

CE Pathways

Complete Curriculum Syllabus

37.5 homestudy CE contact hours across four pathways — every module, instructor, contact hour, and filed learning objective, with the full sponsor and disclosure statements.

Pathway I — The Neuroscience of Mindfulness: Attention, Habit Change, and Anxiety

9.5 CE homestudy credits · Intermediate · Richard J. Davidson, PhD, Rick Hanson, PhD, Judson Brewer, MD, PhD

Pathway II — Guiding and Teaching Mindfulness: Ethics, Skill, and Adaptations for Adults and Children

8 CE homestudy credits · Introductory–Intermediate · James Baraz, MA, Donald Rothberg, PhD, Susan Kaiser Greenland, JD, Rick Hanson, PhD

Pathway III — Working with Shame and Grief: Self-Compassion and Emotional Resilience in Clinical Practice

8.5 CE homestudy credits · Introductory–Intermediate · Christopher Germer, PhD, Francis Weller, MFT, Myra Walden, MA, Bob Wentworth, PhD, Fiona Brandon, MPS, MA, LMFT

Pathway IV — Trauma-Sensitive Mindfulness and Clinical Safety: Adverse Effects, Serious Illness, and Chronic Pain

11.5 CE homestudy credits · Intermediate · Willoughby Britton, PhD, David Treleaven, PhD, Susan Bauer-Wu, PhD, RN, Vidyamala Burch, OBE, Oren Jay Sofer

Sponsorship

Continuing Education is sponsored by Mindful CECs.

Mindful CECs is approved by the American Psychological Association to sponsor continuing education for psychologists. Mindful CECs maintains responsibility for this program and its content.

Provider approved by the California Board of Registered Nursing, Provider Number CEP17985, for 37.5 contact hours.

Format & completion

Self-paced homestudy (asynchronous recorded video). Online at learn.mindfulness Exercises.com — begin any time; there are no live session dates.

Completion requires watching all module videos and passing each module assessment with a score of at least 75%. Up to 3 attempts are allowed per assessment. A course evaluation is requested from all participants. Certificates of completion are issued immediately upon completion and stored in your account.

Policies & disclosures

Because your CE certificate is issued the moment you complete a pathway, enrollments are non-refundable. If a pathway turns out not to be the right fit, contact us before you complete it and we will switch you to a different pathway.

Participants are responsible for determining whether this program meets the CE requirements of their licensing board or certifying organization.

Potential Conflict of Interest Statement: These instructors may have authored publications relevant to the subjects covered in this course, and may teach additional programs. The instructors might reference these publications and programs during the course, and the instructor may receive financial compensation if participants choose to purchase them.

Commercial Support: This program received no commercial support.

Questions, grievances, or ADA accommodation requests: info@mindfulcecs.com · support@mindfulnessexercises.com

Enroll and view full pathway details at mindfulnessexercises.com/ce-credits — the members area is learn.mindfulnessexercises.com.

The Neuroscience of Mindfulness: Attention, Habit Change, and Anxiety

9.5 CE homestudy credits · Intermediate · Self-paced homestudy

How does mindfulness change the brain — and how can science inform clinical work? With Dr. Richard Davidson, Dr. Rick Hanson, and Dr. Judson Brewer, this course establishes the scientific and neurobiological foundations of evidence-based mindfulness practice: attention regulation, neuroplasticity, default mode network activity, and reward-based learning. Beginning with Dr. Davidson's landmark research on the plasticity of well-being and Dr. Hanson's methods for turning beneficial states into lasting traits, the pathway culminates in Dr. Brewer's three-part sequence — from the neuroscience of self-referential processing, to the habit loops understood to drive eating behavior, to the reward-learning mechanisms underlying anxiety. Participants are offered a rigorous, brain-based framework for understanding how mindfulness-based change is understood to occur.

Target audience

This intermediate-level program is designed for licensed and license-eligible mental health and healthcare professionals, including psychologists, social workers (LCSW, LSW), counselors (LPC, LCPC, LMHC), marriage and family therapists, nurses (RN, NP), and other healthcare professionals seeking continuing education in the neuroscience of mindfulness, habit change, and well-being.

