

# **Mindfulness**

**A whistle stop tour for the Primary Care staff**

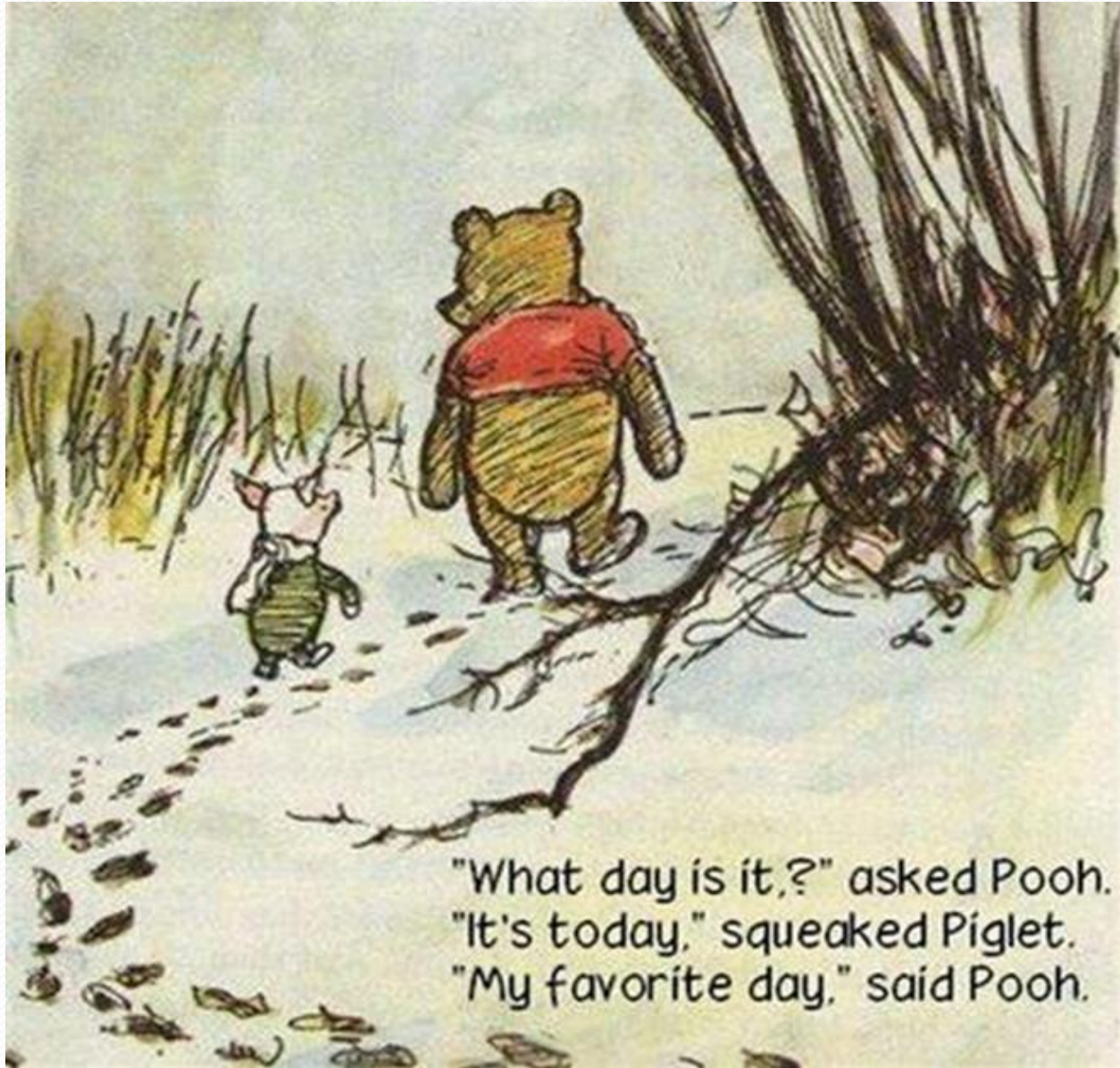
**Protected Learning Time event at York Racecourse**

**Dr Kamila Hortynska**

**Clinical Psychologist, CBT Therapist**

**Mindfulness Teacher and Trainer**

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"What day is it,?" asked Pooh.  
"It's today," squeaked Piglet.  
"My favorite day," said Pooh.



Mindfulness is a form of attention and awareness training that helps people relate more effectively to their experiences.

