



Mindfulness-Based
Professional Training Institute

**MBSR Mentorship
Documents**

REV: June 2, 2014

Description and Guidelines for MBSR Mentorship

Definition of Mindfulness Mentorship: *A contractual arrangement between a mentor and mentee which focuses on a mentee's mindfulness-based teaching in secular settings and supports the on-going development of personal practice. The purpose of this arrangement is to promote competency and best practice skills for teaching mindfulness in secular settings and to encourage the relevance of applying the principles of mindfulness in everyday life.*

The following outlines the role of a mindfulness-based mentor.

- Mentorship of a mentee as they participate in training as a mindfulness-based teacher.
- Support a mentee's personal meditation practice as it relates to teaching MBSR.
- Support and strengthen the teaching of mindfulness meditation practices.
- Support and strengthen the inquiry process.
- Discussion and exploration of the embodiment of mindfulness.
- Provide feedback and evaluation.
- Articulate the ethical underpinnings of mindfulness-based teaching.
- Uphold clear ethical and professional boundaries.

Mindfulness mentorship is therefore multifaceted and an organic evolving process. Suggested guidelines for consideration as an approved mentor in the MBPTI:

- Experience of teaching MBSR group interventions in secular settings.
- Teacher training skills and proficiency in assessment.
- Demonstrated competence and skill in making evident the relevance of a continuing personal mindfulness practice and the importance of mindfulness in everyday life.
- A long-standing foundation of personal on-going mindfulness meditation practice.
- A personal commitment to self-awareness using the ethical principles of mindfulness.
- Ability to articulate the interface of Buddhist philosophy/psychology with western psychology.
- Regular attendance at teacher-lead meditation retreats.

Mindfulness-based mentorship is focused on the delivery and process of teaching MBSR. As such, mentorship will cover the implementation and teaching of the 8-week MBSR program. Preferably a mentor's professional training will provide a match for the mentee's professional background and for the teaching context of the MBSR program. All mentors will limit their mentorship to their own professional expertise and to their experience of teaching mindfulness-based interventions. Any clinical responsibility is to be the responsibility of an outside clinical supervisor (if one is required). If a mentor does not share the professional background of the mentee and have specific experience of the context of the MBI, she/he will limit supervision to the content and process of mindfulness practices.



Mindfulness-Based Professional Training Institute

Good Practice Guidelines for Trainers and Mentors of Mindfulness-Based Teachers

Specific Guidelines for Trainers and Mentors of Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)

1. Certified as an MBSR teacher through the MBPTI or equivalent.
2. Will have had full teaching responsibility for at least 8-10 MBSR courses over a period of five years.
3. Will have trained to be a trainer via an apprenticeship with a more experienced trainer and demonstrated competency in training others.
4. Continue to teach mindfulness-based courses to the general public.
5. Be in peer supervision in relation to teaching mindfulness-based interventions.
6. Attend annual mindfulness meditation retreats.
7. Stay up to date with the current and developing evidence base for mindfulness-based interventions.
8. Be up to date with current methods of assessing mindfulness-based teaching competency and maintaining good practice.
9. Be steeped in the practice and understanding of mindfulness which is informed by both relevant current scientific and/or clinical understanding as well as its historical antecedents from relevant spiritual and philosophical traditions, the most common example of which is the Buddhist tradition.
10. Be a compassionate and strong team player - willing to operate in the context of a training team and in connection with others who are training teachers in MBSR.

In general Mindfulness-based teacher trainers need well developed skills, understandings and attitudes in the following areas:

1. An experientially gained understanding of the complexity of mindfulness as an approach and its transformational potential.
2. An in-depth understanding of the aims and intentions of the full range of curriculum components within the mindfulness-based course they are training others to teach.
3. An understanding of the underlying theoretical principles of the mindfulness-based courses they are training others to teach.
4. Understand and have the capacity to train others in the principles underpinning the adaptation of mindfulness-based courses to different contexts and populations.
5. Skill in working with groups, especially the creation of a safe and challenging learning environment.
6. The ability and skill needed to support trainees in identifying their strengths and learning needs, and providing feedback which facilitates new learning.
7. An understanding of the complex interface between MBIs taught in a therapeutic context and mindfulness as taught in traditional or specific cultural contexts and a commitment to being transparent in regard to which context(s) mindfulness teaching/training is being offered.

The trainer will work within the ethical framework of her/his profession or training and will additionally have particularly developed sensitivities in relation to:

- Only training within the limits and boundaries of competence
- Only asking trainees what is asked of self in relation to informal and formal mindfulness practice

Acknowledgement: We would like to express our thanks and gratitude to our colleagues in the UK for allowing us to use their Good Practice Guidelines as a template for this document. http://www.bangor.ac.uk/mindfulness/our_resources.php.en

Good Practice Guidelines for MBSR Teachers

The following description has been developed to promote and support good practices in the teaching of Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR). MBSR was developed by Jon Kabat-Zinn, PhD and colleagues at the Center for Mindfulness, University of Massachusetts Medical Center, Worcester, MA. MBSR is an empirically supported 8-week psycho-educational group intervention. The program teaches mindfulness meditation skills as a way to develop a different relationship to stress resulting from chronic physical illnesses and psychological disorders. Research outcomes have demonstrated positive improvements in physical and psychological symptoms, as well as changes in health attitudes and behaviors.

