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# Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy

FOR  
DUMMIES®

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- Identify and banish negative thought processes
- Understand your past experiences while staying in the present
- Use MBCT to overcome depression, addiction, anxiety, and more



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of guided meditations

**Patrizia Collard**

Counsellor, Trainer, Coach and Therapist



***Mindfulness-Based  
Cognitive Therapy***

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**DUMMIES**<sup>®</sup>  
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**by Dr Patrizia Collard**

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# **Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy For Dummies®**

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# Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy For Dummies®

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cheat sheet.*

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## About the Author

## Cheat Sheet

# Introduction

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When I was young I learned to sing and read very early on but, my mum tells me, I refused to learn how to read the time. Clocks and watches were my enemy. They spoiled my games and forced me to do things I wasn't ready to do at that moment. I resisted until I was seven years old, and then the world got me!

Little children are naturally mindful. They don't want to look at a clock to determine whether playtime is over or whether they're hungry or not; they just play until they're tired or until their stomach rumbles. They enjoy sweets without worrying whether the next portion is going to taste just as good as this one; they climb onto climbing frames and roundabouts in the park because doing so is exciting; they build sandcastles even though they're going to be washed away by the sea. They don't feel guilty about just being and not doing much. They live in the moment completely.

Unfortunately, most adults have lost this immediate experience of life. Mindfulness-based cognitive therapy (or MBCT as you'll see throughout this book) may be a way to return, at least temporarily, to these moments of joy, these moments of simply tasting life.

MBCT was developed to help people help themselves. It features in-depth training in meditation and moment-to-moment everyday awareness. More precisely, you can see mindfulness as bringing your awareness deliberately to the present moment and accepting what you find, as opposed to judging it or wanting to change it.

I can't stress enough the importance of being able to just experience life, rather than rushing through it. When you look at your life, do you find yourself being calm and

centred, joyful and relaxed? If so, congratulations! The majority of people find that they've less and less time for being, despite all the technological advances you can dream of. In fact these are often your bane rather than your saviour. Perhaps you too find yourself using your mobile or computer tablet while eating, travelling, crossing the road or even when having a conversation.

If you belong to this latter category of 'human doings' (rather than 'human beings'), this book is for you. I demonstrate numerous ways of stepping out of autopilot and moving back into moments of simply being alive. My hope is that this book reminds you that being alive is special and that every moment counts and is precious, because it's all part of your life experience.

## ***About This Book***

Everybody's talking about MBCT: newspapers and magazines are writing about it; books are being published on it; YouTube is bursting with short videos explaining how to do it. Perhaps a well-meaning friend even gave you this book as a gift. The purpose of *Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy For Dummies* is to introduce you to the concept of MBCT, the whys and hows, and whether it may be a life skill that can benefit you. Being a *For Dummies* book, you can choose to pick up a couple of useful tools and meditations or a whole bag full of them, depending on what you choose to read and how much you feel you want to experiment with mindfulness.

This book is helpful for the beginner, who wants a taste of mindfulness and maybe to take things further step by step, as well as for the more experienced meditator, who may find a number of new insights and perspectives on the subject.

I want you to read this book in the way that helps you most. I've done my best to create something that gives you the insights and tools to help you cope better with the various upheavals that life may throw at you. I sincerely hope that you don't need to read all the chapters. You may, however, gain deeper insight into MBCT and the human condition if you skim-read what the different chapters are about: go on, take a peep.

I include many anecdotes, stories, examples, poems, and so on, but place these in grey-tinted boxes called sidebars so you can choose to read or skip them. They enrich your experience (stories and poems have this great way of unfolding complicated facts so that you can feel the truth rather than just know it), but these sidebars aren't essential to practising mindfulness so skip them if you want to.

## ***Foolish Assumptions***

In my line of work I meet many individuals who struggle with aspects of their lives, including clients and therapists alike. So I assume that every person can benefit to a larger or smaller degree from this book. I also assume that you're genuinely interested in finding out what MBCT is and how it may help you.

I certainly don't assume any existing knowledge about MBCT, mindfulness, cognitive behavioural therapy, meditation or Buddhism.

I lead you gently through the subject and hope that this book becomes a good companion to you over the next few months or years.

## ***Icons Used in This Book***



If this book is your first *For Dummies* one, you may not be familiar with the icons used throughout the book. Even if this is your umpteenth *For Dummies* experience, remembering what they stand for is still useful:



This icon points out ideas to help you make your mindfulness voyage smoother.



