

# Mindfulness

## What is mindfulness?

Mindfulness is increasingly being used in hospitals, schools and workplaces to help manage stress, pain and depression. “*Mindfulness means paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment and non-judgementally.*” - John Kabat-Zinn. This ‘present moment’ is not always easy or pleasant, or the one we would choose to have, especially when faced with illness, but it is also the only moment we have to live.

Practising mindfulness helps us to notice what is happening here and now, and to make choices about how we 'respond', rather than habitually 'react', to the circumstances of our lives.

## How can it help me live with illness?

When diagnosed with a life-threatening illness you may understandably be angry, ask 'why me?', or feel panicky and afraid. Mindfulness is an invaluable tool for learning to live with turbulent emotions, helping us discover alternative ways of responding, instead of following ‘default’ reactions. It can help us to feel less overwhelmed and find more steadiness through life’s ups and downs. We can also begin to experience more acceptance, peace and joy in life as a result. “*Mindfulness puts you in the driver’s seat so that you are in control of your mind, rather than your mind being in control of you.*” - Marsha Linehan.

## Mindfulness at The Sara Lee Trust

Our mindfulness groups are for people living with life-threatening illness and provide an opportunity to meet with others in a supportive, confidential space. We will teach a range of meditation practices and refer you to resources so that you can use these at home in your daily life. You will be invited to participate in meditation practices during the sessions. There will also be time for group discussion, as each week we will reflect on an aspect of our experience and our patterns of thinking, and how mindful awareness can help us when feeling overwhelmed by negativity.

Participants are invited to attend a series of eight group sessions that last for 2 hours (with a tea break).