.....let's try it for a minute

# Mindfulness is a process


- Of bringing non-judgemental awareness to what is here (in thoughts, emotions, sensations and urges)
- Of bringing kindness, curiosity and acceptance to both pleasant and unpleasant experience
- Of cultivating “being more of mind” instead automatically and continually operating in “doing mode”
- Of not making experiences and situations that are already painful worse (primary and secondary suffering)

# Way of developing wisdom and stillness

- To create the “space” between stimulus and reaction or perception and reaction
- To be able to choose what to do rather than react automatically based on preconceptions, aversions, attachments, likes and dislikes

# What mindfulness is not:

- Not a relaxation activity
- Not just focusing on breath as a distraction from anything else that is present
- Not a trance experience or a manifestation of religious faith
- Not about trying (to be calm, relaxed, at peace, etc.)
- Not just 'sitting still'



“Deep stillness that we seek doesn’t arise because the world is still or mind is quiet but it is nourished by willingness to let things be as they are moment by moment and breath by breath..”

(Williams & Penman, 2011)



**(3 steps) Breathing space practice**



# Important when cultivating mindfulness

- Practice acceptance (which is different to submission)
- Good enough attitude
- Starting small but being consistent
- Planning for and predicting difficulties
- Patience, Trust, non-striving
- Cultivate gratitude and self-compassion
- The busier is your mind to start with the more mindful you can get! Its like gym for mind.

# Typical mindfulness training

- MBSR or MBCT – various ways of delivery
- Comprises of 8 weekly classes, 2h long in a group of max 16 people, usually 10-12.
- First half = foundation in practice
- Second half = application to every day/ working life
- There are 4 main components:
  - guided practices
  - homework practices
  - shared enquiry
  - talks and theoretical input.

# Useful websites

- [www.ukmindfulnessnetwork.co.uk](http://www.ukmindfulnessnetwork.co.uk) provides details of highly trained mindfulness teachers where you can search by postcode.
- [www.bemindful.co.uk](http://www.bemindful.co.uk) The Mental Health Foundation's website full of information about the clinical applications of mindfulness; lists mindfulness providers and offers an introductory online course (6 weeks for £30)  
[www.bemindfulonline.com](http://www.bemindfulonline.com)
- General information on mindfulness, along with the neuroscience of meditation practice [www.mindfulnet.org](http://www.mindfulnet.org)
- Free mindfulness resources, guided meditations and downloads [www.freemindfulness.org](http://www.freemindfulness.org) and my own [www.leedscbt.co.uk/mp3downloads.html](http://www.leedscbt.co.uk/mp3downloads.html)

# Introductory reading

- *Wherever you go there you are: Mindfulness meditation in everyday life.* Kabat-Zinn
- *Mindfulness: A Practical guide to finding peace in frantic world.* Williams & Penman
- *Mindfulness for Dummies* Shamash Alidina or *MBCT for Dummies* Patrizia Collard
- *The miracle of Mindfulness or Peace is every step or Peace is every breath.* All by Thich Nath Hanh
- *Your Brain at Work. Strategies for overcoming distraction, regaining focus and working smarter all day long.* David Rock

# Further reading

- *Mindfulness in Plain English* Banthe Gunaratana
- *Real Happiness 28-day program* Sharon Salzberg
- *A year of living mindfully* Anna Black
- *Buddha's Brain* Rick Hanson
- *Hardwiring Happiness* Rick Hanson
- *Mindful Way through Depression* Mark Williams
- *Mindfulness for Health* Vidyamala Burch
- *Sane New World* Ruby Wax
- *5 good minutes in the morning/ at work / in the evenings*

All 3 and more by Jeffrey Brantley

# More resources

- **Mobile phone apps:**
  - Headspace
  - Insight timer
  - Calm
- **Articles with a lot of practices and further links:**
  - <https://chriskresser.com/5-reasons-you-should-start-meditating-today>
  - <https://articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2018/01/25/express-gratitude>
  - <https://www.mindful.org/mindfuls-top-10-guided-practices-2017/>
  - <https://www.mindful.org/abcs-stop-three-short-mindful-breaks-day/>
  - <https://www.mindful.org/loving-kindness-meditation-cultivate-resilience/>

# Opportunities for practice

- **Mindful updates** mailing list
- **Monthly Silent Sunday Retreats** offered in North Leeds along with other courses which I offer
- **Northern Centre for Mindfulness & Compassion** in York offers a range of courses too
- **Moments of Mass Mindfulness** – full day, free community event at Kirkstall Abbey grounds, on the 11th of May, 10am-4pm, main meditation 12-1pm



When we stop trying to force pleasant feelings,  
they are freer to emerge on their own.

When we stop trying to resist unpleasant feelings,  
we may find that they can drift away by  
themselves.

When we stop trying to make *something* happen,  
a whole world of fresh and unanticipated  
experiences may become accessible to us.

(Jon Kabat-Zinn, 1991)





# Thank you

Questions?

Comments?

Reflections?

**[kamilahort@hotmail.com](mailto:kamilahort@hotmail.com)**

**[www.leedscbt.co.uk](http://www.leedscbt.co.uk)**