



Trish Bartley: Mindfulness for Cancer



Trish Bartley has been working in the field of mindfulness-based approaches for people with cancer since 2001. She adapted and taught Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy for cancer patients, and is the author of two books on mindfulness and cancer. Explore brief, everyday practices that can be applied whether you've been impacted by cancer or are caring for someone with cancer.

TOP EMBODIMENT TIP: Remember to come back to the body as an anchor; remember to come back to what really matters to you.

First Aid Practice: Feet on the Floor

- Stop for a moment, and come back to your sense of contact with the floor (or surface you are lying on). This can also be done when walking, feeling each foot fall on the ground.
- Cancer treatment can leave one with neuropathy and sore feet, so feet on the floor can be painful at times. You could still be grounded and embodied with a different approach - "A sense of the sound of your feet on the floor"
- Set reminders: Practice when walking up stairs or opening the front door. Establish the practice when you are feeling reasonably steady so that when you're triggered, it will be there for you.

Taking a Pause: "What is Going On For Me Right Now?"

- Stop and pause. Notice sounds, mood, thoughts, physical sensations. Not a long exploration, just a marker like putting a pin on a Google map. A chance to stop, notice, and move out of autopilot. **Then ask, "what could I do about that?"** and have a calming go-to practice (e.g. feet on the floor, noticing the breath, petting your dog)
- As a reminder, stick sticky, colored dots around the house to stop and practice taking a pause.

Intention: "What is it that really matters to me?"

- Coming back to this present moment with an anchor (i.e. feet on floor or breath) and allowing the question to settle in the heart. Connect with a feeling in the body that connects you with what really matters and put a label on that.
- What really matters will change as you change: through different stages in life, different stages of cancer treatment.
- **Turn towards the lovely.** Spend more time with what really matters to you (e.g. people, places in nature, music). Come back with kindness toward yourself, with a sense of "it's okay for me to be anxious about this. It's understandable" but not letting anxiety or rumination about what might happen run loose.

Resources

- ❖ **Books:** *Mindfulness: A Kindly Approach to Being With Cancer*
- ❖ **Courses:** Mindfulness Teacher Training for Cancer, [Brief Mindfulness Training Courses](#)
- ❖ **Website:** <http://trishbartley.co.uk/>



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