Module 1: The Neuroscience of Mindfulness and Well-Being: Research Findings and Clinical Implications

Richard J. Davidson, PhD · 1.5 hrs

Davidson's four-pillar framework (awareness, connection, insight, purpose); neuroplasticity, attention regulation, and resilience as rapid recovery from adversity.

Learning objectives — at the end of the module, you will be better able to:

1. Identify the four core dimensions of well-being (awareness, connection, insight, and purpose) and describe how each dimension relates to neuroplasticity and contemplative practice.
2. Explain the concept of resilience as a form of 'rapid recovery from adversity' and describe associated neuroscience research findings demonstrating differential recovery patterns in meditation practitioners.

Module 2: Attention, Neuroplasticity, and the Cultivation of Well-Being

Rick Hanson, PhD · 2 hrs

Default mode network, interoception, and the insula; positive neuroplasticity and how repeated mental states convert into lasting traits.

Learning objectives — at the end of the module, you will be better able to:

1. Describe how mindfulness practice reduces activity in brain regions associated with mind-wandering, rumination, and self-focused thinking, including the default mode network.
2. Explain the process of positive neuroplasticity, including how deliberately cultivating beneficial mental states through repeated practice has been linked to lasting changes in neural structure and function through state-to-trait learning.

Module 3: The Process of Selfing: Neuroscience, Mindfulness, and the Construction of Identity

Judson Brewer, MD, PhD · 1.75 hrs

fMRI and real-time neurofeedback findings on self-referential processing; dependent origination and open/closed experiential states.

Learning objectives — at the end of the module, you will be better able to:

1. Describe the current understanding on neurological mechanisms by which the brain constructs and maintains a sense of self — including the roles of the DMN, mPFC, and PCC — and explain how mindfulness practice can reduce activation in these self-referential networks.
2. Apply the framework of dependent origination and open/closed experiential states to identify how craving, clinging, and behavioral reinforcement contribute to habitual identity formation in clinical and educational contexts.

Module 4: Mindful Eating: Neuroscience, Habit Formation, and Awareness-Based Interventions

Judson Brewer, MD, PhD · 1.75 hrs

Homeostatic vs. hedonic hunger, the dopamine reward loop, and a three-step framework for working with eating habits without relying on willpower.

Learning objectives — at the end of the module, you will be better able to:

1. Explain the neuroscience of eating behavior, including the distinction between homeostatic and hedonic hunger, the role of dopamine posited in reinforcement learning, and why willpower-based approaches are often found to be ineffective.
2. Apply a three-step awareness-based framework for addressing eating habits: mapping habit loops, updating reward value through mindful attention, and cultivating curiosity as an alternative to reactive eating.

Module 5: Unwinding Anxiety: Habit Loops, Reward-Based Learning, and Mindfulness-Based Intervention

Judson Brewer, MD, PhD · 2.5 hrs

Anxiety as a habit loop; the Rescorla-Wagner prediction error model; cultivating curiosity and kind awareness as a 'bigger, better offer.'

Learning objectives — at the end of the module, you will be better able to:

1. Explain how anxiety operates as a habit loop through reward-based learning mechanisms in the brain.
2. Apply a three-step awareness-based framework for working with anxiety in professional practice.

PATHWAY II

Guiding and Teaching Mindfulness: Ethics, Skill, and Adaptations for Adults and Children

8 CE homestudy credits · Introductory–Intermediate · Self-paced homestudy

For professionals who guide, teach, recommend, or model mindfulness in their work — with adults or with children — this pathway addresses the art and ethics of sharing the practice with skill and integrity. James Baraz opens with the foundational qualities of an effective mindfulness guide: presence, patience, and ethical clarity. Donald Rothberg examines the pathway of teaching loving-kindness across multiple methodological approaches. Susan Kaiser Greenland applies those pedagogical principles to children and adolescents, offering developmentally adapted frameworks refined over 25 years. The pathway closes with Dr. Rick Hanson's cultivation of joy and positive neuroplasticity — positioned not only as a personal practice but as an essential teaching resource: professionals who can model positive states are often shown to be more effective at guiding others.

