

# MBSR: Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction

## Background:

This course is modeled on the Mindfulness based Stress Reduction Program first developed in 1979 by Jon Kabat-Zinn, PhD., a biochemistry instructor at the University of Massachusetts Medical School who also had a background in yoga and meditation. He reasoned that some of the most distressed patients at the UMass hospital and clinic might benefit from meditation training. The initial program began, and proved promising, with initial positive reports from patient participants. A program of scientific research was begun, and MBSR was shown to improve not only quality of life, but clinical symptoms (high blood pressure, skin lesions from psoriasis, symptoms of anxiety, etc.) in participants. Kabat Zinn is now Professor Emeritus at the University Massachusetts Medical School in Worcester, Mass, where he established the Center for Mindfulness in Medicine, Health Care and Society. MBSR programs exist in hospitals and medical centers internationally, and the basic eight-week Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction course has become a model intervention in mind-body research and therapies across academic disciplines. MBSR has been shown to benefit people suffering from eating disorders, panic, depression, chronic pain, and sleep problems to name a few. The skills taught in MBSR are known to be useful in prevention as well as remediation of stress. There is now a substantial body of empirical evidence documenting MBSR as a factor in increasing overall quality of life for patient participants from all walks of life. The course has been used effectively to address stress in health care and human service professionals, lawyers, police, the military, education, persons in economically stressed circumstances and in prisons. Anyone experiencing stress, or wanting to improve quality of life, can benefit from MBSR.

The content of the course is focused on skill development in mindfulness meditation and support for integrating mindfulness into everyday life. The classroom is safe, supportive and non-judgmental. During the 8-week course, a variety of mindfulness meditation practices are introduced.

# MBSR Winter 2020 Class Schedule

## Orientation/Registration

(Required)

Tuesday, January 28, 2020

6:00pm-7:30pm

True North Health Care

514 Beltrami Ave.

Bemidji MN 56601

## All Classes Meet:

February 4, 11& 18

(No class on February 25)

March 3, 10, 17, 24& 31

### Morning Classes:

(all class sessions)

Tuesday Mornings

11:00am-1:30pm

### Evening Classes:

(all class sessions)

Tuesday Evenings

6:00pm-8:30pm

## All Day Retreat

Saturday, March 21, 2020

9:00am to 4:00pm

## Class Materials Provided:

**Recorded guided meditations** for home practice  
**Weekly study packets** to guide and support homework practice  
**Chairs, cushions and blankets** for use in the classroom  
**Secure Web Page** with links to practice resources and online discussion for participants.

## Class Content:

Mindfulness is an innate human capacity for moment to moment awareness. It can be defined as *“paying attention on purpose to what is happening right now, without judgment”*. The skills involved in this are essentially, the ability to focus and sustain attention, learning the difference between observing and judging, and inclining ones thinking toward keen observation of life experience without judgment. This means that *your moment to moment experience is a key part of the class content!* You will learn about stress, and identify your unique responses to stress, discovering new ways of viewing your experience. Skills are introduced and reinforced through teacher-led presentations, class discussions and in-class practices that include sitting meditation, body scan meditation (done reclining in a chair or on the ground) gentle yoga, walking, and mindful eating practice. There will be time to reflect upon professional growth and its impact on classroom teaching.

## Learning Environment:

A basic premise of mindfulness-based stress reduction is that learning is possible only in a safe, and non-critical environment. The classroom is physically comfortable and secure, and the teacher values intent listening as the primary form of support for participants as they learn mindfulness skills. The learning environment itself is “low tech”: free of cell phones, “apps” and computer screens. The instructor is available 30 minutes before each class and maintains e-mail and phone contact with students between class sessions as needed.

## Instructor:

**Geri C. Wilimek**, MSW; LICSW is a clinical social worker in private practice in Bemidji, MN. She Has practiced mindfulness meditation since 2005, and is a Qualified MBSR Teacher trained at the Center for Mindfulness in Medicine, Health Care and Society at the University of Massachusetts Medical School, Worcester, Mass.

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### REMINDER!

All materials for class are on-line at [www.geriwilimekmbsr.com](http://www.geriwilimekmbsr.com)

Click tab for “**Weekly Class Assignments**” the password: **exhale**

For **class updates, cancellations due to weather etc.**

**Subscribe** to the above website

The button to subscribe is in  
the banner on the right side of the home page.

Email Geri with any questions: [geriwilimek@gmail.com](mailto:geriwilimek@gmail.com)