

Table of Contents

Introduction **1**

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| About This Book..... | 2 |
| Foolish Assumptions..... | 2 |
| Icons Used in This Book..... | 3 |
| Beyond the Book | 3 |
| Where to Go from Here..... | 4 |

Part 1: Introducing Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy... 7

Chapter 1: Improving Your Wellbeing with Mindfulness 9

| | |
|---|----|
| Placing the Power in Your Hands: Discovering MBCT | 10 |
| Encountering the term MBCT..... | 11 |
| Drawing on Buddhist philosophy..... | 11 |
| Developing from CBT | 13 |
| Integrating mindfulness and CBT into MBCT..... | 14 |
| Recognising the Need for a Mindful Approach..... | 16 |
| Addressing the shortcomings of CBT | 16 |
| Going beyond traditional therapy | 17 |
| Enjoying the Benefits of MBCT | 17 |
| Seeing the evidence of success..... | 17 |
| Fearing past and future experiences..... | 19 |
| Choosing to live in the now..... | 20 |
| Perusing even more ways that MBCT can help you..... | 21 |

Chapter 2: Deciding to Lead a Mindful Existence 23

| | |
|--|----|
| Understanding Your Problems | 23 |
| Feeling that you can't cope..... | 24 |
| Wanting to make a change..... | 26 |
| Breaking the cycle of mental anguish | 26 |
| Developing an Understanding of Yourself..... | 28 |
| Opening up to yourself..... | 29 |
| Studying your personal thought patterns | 29 |
| Preparing for the Challenges Ahead | 31 |
| Facing your fears..... | 32 |
| Jumping over hurdles..... | 33 |
| Recognising the importance of everyday practice..... | 33 |

| | |
|---|------------|
| Looking Forward to Long-Term Balance | 34 |
| Living in the moment..... | 35 |
| Accepting reality..... | 35 |
| Reducing suffering..... | 36 |
| Becoming your own best friend..... | 37 |
| Chapter 3: Putting Mindfulness into Practice with the Eight-Week Course | .39 |
| Creating a Personal Practice that Works..... | 40 |
| Setting yourself goals | 40 |
| Making the practice part of your daily routine..... | 41 |
| Making time, not finding time..... | 42 |
| Drawing up a schedule..... | 43 |
| Keeping a practice diary..... | 43 |
| Dispelling the Myths | 43 |
| Feeling that you lack the necessary experience or knowledge | 45 |
| Assuming that mindfulness is all spiritual mumbo-jumbo | 45 |
| Distinguishing between meditation, mindfulness and awareness training | 46 |
| Believing that you can do it by yourself | 46 |
| Being Actively Mindful: Theory Rooted in Practice..... | 47 |
| Practising oriental disciplines..... | 47 |
| Adapting old techniques..... | 48 |
| Joining body and mind..... | 48 |
| Focusing on each individual task, and being present in the moment..... | 50 |
| Discovering the Advantages Awaiting You | 50 |
| Adding up the benefits | 50 |
| Tailoring the benefits to you..... | 52 |
| Living healthily..... | 53 |
| Slowing right down..... | 53 |
| Helping yourself and others | 53 |
| Introducing the Eight-Week Course | 55 |
| Going over the core skills | 55 |
| Casting a look over the weeks to come..... | 55 |
| Part II: Sailing Your Personal Ship – the Eight-Week MBCT Course..... | .59 |
| Chapter 4: Preparing for the Voyage – Week One: Practising Mindfulness and Stepping Out of Autopilot | .61 |
| Preparing Yourself and Your Surroundings..... | 62 |
| Creating your practice space..... | 62 |
| Making yourself comfortable..... | 63 |