Target audience

This introductory to intermediate level program is designed for licensed and license-eligible mental health and healthcare professionals, including psychologists, social workers (LCSW, LSW), counselors (LPC, LCPC, LMHC), marriage and family therapists, nurses (RN, NP), and other healthcare professionals seeking continuing education in mindfulness pedagogy, loving-kindness instruction, developmentally adapted mindfulness practices, and the neuroscience of well-being and positive neuroplasticity.

Module 1: Teaching Mindfulness with Integrity: Presence, Attention Training, and Ethical Foundations

James Baraz, MA · 2 hrs

The single most important moment in practice; humility, embodied presence, and translating mindfulness for secular professional and clinical settings.

Learning objectives — at the end of the module, you will be better able to:

1. Describe the foundational elements of mindfulness instruction — including attention regulation, awareness of present-moment experience, and the skillful, self-compassionate response to mind-wandering — and how these principles can be communicated effectively in secular professional and clinical settings.
2. Explain how ethical integrity and the cultivation of positive mental qualities support psychological well-being and inform the responsible teaching and application of mindfulness in professional settings.

Module 2: Teaching Loving-Kindness (Metta): Educational Foundations, Methods, and Pedagogical Considerations

Donald Rothberg, PhD · 2 hrs

Phrase-based and radiating approaches; the traditional sequence of beings; recognizing activation and modifying practice with skill.

Learning objectives — at the end of the module, you will be better able to:

1. Describe the traditional sequence used in loving-kindness practice and identify evidence-based components of structured loving-kindness interventions.
2. Explain and apply methods for integrating loving-kindness practice into daily life contexts, including professional and healthcare settings.

Module 3: Teaching Mindfulness to Children: Developmentally Appropriate Practices and Educational Applications

Susan Kaiser Greenland, JD · 2 hrs

Activity-based framework (Attention, Balance, Compassion); developmental adaptations from preschool through adolescence; scope of practice for school-based work.

Learning objectives — at the end of the module, you will be better able to:

1. Describe an activity-based framework for teaching mindfulness to children, including core qualities (attention, balance, compassion) and associated life skills.
2. Identify developmentally appropriate adaptations of mindfulness practices for different age groups, including focused attention techniques for younger children and open awareness practices for older children.

Module 4: Joy and Happiness in Mindfulness Practice: Positive Neuroplasticity and the Cultivation of Inner Resources

Rick Hanson, PhD · 2 hrs

The HEAL model (Have, Enrich, Absorb, Link); cultivating self-compassion, contentment, and felt sense of being cared about as durable inner resources.

Learning objectives — at the end of the module, you will be better able to:

1. Describe the two-stage neuroplasticity process for converting beneficial experiences into lasting psychological traits through sustained attention, somatic awareness, and reward value amplification.
2. Identify key psychological resources (such as self-compassion, feeling cared about, and contentment) that can support individual needs for safety, satisfaction, and connection.

PATHWAY III

Working with Shame and Grief: Self-Compassion and Emotional Resilience in Clinical Practice

8.5 CE homestudy credits · Introductory–Intermediate · Self-paced homestudy

Shame and grief are among the most challenging — and least directly addressed — emotional terrain clinicians encounter. This course develops the affective and relational competencies to meet that terrain skillfully. Dr. Christopher Germer examines shame and the empirical research on self-compassion; Francis Weller explores grief and the communal practices that support it; Myra Walden and Bob Wentworth introduce needs-based self-empathy as a relational repair mechanism; and Fiona Brandon presents Mindful Sensitivity and tonglen as compassion practices clinicians can use in session and for their own resilience. Each module aims to deepen the clinician's capacity to work skillfully with difficult emotional states — both in clients and in themselves — while offering tools that are simultaneously clinical, relational, and meaningful.

