

Mind-Body Groups

Mind-Body groups focus on the interactions between mind and body and the powerful ways in which emotional, mental, social and spiritual factors can directly affect health. At the heart of the Center's philosophy lies the belief that the successful treatment of others begins with Self-Care.

The three operational principles which guide the model are:

- 1- **Mindfulness** - The ability to observe one's thoughts, feelings, sensations, memories and reactions – alone and amongst others, as they happen, and in a non-judgmental way
- 2- **Mind-Body Techniques** – The tools of self and client care
- 3- **Socially-based** setting for teaching, practice and reflection

The methodology employs meditative, psycho-educational small groups that respects and enhances each person's capacity for self-knowledge and care. In these groups, the participants learn the theory and practice of an array of easy to learn but scientifically validated techniques. The small group context creates a supportive environment in which participants observe themselves and their reactions in a way the frenzy of life rarely allows. The groups make use of peoples' strengths; encourage them to experiment with their own abilities; enhance their sense of control; are free from any stigma that may be associated with "mental illness"; and are as well, interesting and fun. The techniques and the groups have proven appealing and applicable to people of all ages, ethnic groups and levels of education.

The techniques include:

Meditation	Relaxation and breathing
Biofeedback and Autogenics	Movement
Self expression through words and drawings	Guided imagery

The Training Center for Mind-Body Skills offers basic, advanced and certification training programs for professionals wishing to integrate Mind-Body skills work into their lives and their clinical practice.

The **Professional Training Program (PTP)** offers an introduction to mind-body skills within the group context and focuses on teaching participants how to use these skills in their own self-care. It includes extensive scientific material on the biology and physiology of stress and on the specific techniques used, as well as experiential work in an intensive, supportive small group. Biofeedback, guided imagery, and several forms of meditation are used to regulate stress and give perspective on it; drawings, journaling, and movement help participants to discover, express, and understand feelings and thoughts.

The **Advanced Training Program (ATP)** affords participants an opportunity use the approach and tools learned in the PTP to themselves lead mind-body groups with supervision. During this training, they also attend interactive panels on issues related to teaching mind-body skills, and receive consultation on their performance as group leaders, as well as guidance on how to implement the program in their work and institutions.

The **Supervised Practicum** offered to graduates of the ATP, has participants assemble and conduct 2, 8-week series of groups as they receive weekly supervision as well as further didactic enrichment from Center supervisor faculty.

Our experience demonstrates that this training cycle fully prepares and supports professionals as they integrate mind-body groups into their lives and into their client-centered work.