**How to Combat Bad Emotions With Mindfulness**

Mindfulness is a type of meditation that has been practiced for centuries but has recently seen a resurgence in popularity owing to cognitive behavioral therapy and modern psychotherapeutic approaches.

The basic idea is that you’re using meditative practices to become more aware of your own mind and of your own emotions. You’re becoming detached from your body and calming the judgmental part of your brain but at the same time you’re not going to ‘switch off’ those emotions but rather you’re going to ‘observe’ them. The idea is that you’re going to watch your thoughts and take notice of your emotions but in a detached manner so that they can’t harm you.

This practice has two benefits. The first is that it allows you to distance yourself from the kinds of ruminations that can otherwise cause stress, depression, phobias and more. The second is that it allows you to better understand the way your own mind works.

And it is this second point that makes it an incredibly powerful tool for combating a large number of emotional troubles.

**Turning Towards Emotions**

The problem with emotion you see is that it robs us of our rationality. And this becomes especially true if we try to deny it, if we try and suppress it or if we generally don’t treat it the way we should.

Most of us when we’re upset will react by trying to ignore it, by pretending that we’re fine – or possibly by being unintentionally completely oblivious to it. As you probably have guessed, none of these approaches is particularly helpful or effective in combating those negative feelings.

So let’s say for instance that you’re feeling very stressed, anxious and depressed. Maybe you had an argument with your partner, maybe you had a bad day at work. Maybe you just got out of the wrong side of bed!

Either way, you’re now in a position where you feel low and as such you begin to look at everything through very negative glasses. You try and stop being depressed but all you can keep thinking is about what a bad day you’ve had. About how it’s never going to get any better. About how nobody really gets you. About how your partner is no good for you.

Using CBT though and embracing the fact that you’re distressed, you’re able to instead simply turn towards those negative emotions and say ‘yes, I am feeling stressed/anxious/depressed’.

And as soon as you do this, you will find that they become much more manageable and that you become much more detached from them. More specifically, you can focus on the fact that your thoughts are a result of your bad emotion (not a reflection on reality as it actually is) and you can remind yourself of the impermanence of that stress.