Target audience

This introductory to intermediate level program is designed for licensed and license-eligible mental health and healthcare professionals, including psychologists, social workers (LCSW, LSW), counselors (LPC, LCPC, LMHC), marriage and family therapists, nurses (RN, NP), and other healthcare professionals seeking continuing education in shame, grief, self-compassion, and mindfulness-informed approaches to emotional regulation and resilience.

Module 1: Understanding Shame and Self-Compassion: Clinical Concepts and Applications for Helping Professionals

Christopher Germer, PhD · 2 hrs

Shame vs. guilt; the three healing paradoxes; recognizing and responding to backdraft and emotional overwhelm in clinical settings.

Learning objectives — at the end of the module, you will be better able to:

1. Differentiate shame from guilt based on psychological and neurobiological characteristics, including cognitive, emotional, physiological, and behavioral components.
2. Apply self-compassion principles as an evidence-based approach to address shame-related distress in professional practice, including recognizing emotional overwhelm (“backdraft”) and development of appropriate safety responses.

Module 2: Mindfulness and Grief: Understanding Sorrow, Loss, and Communal Contexts

Francis Weller, MFT · 2 hrs

The Five Gates of Grief; cultural barriers to mourning; grief and gratitude as complementary forces and the link to clinician burnout.

Learning objectives — at the end of the module, you will be better able to:

1. Describe cultural and communal factors that shape grief expression, including barriers to mourning in individualistic Western contexts.
2. Explain how communal and ritual approaches to grief can support sustained emotional capacity in both personal and professional contexts.

Module 3: Self-Empathy and Self-Empowerment: A Needs-Based Approach to Emotional Clarity and Intentional Action

Myra Walden, MA & Bob Wentworth, PhD · 2.75 hrs

A seven-step Nonviolent Communication process — observation, judgment, somatic awareness, feelings, needs, mourning, inner silence — for emotional clarity and intentional action.

Learning objectives — at the end of the module, you will be better able to:

1. Describe a structured self-empathy process that integrates observation, emotional differentiation, somatic awareness, and needs recognition based on Nonviolent Communication principles.
2. Apply needs-based awareness practices to a challenging situation to help reduce emotional reactivity, increase empathy, and enhance capacity for an intentional response.

Module 4: Mindful Sensitivity and Tonglen: Clinical Applications of Buddhist-Informed Mindfulness and Compassion Practices

Fiona Brandon, MPS, MA, LMFT · 1.75 hrs

Pleasant, unpleasant, and neutral feeling tones; Tonglen as a silent in-session self-regulation tool to buffer against compassion fatigue.

Learning objectives — at the end of the module, you will be better able to:

1. Describe the clinical applications of Mindful Sensitivity — structured awareness of pleasant, unpleasant, and neutral experience — as a therapeutic tool for supporting metacognitive awareness, affect regulation, and reduced emotional reactivity.
2. Apply Tonglen, a compassion practice of giving and receiving, within clinical settings to support therapeutic presence, nervous system regulation, and empathic distress prevention across diverse client presentations.

PATHWAY IV

Trauma-Sensitive Mindfulness and Clinical Safety: Adverse Effects, Serious Illness, and Chronic Pain

11.5 CE homestudy credits · Intermediate · Self-paced homestudy

This course develops the advanced clinical competencies required to teach and apply mindfulness safely with complex and vulnerable populations. Beginning with Britton's examination of adverse effects of mindfulness, the pathway moves into Treleaven's in-depth two-part training on trauma-informed adaptation of contemplative practice. It then extends those safety sensitivities to three additional high-acuity populations: people with serious illness and end-of-life concerns (Bauer-Wu), people living with chronic pain through a phenomenological and practice-based lens (Burch), and people with chronic pain in clinical settings through an evidence-informed practitioner framework (Sofer). Together these six programs equip clinicians with a comprehensive, population-specific toolkit for mindfulness-based work at the highest levels of clinical complexity.