This icon features essential pieces of guidance that you may want to note down in your diary or read a few times until they sink in.



Sometimes, you have to watch out for specific problems, and I provide advice on avoiding the pitfalls that other people have fallen into beside this icon.



Beside this icon you find exercises, practices and meditations that lead you through something new and inspiring.



Here I demystify therapy language that you may not have come across before.



This book comes with a selection of guided MBCT meditations and exercises. This icon draws your attention to those meditations and exercises for which you can download accompanying audio tracks.

# *Beyond the Book*

As you walk your journey of discovery into the world of MBCT, you can augment what you read here by checking out some of the access-anywhere extra goodies I've hosted for you online.

You can find the book's e-cheat sheet online, at [www.dummies.com/cheatsheet/mindfulnessbasedcognitivetherapyuk](http://www.dummies.com/cheatsheet/mindfulnessbasedcognitivetherapyuk). The at-a-glance ideas and tips I offer in this cheat sheet can help you to make room for mindfulness in your life, and to bring mindful attitudes to everyday activities.

I've also recorded a selection of guided meditations and exercises to go along with some of those I've included in the book:

- ✓ **Track One:** Introduction
- ✓ **Track Two:** Making yourself comfortable, [Chapter 4](#)
- ✓ **Track Three:** The body scan practice, [Chapter 4](#)
- ✓ **Track Four:** Ten-minute sound meditation, [Chapter 5](#)
- ✓ **Track Five:** Mindful breathing exercise, [Chapter 5](#)
- ✓ **Track Six:** Allowing awareness of sound, breath and body meditation, [Chapter 6](#)
- ✓ **Track Seven:** Sitting with difficult thoughts meditation, [Chapter 7](#)
- ✓ **Track Eight:** Sitting with spacious awareness exercise, [Chapter 10](#)
- ✓ **Track Nine:** Mindful walking exercise, [Chapter 12](#)

You can access these audio tracks online, at [www.dummies.com/go/mindfulnessbasedcognitivetherapyuk](http://www.dummies.com/go/mindfulnessbasedcognitivetherapyuk).

Additionally, you can also find bonus content online, at [www.dummies.com/extras/mindfulnessbasedcognitivetherapyuk](http://www.dummies.com/extras/mindfulnessbasedcognitivetherapyuk),

which includes an extra Part of Tens chapter: 'Ten (Plus One) Tips for Developing Mindful Attitudes'.

## ***Where to Go from Here***

I've been leading MBCT courses for more than a decade, and over the years I've discovered plenty about what works and what doesn't. I do my best to convey this knowledge to you, so that you can make practical use of it in your own time and at your leisure.

You can read this book in any order you like. I suggest, however, that you read [Chapter 1](#) initially and then skim through the Table of Contents to pick out what seems most interesting to you. If you have a specific issue you want to tackle quickly, you can turn to the relevant chapter in Part III, such as [Chapter 12](#) for depression or [Chapter 16](#) for handling retirement, for example.

My guess is that when you understand how essential mindfulness is for surviving mentally and physically in this frenetic world, you may feel inspired to engage more deeply and start the eight-session voyage into mindfulness that forms the core of this book in [Chapters 4](#) to [11](#). Whether you choose to take eight weeks or eight months, these sessions are the best way of getting your head round the topic and installing enough mindful ways of being into your brain and daily life.

If you get infected with the mindfulness bug, you may even set up a group with others and meditate together. Sitting in a circle can be particularly powerful and unifying; connecting with others and experiencing kindness. Be well!

## Part I

# Introducing Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy



*For Dummies* can help you get started with lots of subjects. Visit [www.dummies.com](http://www.dummies.com) to learn more and do more

with *For Dummies*.

## *In this part...*

- ✓ Grasp what purpose mindfulness-based cognitive therapy has and how it is used as a treatment tool, and discover how it can enable you to tackle and live with problems, struggles and challenges.
- ✓ Know the importance of experience and of being in the present moment as central aspects of mindfulness-based cognitive therapy.
- ✓ Understand yourself and the problems you face in your life today, and get motivated to make a real change for the better.
- ✓ Learn how to use mindfulness-based cognitive therapy to let go of pointless ruminative thinking and to help you focus on *now*.
- ✓ See the benefits of regular mindfulness-based cognitive therapy practice, and prepare yourself for and successfully personalise an eight-week voyage into mindfulness to suit you.