Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT)
for Older Adults

Instructor: Mariko A. Foulk, LMSW, ACSW

Office Hours: By appointment after the class on July 5, or at:
UMHS East Ann Arbor Health and Geriatrics Center,
4120 Plymouth Rd.
E-mail: mfoulk@umich.edu; (734)763.4965

Class meets:
June 28 & July 5 (Thurs.): 10 am- 4 pm SSWB 3752
(lunch break 12:30-1:30)
July 7 (Sat.): 10 am-3pm @ Turner Senior Resource Center,
2401 Plymouth Rd. Suite C., Campbell Rm.
(AA city bus # 2, get off at the Islamic Center next door)

INFORMATION on July 7  SATURDAY CLASS:

The day will be spent practicing mindfulness skills in a retreat format (almost exactly as it would be offered as a part of MBCT for older adult participants). You will be silent for the entire time except for the last 30 minutes, when we will debrief our experiences of the day. Guidance will be provided throughout the day.

Please bring your own lunch. Water, tea, and coffee will be available, as will a refrigerator. Wear comfortable clothing. Plan on coming 10 minutes early to get settled. The program will start promptly at 10 am.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course addresses: 1) Late-life depression and its challenges for older adults. 2) the theoretical framework of MBCT, on how it helps to relieve symptoms of depression and anxiety, 3) intervention tools used in MBCT and 4) reviews of scientific evidence for the effectiveness of this approach. In order to understand mindfulness fully, we will cultivate direct experience of mindfulness through formal and informal practice, which students are asked to practice both in class and at home between classes.
**COURSE CONTENT:**

Content will include: 1) discussion of late life depression, and the challenges of diagnosing and treating older adults, 2) Evolution of depression as an acute illness to chronic illness & changes in its treatment focus, 3) How MBCT was developed as a relapse prevention program for depression, 4) What “mindfulness” is, and how it can be helpful to deal with stress, depression and anxiety, 5) The MBCT interventions describing contents of each session with as much hands-on exercises as time will allow, 6) Description and discussion of the instructor’s previous local MBCT groups with older adults in the community, including the adjustments needed for this population, pre- & post- survey results & case studies, 7) Research findings on the effectiveness of MBCT & Mindfulness meditation, 7) Ethical considerations and other considerations and 8) Implications for (geriatric and general) social workers.

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<tr>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>Advanced Practice Behavior</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice.</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments.</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Engage diversity and difference in practice.</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Respond to contexts that shape practice</td>
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<td>10b</td>
<td>Assessment</td>
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<td>10c.</td>
<td>Intervention</td>
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**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

1. Students will gain understanding of late-life depression and the challenges older adults face in diagnosis and in treatment. (Practice Behaviors 4 & 9)
2. Students will learn what the mindfulness is, both theoretically and experientially. (Practice Behaviors 7)
3. Students will gain understanding of the background history of MBCT and theories on the benefits it provides. (Practice Behavior 9)
4. Students will learn the specifics of MBCT components including assessment for potential participants and descriptions for eight sessions. (Practice Behaviors 10b & 10c)
5. Students will learn why it is important for a MBCT therapist to embody mindfulness and compassion in order to become an effective facilitator. (Practice Behavior 1)
6. Students will have opportunities to experience a variety of MBCT intervention tools throughout the class. (Practice Behavior 10c)
7. Students will learn about a pilot study of five MBCT groups that the instructor had led with local older adults. They will learn about the specific adjustments needed for this population as well as the quantitative and qualitative findings. (Practice Behavior 6)
8. Students will learn about scientific studies on the subject, including the neuroscience on the effectiveness of MBCT intervention and mindfulness training. (Practice Behavior 6)
9. Students will learn ethical issues of providing mindfulness training as a practitioner. (Practice Behavior 2)

**COURSE DESIGN:**

The first two classes will be lectures and experiential exercises followed by debriefing/class discussion to help understand how specific interventions can help relieve depression and anxiety. The third class will be conducted as a retreat in a MBCT program, followed by a brief discussion.