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Uncluttering Your Mind..... | 65 |
| Letting go of worries and concerns..... | 65 |
| Entering the now..... | 65 |
| Exploring Your Physical Self Mindfully..... | 66 |
| Understanding the importance of taking your time | 66 |
| Engaging in the body scan practice..... | 67 |
| Becoming aware of your mind wandering..... | 70 |
| Slowing Down and Living Your Life Mindfully | 71 |
| Performing everyday activities mindfully..... | 71 |
| Eating with awareness: Raisin exercise | 72 |
| Making time for regular practice | 74 |
| Recording your reactions and responses..... | 75 |
| Reviewing Your Accomplishments This Week | 75 |
| Chapter 5: Plotting the Course – Week Two: Cultivating the Right Attitude | 77 |
| Getting Your Bearings on the Course | 77 |
| Going Deeper into Self-Awareness..... | 78 |
| Listening mindfully: A ten-minute sound meditation..... | 79 |
| Engaging in your mindful routine | 81 |
| Retaining your awareness..... | 82 |
| Dealing with Barriers to Practising Mindful Exercises | 84 |
| Suggesting changes to maintain motivation..... | 86 |
| Staying focused and committed..... | 89 |
| Coping with Setbacks, Pain and Emotions During Your Practice | 89 |
| Trusting your own judgement..... | 90 |
| Accepting difficult emotions | 90 |
| Knowing your physical limits..... | 91 |
| Observing the Wandering Mind..... | 92 |
| Regulating the breath: Mindful breathing exercise..... | 92 |
| Exploring automatic thoughts and the connected feelings..... | 94 |
| Taking note of thoughts throughout the day..... | 94 |
| Reviewing Your Accomplishments This Week | 96 |
| Chapter 6: Setting Sail – Week Three: Developing Physical Awareness | 97 |
| Getting Your Bearings on the Course | 98 |
| Applying Mindfulness to Your Body's Senses | 99 |
| Seeing mindfully: Making a short mind-movie | 99 |
| Getting physically in touch with daily tasks | 100 |
| Finding the breathing space: An emergency meditation..... | 101 |
| Allowing awareness of sight, sound, breath and body..... | 102 |
| Engaging Your Body in Mindful Movement..... | 103 |
| Discovering movement exercises | 103 |
| Stretching yourself | 106 |
| Going for a stroll: Walking exercises..... | 109 |

| | |
|--|-----|
| Observing Mindfulness in Daily Movement | 111 |
| Getting up in the morning..... | 111 |
| Preparing a mindful breakfast..... | 111 |
| Exercising mindfully throughout the day..... | 112 |
| Retiring for the night | 112 |
| Making a Note of Unpleasant Events..... | 113 |
| Reviewing Your Accomplishments This Week | 114 |

**Chapter 7: Weathering the Storm – Week Four:
Dealing with Difficulties.....** **115**

| | |
|--|-----|
| Getting Your Bearings on the Course | 115 |
| Exploring and Explaining Stress | 117 |
| Grasping the nature of stress..... | 117 |
| Hearing the good news..... | 119 |
| Dealing with Unhelpful Thoughts..... | 120 |
| Being with negative thoughts..... | 121 |
| Creating more helpful thoughts..... | 123 |
| Addressing Your Anxiety Demons | 123 |
| Attending to an anchor of awareness – or two | 124 |
| Using mindfulness with unpleasant tasks..... | 125 |
| Coping with Troublesome Thoughts | 126 |
| Tracing your stressful thought patterns..... | 127 |
| Sitting with difficult thoughts..... | 128 |
| Strengthening your position by finding new perspectives..... | 130 |
| Reviewing Your Accomplishments This Week | 132 |

**Chapter 8: Navigating Troubled Waters – Week Five:
Relinquishing Attachments** **133**

| | |
|--|-----|
| Getting Your Bearings on the Course | 134 |
| Allowing the Presence of Painful Thoughts, Emotions and Memories.... | 134 |
| Staying with discomforting thoughts..... | 135 |
| Developing the coping breathing space exercise..... | 137 |
| Tackling Troubling Past Experiences | 138 |
| Bringing painful experiences to mind | 139 |
| Seeing your past as the midnight movie..... | 140 |
| Pre-empting future events | 141 |
| Coping with strong emotions | 142 |
| Resisting the urge to fight or run away..... | 143 |
| Maintaining a gentle approach..... | 144 |
| Beginning a new relationship with your experiences | 145 |
| Using storytelling to understand suffering..... | 146 |
| Unchaining Yourself from Attachments | 147 |
| Noticing strong attachments to the past..... | 149 |
| Co-existing with aversion..... | 149 |

