

Guidance on journal writing

We ask you to keep a journal of your personal mindfulness practice, retreat experience, teaching practice and your experience of engaging in training for the duration of your Teacher Training journey.

This will inform your reflective submission. A journal can be invaluable in bringing increased awareness to your personal development and may also extend beyond this and help you reflect on the on-going dialogue between you as a practitioner and you as a teacher.

Journaling supports the integration of your own practice into teaching, as well as integrating the experiences you encounter in dialogue with your class participants. All this adds to the rich tapestry which will deepen your skills and nourish your intentions for teaching.

The journal is intended as a vehicle for a personal, reflection on the issues and processes you experience during your personal day-to-day practice and during training and teaching. It will also serve as a record of any changes you may experience in your awareness, perceptions or behaviour as you continue the process. You can use the reflective journal as a precision tool for drawing out what you are experiencing and catching the issues that arise and exploring them.

We encourage this process to be as open and unedited as possible, bringing the qualities of acceptance and curiosity into your reflections and letting go, as best you can, of judgements that arise for you. It is a useful practice to see your journal as an extension of your practice by bringing similar 'ways of being' to it. Let go of any need to make formulations, engage in analysis or draw conclusions from what arises for you. Simply notice what is there and make a note of it.

Some questions to consider:

- 1- What has ignited me? How was I aware of this?
- 2- What has been particularly challenging?
- 3- What has been my experience of beginning to teach?
- 4- How has my practice informed my teaching and vice versa?

Guidance on writing your reflective submission

The reflective writing requirement for the MBSR Teacher Training is to inform you and your assessor about some of the important insights and discoveries that you have encountered along your journey. The content should reflect your direct experience - physical sensations, emotions, thoughts, and actions or impulses. This, mostly internal experience needs to be clearly and fully described to allow you to bring awareness to it, and your relationship to it, identifying patterns of habitual experience and understanding different ways of working with these.

Your reflective writing will have a different focus at different stages of your journey. Some of your writing will be descriptive of your direct experience, and some will be an in-depth reflection on what you have described. Reflection is a skill that is useful for all of us and one that we can all hone. It is also a part of our mindfulness practice which slowly and steadily teaches us that we can begin to move towards insight as we engage in the process of disentangling the complicated web of our experience as it unfolds in each moment. The reflective writing can, therefore, be a powerful learning experience.

Whilst your journal is entirely for your reflection and learning, the summary you submit is intended to inform your portfolio assessor about your development of skills, attitudes and knowledge as you move into becoming a teacher of mindfulness-based courses. You should relate your journal summary content to the learning outcomes for the appropriate part of the Teacher Training.

Remember: Your journal summary should give the reader an idea of your journey from mindfulness practitioner to mindfulness teacher

Include in your reflective summary:

- An overview of your context for teaching, and a brief account of your journey to this point.
- Some description of your current practice, its challenges and delights.
- One or two experiences which stand out as formative for you - these might be during training, retreat, teaching, supervision etc.
- In particular, reflect on your learning from training and supervision.