

Birmingham & District Tinnitus Group

This is printed as part of a series of occasional papers produced by BIRMINGHAM & DISTRICT TINNITUS GROUP presenting a variety of points to offer information and support for our members

## Mindfulness Meditation

Information compiled by Ann Perry

Many medical professionals are interested in Mindfulness Meditation as a new way of dealing with tinnitus. It is not a specific treatment for tinnitus and it doesn't cure it but, it could improve our ability to cope with it. Mindfulness Meditation is a way of paying attention to what is happening in the present moment without allowing any negative distractions to interfere with the process. It sounds easy but it takes practice. The technique has been successfully used in clinical studies for a variety of conditions and this has been demonstrated in a number of case studies.

### What is Mindfulness Meditation?

Mindfulness is a type of meditation that essentially involves focusing your mind on the present. To be mindful is to be aware of your thoughts and actions in the present, without judging yourself. Research suggests that Mindfulness Meditation may improve mood, decrease stress, and boost immune function.

### How to Try Mindfulness Meditation

1. Find a quiet and comfortable place. Sit in a chair or on the floor with your head, neck and back straight but not stiff.
2. Try to put aside all thoughts of the past and the future and stay in the present.
3. Become aware of your breathing, focusing on the sensation of air moving in and out of your body as you breathe. Feel your belly rise and fall, the air enter your nostrils and leave your mouth. Pay attention to the way each breath changes and is different.
4. Watch every thought come and go, whether it be a worry, fear, anxiety or hope. When thoughts come up in your mind, don't ignore or suppress them but simply note them, remain calm and use your breathing as an anchor.

If you find yourself getting carried away in your thoughts, observe where your mind went off to, without judging, and simply return to your breathing. Remember not to be hard on yourself if this happens. As the time comes to a close, sit for a minute or two, becoming aware of where you are. Get up gradually.

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