| | |
|--|------------|
| Understanding the importance of acceptance..... | 150 |
| Letting go of the desire for quick fixes..... | 150 |
| Jettisoning pleasant attachments too..... | 151 |
| Reviewing Your Accomplishments This Week..... | 152 |
| Chapter 9: Going with the Current – Week Six: Accepting the True Nature of Thoughts | 153 |
| Getting Your Bearings on the Course | 154 |
| Demystifying Thoughts: They're Less Peculiar Than You Think..... | 154 |
| Understanding how your thoughts affect your moods (and vice versa)..... | 155 |
| Distinguishing your thoughts from facts..... | 156 |
| Relating to your thoughts in a new way..... | 157 |
| Parting the Waves of Self-Doubt | 159 |
| Bringing awareness to your thoughts..... | 159 |
| Performing the pebble meditation to consider deeper thoughts | 160 |
| Writing to yourself about your thoughts..... | 161 |
| Approaching difficult thoughts in a longer meditation..... | 162 |
| Visualising problems and problematic people | 164 |
| Being Kind to Yourself..... | 165 |
| Treating yourself well with the kindness meditation..... | 166 |
| Remembering real moods occurring during real events | 166 |
| Avoiding self-criticism and -judgement..... | 169 |
| Releasing unhelpful emotional habits..... | 170 |
| Finding inner peace by sitting with your thoughts | 171 |
| Reviewing Your Accomplishments This Week | 172 |
| Chapter 10: Coming Into Port – Week Seven: Looking After Your Own Wellbeing | 173 |
| Getting Your Bearings on the Course | 174 |
| Taking Positive Steps to Look After Yourself | 175 |
| Taking a break: Fixing your focus mindfully | 175 |
| Maintaining and developing your practice for your benefit | 177 |
| Beginning your day with a treat..... | 178 |
| Rebalancing Your Daily Life | 179 |
| Identifying your daily drainers and possible rechargers | 180 |
| Alleviating feelings of anger..... | 181 |
| Stabilising your mood | 183 |
| Having Fun for Fun's Sake..... | 184 |
| Treating yourself..... | 185 |
| Not overindulging | 185 |
| Dealing with Threats to Your Wellbeing..... | 186 |
| Remembering the good..... | 186 |
| Finding the right response..... | 187 |
| Linking your actions to your moods | 187 |



Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy For Dummies

| | |
|---|------------|
| Improving how you feel through what you do..... | 188 |
| Sitting with spacious awareness..... | 189 |
| Reviewing Your Accomplishments This Week | 190 |
| Chapter 11: Looking Beyond the Horizon to the Rest of Your Life – Week Eight: Living Mindfully | 191 |
| Getting Your Bearings on the Course | 192 |
| Embracing a Mindful Life in Good and Bad Times | 192 |
| Pledging to Practise..... | 195 |
| Motivating yourself..... | 195 |
| Creating action plans..... | 196 |
| Keeping a progress diary..... | 197 |
| Having a Mindful Day, Every Day..... | 198 |
| Waking up | 198 |
| Breaking your fast..... | 198 |
| Journeying mindfully..... | 198 |
| Taking regular breathing breaks..... | 199 |
| Performing mindful daily actions | 199 |
| Communicating mindfully..... | 199 |
| Going to sleep..... | 200 |
| Embracing your experiences..... | 200 |
| Exercising mind and body..... | 200 |
| Developing Mindfulness Attributes..... | 200 |
| Remembering non-judgement | 201 |
| Having patience..... | 202 |
| Using childlike curiosity: Beginner's mind | 202 |
| Trusting yourself..... | 203 |
| Working on non-striving..... | 204 |
| Accepting things the way they are | 204 |
| Letting go | 204 |
| Accepting the importance of commitment, self-discipline and intention..... | 205 |
| Keeping it simple | 206 |
| Giving yourself a reason to keep practising..... | 207 |
| Reviewing Your Accomplishments This Week | 207 |

