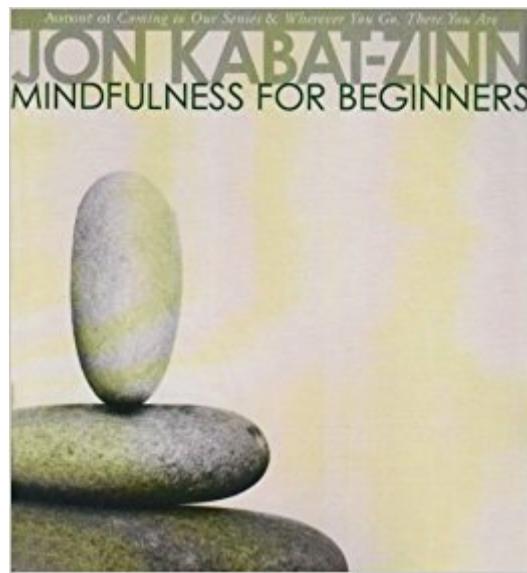


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# Mindfulness For Beginners



## Synopsis

What if you could profoundly change your life just by becoming more mindful of your breathing? According to Jon Kabat-Zinn, you can. What if paying attention on purpose (and nonjudgmentally) could improve your health? Again, according to Dr. Kabat-Zinn, it can. *Mindfulness for Beginners*, this internationally known scientist, bestselling author, and teacher who brought mindfulness meditation into the mainstream of medicine and society gives you immediate access to a practice that can potentially add years to your life, and will certainly enhance the quality of your moments and your years. Join Dr. Kabat-Zinn to: Explore five guided meditations that lead you breath-by-breath into the essence of Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR), a program offered in medical clinics and hospitals around the world. Cultivate the Seven Key Attitudinal Factors of MBSR: qualities of heart and mind that lay the foundation for mindfulness practice and for seeing and accepting things as they are as a first step to working wisely and compassionately with stress, pain, illness, and sorrow as well as life's joys and pleasures. Free yourself from limiting perspectives, and become more intimate with your own boundless awareness. You're already in the perfect moment for inhabiting this liberating awareness, which is always available, teaches Jon Kabat-Zinn. With *Mindfulness for Beginners*, he invites you to cultivate mindfulness as if your life depended on it, which it surely does, and experience the magnitude and beauty of who you already are. Course objectives: Apply an understanding of the concept of mindfulness. Utilize simple guided meditations led by Kabat-Zinn. List the ethical and attitudinal foundations necessary to cultivating mindfulness. Assess how we can choose where to focus our awareness. Plan to use mindfulness to help us develop compassion and insight into our true nature.

## Book Information

Audio CD: 2 pages

Publisher: Sounds True; Unabridged edition (July 1, 2006)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1591794641

ISBN-13: 978-1591794646

Product Dimensions: 0.8 x 5 x 5.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 0.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 stars 416 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #279,518 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #21 in Books > Books on CD > Health, Mind & Body > Fitness #65 in Books > Books on CD > Reference #70 in Books >

## Customer Reviews

"Jon Kabat-Zinn is one of the finest teachers of mindfulness you will ever encounter."

•JACK KORNFIELD, author of *A Path with Heart* "Jon Kabat-Zinn provides access to the essence of meditation and its applications for both the beginner and those who wish to deepen and expand their practice. He embodies what he describes." •DEAN ORNISH, MD --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

**Jon Kabat-Zinn** Jon Kabat-Zinn, PhD, is the founder and director of the Stress Reduction Clinic at the University of Massachusetts Medical Center and associate professor of medicine in the Division of Preventative and Behavioral Medicine. His clinic was featured in 1993 in the public television series *Healing and the Mind* with Bill Moyers. Jon Kabat-Zinn is the author of *Wherever You Go, There You Are* and *Full-Catastrophe Living: Using Your Body and Mind to Face Stress, Pain and Illness*.

