

Good-Practice Guidelines

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The Center for Mindful Eating is delighted to offer Good-Practice Guidelines (GPG) for professionals engaged in the practice and teaching of mindful eating. These Good-Practice Guidelines have been designed for professionals who identify themselves as Mindful Eating Teachers, professionals who train Mindful Eating Teachers, and Mindful Eating Teacher Trainers.

Mindful Eating Teachers

Mindful Eating Teacher Trainers

Mindful Eating Teacher Training

Becoming a Mindful Eating Teacher consists of multiple stages of preparation, study, training, practice, and direct teaching experience. A Mindful Eating Teacher Training is to be conducted by professional mindful eating trainers who have completed an extensive program of study and practice as well as have experience with teaching so they can provide a comprehensive education to other professionals. Trainings should be broad enough to provide a deep understanding of the principles of mindful eating, the current research in the field, and effective teaching strategies and techniques.

These guidelines are aspirational in nature. Not every professional who teaches aspects of mindful eating to their patients or clients will choose to be engaged in this level of training. However, for a Mindful Eating Teacher who wants to offer a mindful eating program of a minimum 18 hours (during a minimum six sessions), the Good-Practice Guidelines provide a complete, clear and internationally approved pathway that preserves the health and healing available through the practice of mindful eating.

Our hope is that the guidelines will motivate those wishing to be a part of this inspiring mindful eating work.

To see our members' directory of professional training opportunities, visit our [**Upcoming Events/Professional Development**](#)

Good Practice Guidelines for Mindful Eating Teachers

A Mindful Eating Teacher is defined as a professional who offers a Mindful Eating program during at least 18 hours and a minimum of 6 sessions to a group or individuals.

The Center for Mindful Eating encourages professionals meet the following Good Practice Guidelines for Mindful Eating Teachers:

1. A professional degree in mental or physical health care, education or social care, or background in ecology, biology or food technology science, with adherence to the ethical framework and best practice guidelines appropriate to the teacher's professional background and working context.
2. Completion, as a participant, of a mindfulness based program such as Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR), Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy, (MBCT) and/or long-term practice under guidance of a senior teacher in a contemplative tradition (minimum 3 years).
3. Completion of a 5 day or longer in-person professional mindful eating teacher training which adheres to TCME's Guidelines for [Mindful Eating Teacher Trainings](#).
4. Completion of an online training is only equivalent when the participant has a Mindfulness based teacher background (attended a MBSR, MBCT or other MBI teacher training pathways) or long-term meditation practice under guidance of an experienced meditation teacher before the start of the online teacher training.
5. As part of the teacher training, the teacher-in-training is mentored by a senior mindful eating instructor during a minimum of 10 private sessions while offering a cycle of mindful eating program.
6. Knowledge and experience of the specific populations that the mindful eating program will be delivered to (people with disordered eating behavior; such as overeating, binge eating, extreme restrictive eating, anorexia, bulimia and orthorexia), including experience of teaching, therapeutic or other care provision with these groups and/or individuals
7. Commitment to a personal mindfulness practice through daily formal and informal practice, and participation in at least one residential teacher-led silent mindfulness meditation retreat during the mindful eating training pathway. Annual mindfulness meditation retreats are recommended to maintain and deepen the practice of a mindful eating teacher.
8. Commitment to ongoing development as a teacher through further training, keeping up to date with evidence-based research, and regular contact with other professionals who share the same values
9. Supervision/mentoring under guidance of an experienced mindful eating mentor during the teaching of minimum one mindful eating 8-week program. A mindful eating mentor might

be the trainer of a professional mindful eating teacher training or a mentor appointed by the trainer.

Acknowledgements:

This position statement is grounded in the Good Practice Guidelines of Mindfulness Based Interventions. Our special gratitude to the UK Network for Mindfulness-Based Teachers.

Further reading:

Crane, R.S., Eames, C., Kuyken, W., Hastings, R.P., Williams, J.M., Bartley, T. et al. (2013) Development and validation of the mindfulness-based interventions - teaching assessment criteria (MBI:TAC). *Assessment*, 20, 681-688.

Crane, R.S., Kuyken, W., Hastings, R.P., Rothwell, N., Williams, J.M.G. (2010) Training teachers to deliver mindfulness-based interventions: Learning from the UK experience. *Mindfulness*, 1, 74-86.

Cullen, M. (2011). Mindfulness-Based Interventions: An emerging phenomenon. *Mindfulness*, 2, 186-193.

UK Network of Mindfulness Teacher Training Organisations

(www.mindfulnessteachersuk.org.uk): Good Practice Guidance for Teachers (April 2015)

Woods, S.L. (2009). Training professionals in mindfulness: The heart of teaching. In F. Didonna (Ed.), *Clinical Handbook of Mindfulness* (pp. 463-475). New York: Springer.

