

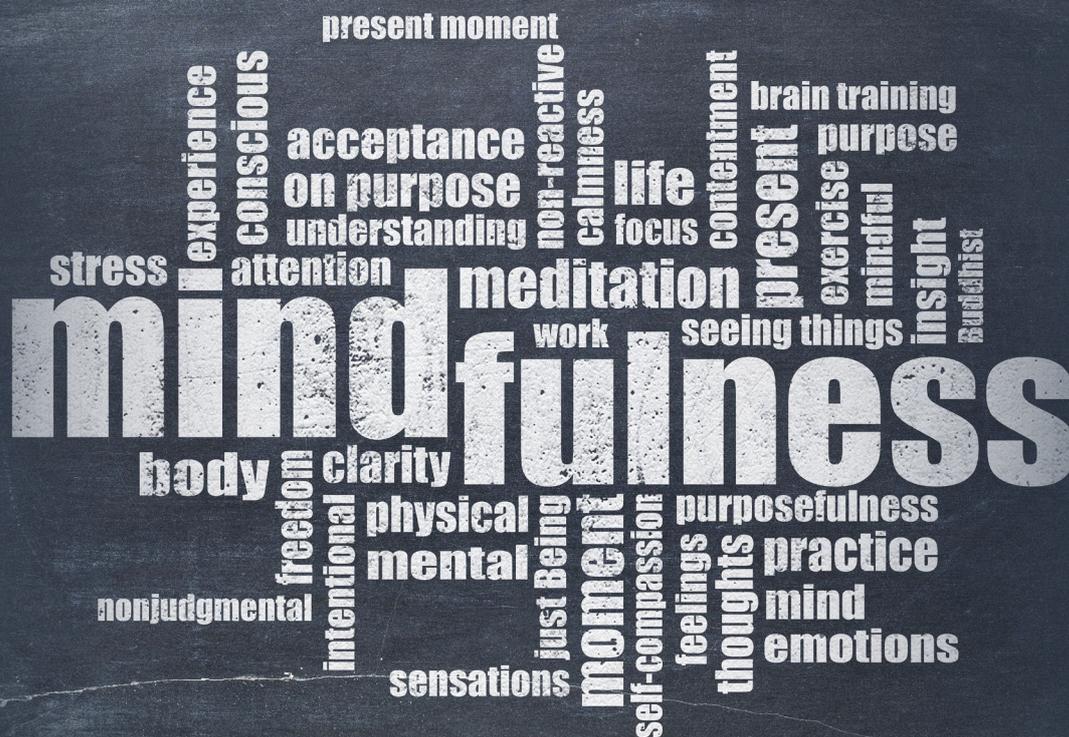


THE LAUNCHING OF *MINDFULNESS* CYCLES

The Mimi Ullens Foundation's mission is to offer cancer patients the **best care possible**. To do that the Foundation regularly updates itself on measures that have proved themselves in the field of therapeutic well-being and, where necessary, trains the professionals in its team in how to use them.

A case in point is **mindfulness-based cognitive therapy** and **mindfulness-based stress reduction** (MBCT & MBSR). Valérie van Nitsen, the massage therapist in our centre at the Cliniques Universitaires Saint-Luc (Belgium), has followed a three-year certified training course in Mindfulness at the Free University of Brussels (ULB). And, as a result, the Mimi Ullens Foundation has been offering mindfulness cycles in partnership with that hospital since October 2016.

Slowly but surely Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy has become established in American hospitals and is now gaining ground over here. This technique of concentration on the present moment and on one's physical sensations is proving to be highly **effective in combating anxiety and stress**. The sensation of feeling better, the better management of stress and improved sleep... are all benefits that cancer sufferers have reported.



Moreover, a pilot trial reported in the *Journal of Cancer Survivorship* shows that mindfulness-based meditation can make it possible **to limit the pernicious effects of chemotherapy**.

"Increasingly people are surviving cancer because of developments in targeted and effective treatments. But many survivors suffer the serious and persistent secondary effects of those treatments," explains Shelley Johns, the principal author of the work. This clinical trial is the first to assess the benefits of meditation as a way of combating what the English call **chemo brain**.

Researchers have observed an improvement in the cognitive problems associated with chemotherapy: during tasks given to them, participants appeared more attentive and made fewer mistakes.

*"Mindfulness-based meditation enables cancer survivors better **to manage the cognitive problems associated with cancer** that 35% of those who reach the end of their treatment report,"* says Shelley Johns. According to this psychologist, meditation would appear to improve cognitive awareness by concentrating patients' attention and improving the way they manage their feelings and their physical sensations.