

## Maintaining a Mindful Life

- Glossary of terms

<b>Adrenaline and cortisol</b>	Naturally occurring hormones released in response to stress, physically preparing the body for a fight or flight response.
<b>Allostatic load</b>	Prolonged wear and tear on the body caused by long-term activation of the stress response.
<b>Amygdala</b>	A section of the brain that controls emotions, especially feelings of stress, fear and anger.
<b>Attention Deficit Trait</b>	<p>A conditioned response to an overly busy environment, Attention Deficit Trait is the tendency to become increasingly agitated, adopt black and white thinking and find it difficult to stay organised, set priorities and manage time.</p> <p>Note that Attention Deficit Trait is different to Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, which is a psychological disorder.</p>
<b>Attentional blink</b>	<p>The mental pause we have every time we switch our attention from one thing to another.</p> <p>The more stress we have, the longer the attentional blink is, and during this time, we're actually not paying attention to anything at all.</p>
<b>Catastrophising</b>	Worrying about and viewing an event as considerably worse than it actually is.

<b>Chromosomes</b>	A collection of nucleic acids and protein found in the nucleus of most living cells, carrying information in the form of genes.
<b>Compassion</b>	A concern for the suffering and misfortune of others.
<b>Default mode</b>	When our mind is inattentive, idle, daydreaming or ruminating about the past or future. This is the opposite of mindfulness.
<b>Dopamine</b>	A brain chemical that helps control the pleasure and reward centres of the brain.
<b>Executive functions</b>	Executive functions are mental skills that help you get things done. These involve planning, memory, organisation and decision making, as well as the ability to be self aware and respond appropriately to emotions.
<b>Fight-flight response</b>	A reaction that occurs in response to a perceived threat to survival.
<b>Freeze response</b>	A reaction to specific stimuli, where a prey animal (for example, a rabbit or deer) feigns death to escape the predator.
<b>Gentleness</b>	The intention to be gentler with ourselves in each moment.
<b>Hippocampus</b>	The long-term memory centre of the brain.
Hyperkinetic	A syndrome with an enduring pattern of severe, developmentally inappropriate inattention (including hyperactivity and impulsivity) across a range of settings that can significantly impair academic, social and work performance.
<b>Immune Dysregulation</b>	An unrestrained or unregulated immune response (the body's recognition and reaction to harmful bacteria, viruses and foreign substances).

<b>Neuroplasticity</b>	Recurring changes in the neural pathways of the brain due to environment or changes in behaviour, thinking and emotions.
<b>Oxytocin</b>	A naturally occurring hormone that produces a feeling of wellbeing which helps you to focus and relate more effectively to others.
<b>Stress performance curve</b>	The relationship between stress and performance, where no stress results in little or no performance, but too much stress causes performance levels to drop.
<b>Self-compassion</b>	Recognition and concern for the suffering of others (and ourselves) which may result in a desire to alleviate the suffering.
<b>Tend and befriend</b>	A protective and inclusive behaviour exhibited in response to threat.
<b>Telomeres</b>	A DNA cap located at the end of each chromosome that protects genetic data.
<b>Vicarious stress</b>	The feeling of stress we may feel in the presence of other people's distress.