

Discover Mindfulness Group – Winter 2022 (Online)

The *Discover Mindfulness Group* is an 8-week group created to help students develop and integrate mindfulness and self-compassion skills in and out of the therapy room. Mindfulness skills can help to manage stress, adjust your reactions to responses, soothe mild to moderate anxiety and depression, and discover foundational skills to practice and apply mindfulness to your daily life and work. If you find that you easily get overwhelmed and unable to find your center or have a hard time slowing down to-do lists in your brain, then this group is for you. Each group will start out with a brief mindfulness practice, followed by a brief discussion, learning and integration, and then the discovery of a new mindfulness modality near the middle of the class.

Most people who partook in the group last time discovered that they enjoyed the group process much more than they had anticipated. They all felt like they were kinder to themselves and could work with mindfulness in various capacities applying it to their daily lives in a non-pressured and non-dogmatic way.

You will also be encouraged to start a 3 minute at-home or on-the-go mindfulness practice. Sharing your personal experiences and getting support on your mindfulness practice from fellow group members and facilitators is also a key component of the Discover Mindfulness group experience.

Time:	Mondays, 1:30-3:00 PM	Wednesdays, 7:00-8:30 PM
Dates:	February 7, 2022 – April 4, 2022 (No group Family Day)	February 9, 2022 – April 6, 2022 (No group March 9)
Location:	Virtual/online through Zoom	
Facilitators:	Dr. Irina Mihaescu, Consulting Psychiatrist	

Group Structure:

Week 1	Introduction to mindfulness
Week 2	Mindfulness in the body
Week 3	Mindfulness in everyday
Week 4	Mindfulness – non-evaluative awareness
Week 5	Mindfulness – self-compassion practices
Week 6	Mindfulness – loving kindness
Week 7	Mindfulness – equanimity
Week 8	Mindfulness – a review of the process, styles

Group Eligibility:

- In a group therapy environment, much of the focus is on the delivery of psychoeducational content and fostering a dynamic where all participants feel safe and comfortable to share their experiences as they relate to the content of the group. Given this structure, this

group is considered appropriate for students struggling with stress, adjustment disorder, mild to moderate anxiety, mild to moderate depression with ***no suicidal ideation, no self-injurious behaviour and not currently suffering from or at risk for psychosis or severe dissociation. History of a major traumatic event or diagnosis of PTSD related to this event would also not be suitable for this mindfulness group.*** If you are currently at risk of harming yourself or others, please contact CCS to book an Initial Consultation or phone ACCESS 24/7 at 780-424-2424 to access community mental health supports.

- Groups are open to those clients who are not currently receiving individual therapy.

Group Requirements:

- **If you are unable to attend the first session, you will not be able to attend the remainder of the group.** The first week sets the foundation for the following sessions and outlines the process for a safe group therapy experience for all. As result, attendance at the first session essential. If you miss two group sessions in a row, you will also lose your place in the group. Each group session builds on the next, and regular attendance is key for a successful group therapy experience.
- During the group, you are asked to:
 - Limit distractions and *no multi-tasking* (e.g. place cell phone on airplane mode)
 - Have writing materials ready (paper, pen, handouts)
 - Bring a water and/or snack if that would help you to feel more comfortable
- You will receive meeting reminder e-mails from the reception desk two days before the next group meeting. If you are unable to attend the meeting, please reply to the e-mail or phone **reception (780-492-5205)**. Otherwise, you do not need to respond to the reminder email.
- Homework will be assigned weekly in order for you to have a chance to put your new skills into practice. It is especially important that homework is completed between sessions as this not only allows you to become more adept at utilizing these new skills, but also ensures that you will be able to contribute to group discussion.
- To maximize all participants' comfort, group members are expected to demonstrate respect for others' experiences and comments. You are also required to treat others' information as confidential - "what is said in the group, stays in the group" - and to keep private the identities of group members. Sessions are NOT to be recorded or digitally captured in any way. It is a breach of confidentiality if anyone who is not a current group member can see or hear the group proceedings.
- Prior to the start of group, you will need to complete an online consent form about the procedures and expectations regarding your participation in this group program, along with other demographic forms and symptom inventories. A link to these forms will be sent to your email following the Group Information Session. The group facilitators will review

the consent form with all group members on the first day of group. If you have any questions or concerns about the forms, you are welcome to email the facilitator.

How to Register Your Interest in Therapy Groups at CCS:

1. From the [website](#), click the “Register for Group Information Session” link below the group you are interested in and complete the sign-up form.
2. Attend the Group Information Session. Here, you will learn more about the content, structure, and expectations for the group and you will have a chance to meet the group facilitators. The facilitators will also explain the criteria for being in a therapy group and also answer questions you might have. *You must attend the info session to be eligible to sign up for the group.*
3. Shortly after the Group Information Session, you will receive an email with consent forms and demographic information to fill out. If you are still interested in attending the group, fill out these forms within two days of the info session. ***If you are no longer interested in the group, you don't need to fill out the forms!***
4. Two days after the Group Information Session, students who have submitted their completed consent forms will be contacted by email and provided confirmation that they are enrolled in the group.
5. If we have more people interested than we have space in the group, we will randomly draw names until the group is full. The remaining students will be put on a waitlist for the next group, and will get priority to attend should they want to. These students will also be offered alternate means of support in the interim, including an Initial Consultation.

Please note: in some instances it is determined by the group facilitator that clients would be better served through individual rather than group treatment. Facilitators reserve the right to relocate group participants to individual services as needed.