Good Practice Guidelines for Mindful Eating Teacher Trainers

It is recommended by The Center for Mindful Eating that Mindful Eating Teacher Trainers meet the following Good Practice Guidelines:

1. Have offered at least nine public mindful eating programs to a group, over a minimum of three years.
2. To be a proficient teacher of mindful eating programs (for public)– as assessed by experienced senior colleagues and potentially reviewed by the use of the ‘Mindfulness-based Interventions: Teaching Assessment Criteria’ (MBI: TAC).
3. Experienced in offering training pathways for teachers-in-training which have a minimum duration of 5 days in a residential setting.
4. Have trained to be a trainer via an apprenticeship with a senior mindfulness/mindful eating teacher trainer and demonstrated a competency in training others.
5. Continuously teach mindful eating programs to people with varying levels of experience as a teacher, alongside training teachers.
6. Be in an ongoing and regular mentorship relationship regarding one’s teaching practice and how it interfaces with personal mindfulness practice. The trainer engage in peer relationships with other teacher trainers.

7. Attend annual residential teacher-led silent mindfulness meditation retreats which includes formal and informal mindfulness practices.
8. Stay up to date with the current and developing evidence based studies on mindful eating, nutrition research and food psychology, in addition to mindfulness-based teaching and best practices.
9. Be steeped in the practice and understanding of mindfulness which is informed by both relevant current scientific and/or clinical understanding as well as its historical antecedents from relevant spiritual and philosophical traditions, the most common example of which is the Buddhist tradition.
10. In the case of online mindful eating teacher trainings; the teachers trainer adheres to the same Good Practice Guidelines as for trainers in residential settings. Experienced in offering training pathways for trainees with a Mindfulness based teacher background or long-term meditation practice under guidance of an experienced meditation teacher (before the start of the online teacher training)

Mindful Eating teacher trainers need well developed skills, understandings and attitudes in the following areas:

- A. An experientially gained understanding of the complexity of mindfulness and mindful eating as an approach and its transformational potential.
- B. An in depth understanding of the rationale and intentions of the full range of curriculum components within the mindful eating program they are training others to teach.
- C. An understanding of the underlying theoretical principles of the mindful eating programs they are training others to teach.
- D. Understand and have the capacity to train others in the principles underpinning the adaptation of mindful eating programs to different contexts and populations.
- E. Skill in working with groups, especially the creation of a safe and challenging learning environment.
- F. The ability and skill needed to support trainees in identifying their strengths and learning needs, and providing feedback which facilitates new learning.

The trainer adheres to the ethical framework of his/her profession or training and will additionally have particularly developed sensitivities in relation to:

- Only training within the limits and boundaries of competence Only asking trainees what is asked of self in relation to informal and formal mindfulness practice

Good Practice Guidelines for Mindful Eating Teacher Training

It is recommended by The Center for Mindful Eating that a training created to prepare professionals to teach a mindful eating program of minimum 18 hours (minimum 6 sessions), will meet the following guidelines:

1. A Mindful Eating Teacher Training (METT) is a skill-building teachers program, offered within a minimum of 5 days or longer in length in a residential setting. This framework will serve the teacher-in-training, to implement the different topics of the training and enhance the personal meditation practice of the trainee.
2. The METT is facilitated by qualified senior teacher trainers adhering to the 'Good Practice Guidelines for Trainers of Mindful Eating Teachers'.
3. The content and didactic information offered in a METT is line with the Principles of Mindful Eating and the Position Statements, established by The Center for Mindful Eating (TCME).
4. Mindfulness meditation practices and mindful eating exercises are integral components of a METT and provide the core for any mindful eating teacher training. In programs with an emphasis on contemplative practices, the spiritual dimension of food/hunger is also addressed.
5. Additionally, components of a METT draw from secular and well researched mindfulness interventions such as Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) and Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT). It also incorporates elements from Buddhist psychology and other contemplative wisdom traditions.
6. A METT is annually updated to align to the latest scientific research findings in the field of nutrition, psychology, mindfulness-based interventions and meditation.
7. A METT will provide a teacher's curriculum and manual for use to professionals who attend a residential or online mindful eating teacher training.
8. A Mindful Eating Teacher Online Training will be considered equivalent to a residential METT when the trainee –before the start of an online teacher training- has a Mindfulness based teacher background or long-term meditation practice (under guidance of an experienced meditation teacher). Additionally, the trainee is mentored by a senior mindful eating teacher trainer during a minimum of 10 private sessions while offering a mindful eating program, as part of the teacher training.

References:

UK Network of Mindfulness Teacher Training Organisations
(www.mindfulnessteachersuk.org.uk): Good Practice Guidance for Teachers (April 2015)
Woods, S.L. (2009). Training professionals in mindfulness: The heart of teaching. In F. Didonna (Ed.), *Clinical Handbook of Mindfulness* (pp. 463-475). New York: Springer.