Part III: Developing Different Treatment Practices 209

| | |
|---|------------|
| Chapter 12: Stopping the Cycle of Depression | 211 |
| Staring into a Black Hole: Understanding Depression..... | 212 |
| Becoming depressed: You're not alone | 214 |
| Knowing the common symptoms of depression | 214 |
| Identifying the causes | 215 |
| Observing the effects that feed depression | 217 |

| | |
|--|------------|
| Breaking Down Common Symptoms: Your Personal Narrative | 218 |
| Searching for your personal signature..... | 218 |
| Noticing how depression affects you..... | 220 |
| Lacking drive or energy | 221 |
| Feeling helpless..... | 222 |
| Understanding why some people self-harm..... | 223 |
| Overcoming Unhelpful Thoughts | 224 |
| ‘Snapping out’ of it..... | 224 |
| Believing that you’re against the world..... | 225 |
| Deleting the Depression Loop..... | 225 |
| Encountering a depression loop..... | 226 |
| Making time, not finding time..... | 227 |
| Following up on your progress | 227 |
| Using MBCT to prevent depression relapse..... | 228 |
| Believing that things can and will improve | 228 |
| Chapter 13: Breaking Free from Addiction | 231 |
| Discovering the Realities of Addiction | 232 |
| Filling a void – why people get addicted..... | 232 |
| Looking at common factors of addiction..... | 233 |
| Wanting to Stop: The Process of Change | 235 |
| Entering the sea of change | 236 |
| Meeting with others..... | 237 |
| Accepting who you really are..... | 237 |
| Believing in yourself | 239 |
| Letting go of addiction, mindfully..... | 239 |
| Starting afresh, now..... | 241 |
| Staving Off Relapse..... | 241 |
| Losing Control: Understanding Alcohol Addiction | 242 |
| Considering the symptoms of alcohol addiction..... | 242 |
| Discovering the dangers | 244 |
| Challenging the misconceptions..... | 244 |
| Believing that the problem is out of your hands | 246 |
| Going cold turkey..... | 246 |
| Remembering Helpful Lessons | 248 |
| Chapter 14: Relieving the Strain of Anxiety..... | 249 |
| Coping with Pressure..... | 249 |
| Understanding how anxiety manifests itself | 251 |
| Differentiating between the types of anxiety | 251 |
| Tackling Your Fears with Targeted Interventions..... | 253 |
| Developing a coping plan..... | 254 |
| Changing unhelpful thoughts | 255 |
| Intervening mindfully | 256 |
| Creating practice points | 257 |

| | |
|--|------------|
| Making Peace with Your Fears..... | 259 |
| Understanding that your instincts are natural | 259 |
| Knowing that you can rise above your instincts | 259 |
| Accepting Anxiety as Part of Life..... | 260 |
| Pre-empting anxious feelings | 260 |
| Changing what can be changed | 261 |
| Allowing what can't be changed | 261 |
| Sleeping it off..... | 262 |
| Remembering Helpful Lessons from the Course..... | 262 |
| Chapter 15: Nurturing Hope While Living with Pain | 265 |
| Grinding to a Halt: When Pain Stops You from Living Life..... | 266 |
| Understanding the nature of pain..... | 267 |
| Looking at different types of pain..... | 268 |
| Studying the effects of pain on memory | 269 |
| Hurting mentally | 270 |
| Maintaining Perspective | 271 |
| Waking Up to Life: Accepting Pain | 272 |
| Accepting and then responding..... | 273 |
| Recognising what your body can still do..... | 274 |
| Creating a new relationship with pain | 274 |
| Using Regular Coping Skills..... | 275 |
| Engaging in breathing practices | 275 |
| Achieving wholeness..... | 278 |
| Chapter 16: Finding Purpose and Meaning When You're Older | 281 |
| Thinking About the True Meaning of Purpose..... | 282 |
| Redefining your concept of purpose..... | 283 |
| Reconnecting to your own sense of purpose..... | 283 |
| Finding Positive Aspects of Life..... | 285 |
| Surrounding yourself with positive people..... | 285 |
| Widening your experience of life..... | 286 |
| Cultivating motivation and inspiration..... | 287 |
| Dismissing nothing, including everything | 289 |
| Finding joy | 290 |
| Accepting Limitations of All Kinds | 290 |
| Trying to improve and develop | 292 |
| Dismissing the notion of 'failure' | 293 |
| Rediscovering your strengths..... | 294 |
| Connecting Fully with the Life You Have Now..... | 295 |
| Setting yourself new goals and challenges | 296 |
| Moving forward one step at a time..... | 298 |
| Living in the now, whatever your age | 299 |