Unlike many who reviewed this book, I have no experience with meditation, so *Mindfulness for Beginners* promised to be a great introduction, particularly given the stellar reputation of the author. Now that I've read it, however, I don't think it is the optimal book for those with no knowledge of or experience with meditation. I found the book to be a scattered collection of somewhat random reflections on mindfulness that seem more appropriate for those who have already started a meditation practice. Even though the author writes "we will be exploring together the subject of mindfulness as if you'd never heard about it and had no idea what it is or, for that matter, why it might be worth integrating into your life," the book lacked the structure and organization to meet that goal. The author points out that everything is explained in much greater detail in some of his previous books, and I am thinking about turning to them in search of a more coherent presentation. Although the entire book can be read in an hour (most chapters are only one or two pages), I don't think there would be much benefit from reading it in one sitting. The book seems designed to be read a brief chapter or two at a time, followed by reflection. From my perspective, the chapters do not always seem sequentially or logically linked. They are more like mindfulness devotionals. I found some of the chapters thought-provoking, but not consistently so. I would have preferred a more organized book that started by laying out a foundation for how and why meditation is helpful, followed by instruction for getting started. The enclosed CD is a very nice bonus. I used it

to guide my first-ever attempt at meditation, and I felt very good about the process and the outcome. If I continue to meditate, I may refer to various chapters in this book for inspiration, but I am more likely to use the recommended reading list to find books that help make meditation more accessible to a true beginner.

Jon Kabat-Zinn is one of the best mindfulness teachers in the US. In looking over the reviews of *Mindfulness for Beginners*, I was surprised to see that more than a few readers thought this book was a kind of scam, something like a cut-and-paste of his earlier books. But the difference maker for this book is right there on the cover. It's for beginners. I've been teaching mindfulness for ten years, often to beginners. This book is one of the best, if not the best, I've found for beginners to work with. Of course, if you're new to mindful meditation, you need to read it thoughtfully, page by page, absorbing his descriptions, explanations and examples, often going back to be reminded of bits you've forgotten--or are suddenly understanding. And of course, like all of us, you have have to practice. A lot. There's no other way to learn and experience for yourself how helpful, how potentially life changing mindful meditation can be. The only caution I might offer is that Kabat-Zinn is and always has been somewhat professorial. He's a very smart guy with a considerable vocabulary. That said, as always, don't believe everything you read, especially in book reviews!

This isn't another 2-bit self-help book; it's not a self-help book at all. It's an invitation to unravel the power already available to us to live mindfully. It is no doubt one of the most difficult challenges you could possibly impose on yourself, it will require a sense of dedication, discipline and persistence, however, the rewards are unquantifiable. Living mindfully will allow you to inhabit a new dimension through which to live life, a dimension conducive to living a richer and more fulfilling life. Most of all it'll help you realize the actuality of who you are.

I purchased this book after seeing the author quoted in several news stories and upon the largely positive reviews here. However, this book quickly disappoints. What is mindfulness? That's covered in the introduction, but there is so much 'who really cares about it' stuff in the intro, you quickly forget that definition. (Note--if it's central to the book, it belongs in one of the chapters, not the intro.) What is MBSR? I don't recall, and since the book has no index, I don't know if I'll find the definition in the book. The book is divided into very small chapters, each just two or three pages. The lack of an index and the poor organization of the material is a killer. The CD is a disappointment, too. It's not relaxing to listen to. The tracks are really bare-bone and ultimately your impression of the CD

depends a great deal upon whether you find the author's voice soothing and enticing or not. As other reviewers have said, it's more of a book about mindfulness rather than a book about how to practice mindfulness. For the average person, this has a usefulness approaching nothingness.

I am being treated for PTSD and my therapist gave me this book. The book and accompanying disk are doing more for me than drugs or anything else I have tried; helping me step aside and observe my swirling thoughts and emotions rather than being swept away with them. I am now taking things in stride that once made me consider suicide as the only option.

If I wasn't stressed out before I began listening to this CD, I probably was after. Jon Kabat-Zinn may be the greatest teacher who ever lived, however I couldn't tell you. He MUMBLED his way through the entire CD. So very annoying. Half the time I couldn't understand a word he was saying. This is a real pity as I expected a nice relaxing CD and instead what I heard was a bunch of very annoying inaudible mumbles at the end of almost every sentence. YUK! I now need a stress reduction CD to help me get over my so-called stress reducing CD.

Jon Kabat-Zinn is marvelous in his sharing and understanding of how to apply mindfulness. I recently ordered this book to share with new practitioners of mindfulness. I highly recommend this book which is full of so many wonderful ideas and suggestions.

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