

# Introduction to Mindfulness Practices

Ruth Goldston

## Course Information

Wednesdays from 10:00 a.m.–noon for six weeks beginning October 2 through November 6.

**IN-PERSON - LECTURE/DISCUSSION - MAX 20**

## Course Description

The benefits of mindfulness practice have become increasingly recognized in the West over the past 30 years. The practices themselves began to be developed and used almost 2500 years ago and are still relevant and effective today. Learning to be more mindful has many proven benefits, for example: better health, better stress tolerance, lower blood pressure, and often, improved relationships.

For all these reasons, many people are interested in learning mindfulness practices. But often, all too quickly, they give up because they find it too challenging, confusing, and time-consuming. Plus, they may feel they're not seeing "results" quickly enough. And, while there are loads of apps and online videos that present talks and guided meditations to follow, you're probably more likely to benefit from mindfulness practice if you participate in a live class with opportunities for personal practice, and constructive, personal feedback from a teacher.

In this class, we will begin by developing our abilities to notice and focus on information we take in through our senses. We will learn techniques to develop mindfulness of breathing, mindfulness of the body, and awareness of our experience of the present moment. We'll also explore how developing these skills can increase our ability to treat ourselves and others with kindness, compassion, and joy.

The 6-week class provides an excellent opportunity for students to experiment with beginning and maintaining a regular mindfulness practice. Students will

have the opportunity to set realistic personal practice goals to work on between classes, and to evaluate and modify those goals each week based on their experiences.

Each class will include an interactive lecture, directed dyadic discussion, and a series of progressive guided meditations. Students will have access to recordings of the guided meditations presented in class to use as part of their own personal practice if they choose. Brief readings to augment the ideas and practices introduced in each week's lessons will be made available. An optional half-day retreat will be offered after the course ends at a time TBD with input from class participants.

Please note: This class does NOT provide psychotherapy and is not designed to diagnose or treat any psychological or medical condition. Students will never be asked to share distressing or sensitive memories, feelings, or personal history. At the beginning of the course students will be asked to review and agree to a set of communication guidelines, including confidentiality, to ensure that everyone in the class can feel comfortable participating.

## **Leader**

Ruth Goldston, PhD, has been a licensed psychologist in private practice in Princeton for the past thirty years. A graduate of Harvard, Hunter College, and Rutgers, she uses mindfulness practices with clients to deal with a variety of problems and issues.