

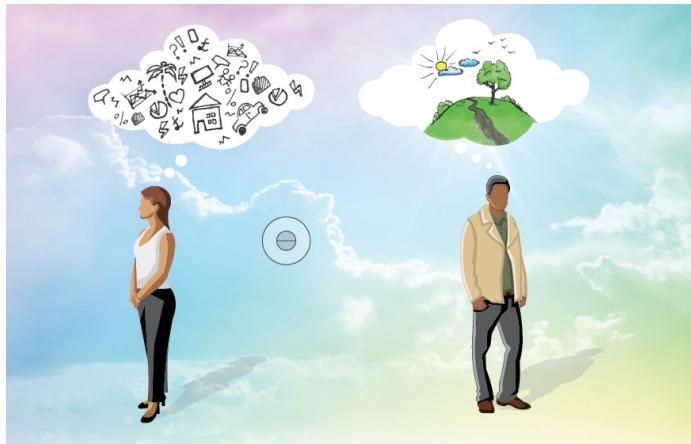
Validium Newsletter

for employees



January 2016

What can Mindfulness do for Me?



Mindfulness can help us optimise our ability to handle life's unavoidable difficulties.

It can help us reach new depths of understanding and Mindfulness exercises are ways of paying attention to the here and now, using techniques like meditation, breathing and yoga. The benefits of this can include:

- Enhancing balance and resilience
- Managing anxiety and stress
- Becoming less disturbed by unpleasant experiences and emotions
- Increasing self-awareness
- Learning that everything changes
- Feeling more engaged with the world around you

By being mindful you can become more aware of the present moment, including your feelings and thoughts, your body and the world around you.

If you want help to become mindful rather than 'mind full' visit www.validium.com and log in to your vClub account to access various pod casts on Mindfulness and relaxation, or call your Validium service.

Did you know?
The legal team offer information, help and guidance when ... you bought something online but it was damaged and doesn't work, so you want to understand your rights

Organisational Change

While change is part of our everyday life at work, there are views that this is even more so in today's working environment. Research shows that change is accelerating at a faster pace. Change can be a continuous process of adaptation to grow an organisation, to match its capabilities to the developing environment around it – market forces, technology, customer preferences, budgetary constraints and so on.

To manage the changing pace of your working life you might try to:

- Expect change to happen from time to time
- Look upon change as an opportunity rather than a threat
- Look positively at trying new ways of working
- Keep a sense of humour
- Embrace new ideas and training
- Use your new skillset to enhance your job satisfaction
- Talk through any concerns with a manager or colleague

If you are feeling anxious about change in your life you can call your Validium service for confidential support.



The psychological impact of debt

Once the Christmas tree has been put away, January can be a seemingly depressing time of year for many people, but for those of us who relied on credit to get through the Christmas period, the start of the year can be very worrying. On the vClub Debt & Money page this month, leading free debt advice provider PayPlan share their research on the damaging psychological impact that financial problems have on thousands of people across the country, including people you might know. **To find out more, visit the vClub Debt and Money blog today!**

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Love Yourself



Having low self-esteem doesn't just affect the way we feel about ourselves, it can also affect the way our bodies function, which in the long-term could lead to serious health implications. So it seems that having high self esteem, when we think well of ourselves, is not only good for our mental wellbeing but may also protect our heart and immune system too.

In order to explore how to build positive self-esteem we first need to recognise how low self-esteem can affect behaviours, thoughts and feelings:

- **Behaviours** - People with low self-esteem might walk slowly or sit slumped in a chair, and often avoid other people, seem scared to say anything or to make eye contact
- **Thoughts** - People with low self-esteem are often excessively self-critical, see themselves as 'useless' at everything and can find it difficult to trust their own judgement
- **Feelings** - People with low self-esteem can feel depressed some or all of the time and experience feeling anxious, self-conscious or easily embarrassed

There are, however, a number of strategies we can all use to boost our self-esteem. One simple way is to surround ourselves with supportive friends or family: people who provide positive feedback and encouragement.

Other strategies include:

- Using affirmations to reinforce positive messages,
- Challenging the negative thoughts and beliefs we have about ourselves
- Adopting a more positive way of thinking by looking at things from a different perspective.

Adopting new strategies and new ways of thinking about ourselves takes time and practice because we need to unlearn the old negative patterns of behaving and thinking.

Counselling is a safe place where you can be supported in making these changes, helping you to break the cycle of negative behaviours, thoughts and feelings and replace them with more positive ones.

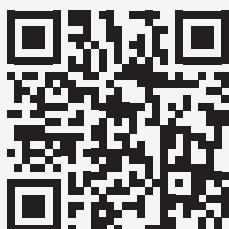
How can I take control of my life?

Sometimes in our busy lives we feel that we don't have full control over some aspects of our life and it can feel like events are running away from us or that some areas of our life aren't receiving the attention they deserve.

Recognising this can be difficult but, when we do, it is worth taking some time out to evaluate where we are focussing our attention and whether we are neglecting some areas of our life. It can be helpful to write down a list of what aspects you are happy with and what aspects you would like to improve in some way.

Taking small manageable steps in each of these areas is the best strategy. The Validium service can also help support you with your journey to reclaiming control of your life.

The articles here do not necessarily represent the opinions or policies of your employer and should not be considered as a definitive health guide. Please refer to other sources for guidance on work place policies and also on health matters that specifically relate to you.



0800 3 58 48 58

Outside UK: +44 141 271 7179

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