



Behaviour

Let shoulders relax. Soothing, cooling breath. Allow hot flush to flow over. Talk about it?

Continue with usual activities.

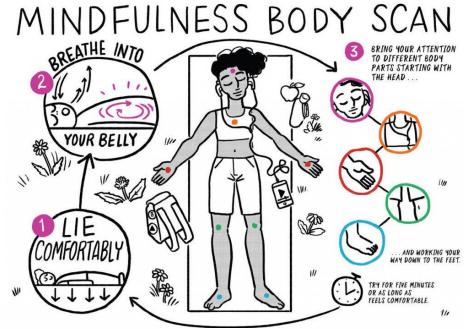


Calm. Confident. A bit annoyed. Compassion for own situation.

Attentional control – 'practice makes possible'









Meno II pause Appreciation practice

How do we cultivate these magical things?

- PRACTICE!
- Structured courses
- Drop ins
- Websites
- Books
- Online
- Apps



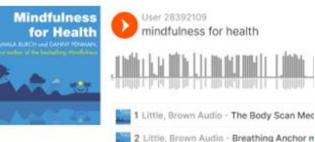


breathworks



InsightTimer









Trust Honesty Respect Compassion Teamwork

Thank you for listening!

beth.longstaff@nottshc.nhs.uk

