



## HOW TO ACHIEVE & MAINTAIN MENTAL HEALTH & HOLISTIC WELLBEING

### Introduction

As a fully qualified BACP registered Mindfulness Psychotherapist... I've been working in the field of addiction and mental health for 20 years... here in the UK & overseas. On returning from an astounding experience in Thailand delivering psychotherapeutic services in a private 5\* in-patient treatment centre... I decided to "down tools" and take time out to re-evaluate my life... a consequence of being a mature woman impacted by the dreaded 'Change of Life' syndrome 😞! I needed time to make sense of my presenting experience... to discover who I was becoming & what I wanted to do with the rest of my life. Discovering Mindfulness prompted this move of self-investigation making it one of the best decisions I've ever made. Through this reflection... retrospection... & introspection HABITS of London C.I.C. was born... and my continued journey of self-discovery fuelled an even deeper passion to empower others to self-explore & subsequently become their best self.

During my empirical private... academic & professional experiences I came to a recognition & acknowledgement that we are all primarily products of our childhood experiences... experiences that shape our adulthood perceptions, behaviours and relationships. I myself experienced dysfunction and consequential mental turmoil from my upbringing that continued to leave me feeling wounded, troubled & distressed as an adult. I've been extremely fortunate & blessed that my psychology studies, psychotherapy & unwavering Faith helped me to understand the processes of my wounding that subsequently unlocked the answers to my healing.

Embracing Mindfulness has helped refine who I am today... personally and professionally... through the development of an exceptional yet simplistic attentive awareness that has given new meaning to my experiences... those of the past but more importantly those of the present moment... the moment that truly makes the difference. I observed my idiosyncratic 'habits of mind' that facilitated the discovery of how significantly thoughts influence feelings influence behaviours. The mind after all is the 'Supreme Controller'... it governs thoughts... feelings.. urges & behaviours. When we deeply understand how our mind works... in other words 'learn to discern'... we are not only in the best position to take control of our mind... we're in the best position to take control of our life.... essentially through the decisions and choices we make.

Engaging in psychology and psychotherapy fundamentally changed my life and created a healthier foundation on which to continue to nurture & grow. Mindfulness successively offers the most effective approach to combatting emotional & mental stress... managing life struggles & routine pressures... improving & enriching relationships with self & others... & enhancing a quality of life that is rewarding... uplifting... satisfying... desired & peaceful. Mindfulness techniques & practices should not be considered as 'tools in a toolbox' you pick up as and when you need it. Mindfulness needs to be embraced as a way of life... and through routine practice it becomes no longer what you do... it becomes who you are... embarking on a life-long journey to becoming your best self.

***"When you Master your Mind... you Master your Life!"***

Start your journey today to mastering your life by following the guaranteed health tips below!

Helen Raphael BSc, MSc, MBACP  
Founder & Executive Director  
HABITS of London C.I.C.



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### 5 Tips to Enhancing your Mental Health & Holistic Wellbeing

1. Avoid being in 'autopilot'. Autopilot can be considered as... *"No human operator at the controls!"* In this context life is happening around you but you're not fully aware therefore not fully in control. Learn to check in with your thoughts and feelings before leaving your bed each morning & throughout the day. Ask yourself... *"What am I thinking... how am I feeling?"* When these are negatively charged and go unchecked they have the propensity to impact on your day... especially your relationships... in an unhelpful and destructive way.
2. Become aware of your limitations and how much you schedule into your day and your week. Adding too much to your day adds stress to your life... and unfortunately stress can be a silent killer... not just physiologically... but mentally... emotionally... & spiritually. Take better care of your life... start paying better attention by observing & 'listening' to what's going on in & around you.
3. Use the S.T.O.P technique when experiencing moments of stress. It's a simple... useful... effective tool allowing you to respond mindfully instead of reacting mindlessly often with negative consequences.

S. Stop – give yourself the gift of brief reflection

T. Take a breath – focus on it allowing yourself to come into the present moment

O. Observe – what you are thinking and how you are feeling

P. Proceed – in a way that aligns with your values, principles & morals

4. Focus and develop a routine in the following 7 areas for optimal holistic health...

#### **DO:**

- I. Eat lots and lots of fruits & vegetables
- II. Drink plenty of water
- III. Take regular exercise
- IV. Have quality sleep
- V. Accept helpful thoughts... reject unhelpful ones

#### **AVOID:**

- VI. Stress
- VII. Toxic products

5. Last and by no means least... start living a Mindfulness life. All the above tips and considerably more can be attained from engaging in the practices & techniques of Mindfulness. Mindfulness is... ***A deep awareness that develops from paying attention in 3 essential & empowering ways:***

- I. In the Moment**
- II. On Purpose**
- III. Without Judgment**

Foundational attitudes such as curiosity... compassion... patience & acceptance... to name but a few... are necessary to produce the transformational... life-changing benefits Mindfulness promises.

For further support & information about Mindfulness, Helen & HABITS visit: <https://www.habits.org.uk>