**RELATIONSHIP TO FOUR CURRICULAR THEMES:**

Themes of multiculturalism and diversity are addressed through discussion of working with older adults with differing degrees of disabilities. The unique relationship of a MBCT therapist to his or her clients will be discussed.
Social change and social justice are addressed through the discussion of barriers for older adults with depression and anxiety to receiving mental health treatment.

The importance of relapse prevention treatment for depression will be discussed in the context of depression becoming a major chronic health condition of the twenty-first century. MBCT’s specific contributions will be addressed.

Behavioral and social science research will be incorporated throughout the course in addressing interventions and scientific studies.

**COURSE RELATIONSHIP TO SOCIAL WORK ETHICS AND VALUES:**

Social work ethics and values will be addressed as they pertain to issues relating to working with clients in group therapy settings. We will discuss the importance of building a supportive, compassionate setting where clients can feel trusting and not judged, as well as the essentialness of clients to start seeing their own inner strength and start practicing new skills while ensuring individual confidentiality.

Ethical issues on teaching MBI (mindfulness-based interventions) in relation to core values of mindfulness practice will be addressed through reading and class discussion.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

1. Attendance and class participation for the entire time.
2. Reading: Please read all articles and book chapters described in a document, “Course Assignment” at the Canvas website. These will be very helpful to understand much of what we discuss in class.
3. Home practice assignments: Details are described in “Course Assignment” at the Canvas site. Please try to practice some of the mindfulness meditations for at least five of the seven days in between Session 1 and Session 2. Such direct experience practice is essential in gaining understanding of MBCT as well as in understanding and assisting group members’ tasks.
4. A very brief quiz at the end of the second class.
5. Short paper (up to 2 pages) reflecting on your home practice experience, due at the beginning of the retreat on July 7. Please print out and submit it to the instructor.

Grading: Grade will be satisfactory or unsatisfactory for the course.

**ACCOMODATION FOR DISABILITIES:**
If you need or desire an accommodation for a disability, please contact me at your earliest convenience. Many aspects of the course can be modified to facilitate participation and progress throughout the course. Resources are available (i.e. The Services for Students with Disabilities, adaptive technology computing site, etc.) to make learning more effective for you. To the extent permitted by law, the information will be treated as private and confidential.

**RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES:**

Please notify me if religious observances conflict with class attendance or due dates for assignments so that we can make appropriate arrangements.

**ASSIGNMENTS:**

- Read assigned articles on Canvas site.
- Practice 30-45 minutes daily (5 out of 7 days) on home practice assignments described on the Canvas site. Take notes on the Home Practice Record Form which will be handed out at the end of our first class.

Due: (1) At the end of second class on 7/05. A very brief in-class quiz.

Due: (2) At the beginning of the retreat on 7/07. A short paper (up to 2 pages) reflecting on what you noticed by doing your home practice and how such awareness could help improve your daily life.

**THE FLOW OF THE COURSE:**

*Required reading prior to the 1st class (see “Course Assignment” document. All the reading materials are there as well.)*

**June 28, 2018 10 am-4 pm**

- Introduction
- Late-life depression and its challenges to diagnose and to treat.
- Background of how MBCT was developed: changing face of depression, from acute to chronic illness and the need for relapse prevention.
- Mindfulness: what it is, and what it is not.
- MBCT: 1) Theoretical background
- MBCT: 2) Core values:
- MBCT in action (with exercises)
- Home practice description

*Do the Home practice and required reading described in Course Assignment. (You will find both PDFs and Guided Meditation audio recording there as well.)*

**July 05, 2018 10 am – 4 pm**

- Continue on MBCT sessions in action
- MBCT with older adults: benefits & adaptation
- Evaluation of local older adult participants of 5 MBCT groups
  - Participants profile
  - Results of pre- & post surveys
  - Case studies
- Research findings of MBCT with general population
- Neuroscience of mindfulness meditation
- On becoming a MBCT therapist: Values, ethics and skills
- Implication for (geriatric and general) social workers

- Quiz

*A brief reading assignment* after the second class: see Course Assignment.

*July 7, 2018  10 am -3 pm*
- Submit assigned paper prior to the beginning of the retreat
- A Day of Mindfulness: Silent guided retreat