| | |
|--|------------|
| Moving Gently, but Mindfully..... | 299 |
| Pressing palms | 299 |
| Cutting wood | 299 |
| Opening the chest..... | 300 |
| Flexing the spine | 300 |
| Chapter 17: Bringing Harmony to Your Life | 301 |
| Accepting the Importance of Mindful Living..... | 301 |
| Homing in on Domestic Mindfulness | 302 |
| Waking with an open mind | 303 |
| Getting up on the right side of bed..... | 304 |
| Enjoying your morning routine..... | 304 |
| Starting with a positive attitude..... | 305 |
| Preparing yourself for the rigours of the day..... | 306 |
| Relaxing and enjoying yourself | 306 |
| Winding down..... | 307 |
| Employing Mindfulness at Work..... | 308 |
| Focusing on each individual task..... | 309 |
| Making sure not to overload yourself..... | 310 |
| Responding to pressure and criticism..... | 311 |
| Knowing when you've done enough and setting up boundaries... | 312 |
| Making time for mindfulness practice..... | 313 |
| Enhancing Your Relationships..... | 314 |
| Communicating mindfully..... | 314 |
| Being mindful of your body language..... | 315 |
| Noticing when and why moods change | 316 |
| Having realistic expectations and accepting the notion of change | 317 |
| Assessing Your Core Values..... | 318 |
| Looking at what makes people human..... | 319 |
| Seeing how your values agree or conflict with those of other people | 320 |
| Accepting the imperfection of human beings | 322 |
| Making Mindfulness a Shared Experience..... | 322 |
| Considering ways to share mindfulness with other people..... | 323 |
| Living in a mindful society..... | 323 |
| Part IV: The Part of Tens | 325 |
| Chapter 18: Ten Ways to Expand Your Mindfulness Experience | 327 |
| Dropping by the Enter Mindfulness Website..... | 327 |
| Checking out the Be Mindful Website..... | 328 |

| | |
|--|------------|
| Visiting the Mindfulnet Website | 328 |
| Studying Mindfulness Formally: Centre for Mindfulness | |
| Research and Practice..... | 329 |
| Benefiting from Research at the Oxford Mindfulness Centre..... | 330 |
| Taking a Mindful Breath with Breathworks | 330 |
| Attending a Mindfulness Course in Scotland..... | 331 |
| Watching Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter . . . and Spring..... | 332 |
| Changing Lives: Doing Time, Doing Vipassana..... | 332 |
| Following One Man's Mindful Recovery: I Am | 333 |
| Chapter 19: Checking Out Ten Inspirational People . . . | 335 |
| Thich Nhat Hanh: Spreading Mindfulness and Peace..... | 335 |
| The Dalai Lama: 'My Message Is Love'..... | 336 |
| Jon Kabat-Zinn: Mindfulness in Medicine..... | 337 |
| Ram Dass: Expressing Gratitude..... | 338 |
| Eckhart Tolle: Living Moment to Moment..... | 338 |
| Melissa Myozen Blacker: Teaching Mindfulness | 339 |
| Buddha Maitreya: Living the Path..... | 339 |
| Rick Hanson: Examining the Mindful Brain..... | 340 |
| Jenny Ronayne: Studying Autism | 341 |
| Kristin Neff: Focusing on Self-Compassion..... | 341 |
| Chapter 20: Surveying (Almost) Ten Inspirational Places to Visit . . . | 343 |
| Plumbing the Heights of Mindfulness at Plum Village | 343 |
| Attending Quiet Days at the London Insight Meditation Society | 344 |
| Finding a Home from Home at Findhorn | 344 |
| Channelling Your Inner Bruce Lee at Shaolin Monastery | 345 |
| Exploring the Buddha's Teachings at Gaia House | 346 |
| Retreating to the Countryside at Trigonos | 347 |
| Enjoying the Food (Mindfully!) at The Abbey..... | 347 |
| Getting the Best of Both Worlds: West-Östliche Weisheit, Benediktushof..... | 348 |
| Visiting The Well at Willen | 348 |
| Index..... | 349 |