Target audience

This intermediate-level program is designed for licensed and license-eligible mental health and healthcare professionals, including psychologists, social workers (LCSW, LSW), counselors (LPC, LCPC, LMHC), marriage and family therapists, nurses (RN, NP), and other healthcare professionals seeking continuing education in trauma-sensitive mindfulness, adverse effects of meditation practice, mindfulness for serious illness and chronic pain, and communication skills for clinical settings.

Module 1: Adverse Effects of Mindfulness Meditation: Identification, Assessment, and Clinical Response

Willoughby Britton, PhD

Britton's research on the prevalence, phenomenology, and predictors of meditation-related harm; informed consent and skillful response to disclosures.

Learning objectives — at the end of the module, you will be better able to:

1. Identify the prevalence, phenomenology, and risk factors associated with meditation-related adverse effects in mindfulness-based programs.
2. Apply trauma-informed strategies for modifying mindfulness practices to reduce the likelihood of adverse effects and respond therapeutically to client disclosures of meditation-related harm.

Module 2: Trauma-Sensitive Mindfulness, Part 1: Understanding Trauma Responses and Adapting Contemplative Practices

David Treleaven, PhD

The trauma spectrum, the Four Rs framework, and why the same instruction that stabilizes one student can destabilize another.

Learning objectives — at the end of the module, you will be better able to:

1. Explain how trauma affects attention and arousal, and why mindfulness meditation may support regulation for some individuals while increasing dysregulation for others.
2. Apply trauma-sensitive modifications to mindfulness instruction — including alternative attentional anchors, posture flexibility, and explicit permission strategies — to support safety and nervous system regulation in clinical contexts.

Module 3: Trauma-Sensitive Mindfulness, Part 2: Self-Regulation, Resourcing, and Skillful Practice Tools

David Treleaven, PhD

Window of tolerance, resourcing as self-regulation, the volume knob framework, and stepwise introduction of trauma-informed content in group settings.

Learning objectives — at the end of the module, you will be better able to:

1. Apply the window of tolerance framework to assess and respond to signs of dysregulated arousal in individual and group mindfulness teaching contexts.
2. Describe resourcing as a self-regulation strategy in mindfulness practice and explain how it supports nervous system stabilization.

Module 4: Teaching Mindfulness to People with Serious Illness: Ethics, Adaptations, and Compassionate Care

Susan Bauer-Wu, PhD, RN

Adaptations for physical limitations, fatigue, and pain; managing distressing thoughts; restoring agency at end of life.

Learning objectives — at the end of the module, you will be better able to:

1. Describe the cycle of suffering in serious illness, including how physical symptoms may trigger mental interpretations, emotional responses, and physiological reactions that can intensify distress.
2. Identify at least three adaptations of standard mindfulness practices for individuals with physical limitations, including alternatives to breath-focused awareness, modified body scan approaches, and sensory grounding techniques.

Module 5: From Resistance to Resilience: Mindfulness-Based Approaches to Chronic Pain and Illness

Vidyamala Burch, OBE

Primary vs. secondary suffering; the four diaphragms and Five B's of breath; releasing chronic tension patterns.

Learning objectives — at the end of the module, you will be better able to:

1. Describe the primary and secondary suffering models of chronic pain and explain how mindfulness-based attentional strategies can interrupt habitual resistance responses to reduce pain-related psychological distress.
2. Apply whole-body breath awareness techniques, including diaphragmatic breathing and somatic grounding practices, to support physiological regulation in clinical and patient-facing contexts.

Module 6: Working with Chronic Pain: A Mindfulness-Based Framework for Mental Health and Healthcare Practitioners

Oren Jay Sofer

The spectrum from indirect (regulation) to direct (investigation) practices; self-compassion as the clinical bridge; introducing mindfulness to skeptical clients.

Learning objectives — at the end of the module, you will be better able to:

1. Describe the distinction between pain and suffering, and explain the role self-compassion plays as the clinical bridge that enables direct mindfulness-based engagement with painful experience.
2. Identify a spectrum of mindfulness-based practices for supporting people with chronic pain, from indirect approaches that support nervous system regulation to direct approaches that cultivate mindful awareness of painful sensations.