An MBSR teacher will demonstrate the following:

Mindfulness-Based Teacher Training

1. Participation in an 8-week MBSR program.
2. Completion of Teacher Qualification and Certification.

Training and background required in addition to MBSR teacher training

1. A professional qualification in mental or physical health care, education, social welfare, law. An equivalent life experience, recognized by the organization or context within which the MBSR teaching will take place, can be taken into consideration and will be reviewed on an individual basis.
2. Knowledge and experience of the populations that the MBSR program will be brought to. This shall include teaching experience, therapeutic or other care provisions with the group and/or individuals. An exception to this can be taken into consideration and will be reviewed on an individual basis when co-teaching with a colleague who is a certified MBSR teacher, has experience of this population and relevant professional qualification in this area.

On-going Good Practice Requirements

1. Commitment to a personal mindfulness practice through daily formal and informal practices and participation in annual residential teacher-led silent mindfulness meditation retreats.
2. Adherence to the ethical framework appropriate to the MBSR teacher's professional background and working context.
3. Commitment to continuing education in the field of mindfulness meditation research, theory and practice. Sustaining on-going contact with other colleagues involved in the practice and teaching of mindfulness; one that offers mutual support and promotes collaboration.
4. Regular mentorship with more experienced MBSR teachers which includes the following:
 - a) The opportunity to reflect on and inquire into personal process as it relates to teaching MBSR. In addition a willingness to share, discuss and inquire into personal mindfulness meditation practice.
 - b) Receive periodic feedback on teaching MBSR. This can be through audio/visual tools, mentor sitting in on teaching sessions or through co-teaching with reciprocal feedback.

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Mentorship Agreement

This is an agreement between _____ (Mentee) and
_____ (Mentor)

Effective Dates: _____

Frequency of meetings: _____

Number of sessions: _____

Duration of each Session: _____

This agreement is entered into voluntarily by the above parties for the purpose of providing mentorship in teaching the Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) program. These mentorship sessions are for the purposes of fulfilling the requirements for MBSR Teacher Qualification and Certification in the Institute.

1. Purpose, Goals and objectives of Mentorship:

- a) To fulfill MBSR training requirements leading to MBSR teacher qualification and certification.
- b) To promote the development of mentee's competency and good practice skills in the teaching of the MBSR program.

2. Content and context of mentorship:

- a) The content of mentorship will focus on the acquisition of mindfulness-based knowledge, theoretical and experiential teaching competencies, and best practice skills.
- b) The context will ensure the understanding of good practice guidelines, and appropriate professional boundaries, codes and ethics, as stated in the MBPTI Good Practice Guidelines.

3. A mentorship record form will be used to document key features of each mentorship session. Feedback will be provided at the close of each session. Mentorship notes may be shared with mentee.

4. Rights and responsibilities of both parties:

Mentor's rights

1. To inquire into mentee's MBSR teaching.
2. To provide mentee with constructive feedback on her/his MBSR teaching.
3. To listen to and observe mentee's MBSR teaching through the use of audio/visual tools and give constructive feedback.

4. To write a letter of recommendation (when deemed the relevant time) to the MBSR review committee for the purposes of teacher Qualification/Certification.

Mentor's responsibilities:

1. To uphold good practice guidelines and an ethical framework appropriate to mentor's professional background and working context.
2. To keep a record of the meeting; date, time and relevant session notes.
3. To provide evaluation and feedback to mentee.
4. To monitor mentee's teaching performance.
5. To support mentee in developing MBSR teaching competencies and best practice skills.

Mentee's rights:

1. To uninterrupted time during scheduled sessions.
2. To Mentor's undivided attention, guidance during scheduled sessions.
3. To receive feedback.
4. To set part of the agenda.
5. To ask questions.
6. To have, within the context of this MBSR mentorship, reasonable development/training needs addressed.
7. To challenge ideas and guidance in a constructive way.

Mentee's responsibilities:

1. To uphold good practice guidelines and an ethical framework appropriate to mentee's professional background and working context.
2. To be prepared to discuss MBSR teaching issues and dilemmas.
3. To be open to change and the use of alternate methods of teaching.
4. Maintain on-going commitment to continuing education in mindfulness-based theories and techniques.

5. Finances:

The agreement to an hourly rate for mentorship of _____ to be paid to the mentor prior to each session via check, PayPal or other mutually agreed-upon means.

This contract is subject to revision at any time, upon the request of the mentor or the mentee.

Both parties agree that the mentor's role includes what is described above and that the mentor DOES NOT hold any responsibility for any clinical delivery of services by the mentee nor to those people the mentee may instruct, teach individually or in a group regardless of the setting. This agreement is not a supervisory relationship, but instead describes a mentoring relationship. We agree, to the best of our ability, to uphold the guidelines specified in this mentorship agreement and to manage the mentorship relationship and process in an ethical and professional manner.

Mentor: _____ Date: _____

Mentee: _____ Date: _____