

What is Mindful Movement?

Mindful movement promotes body awareness through bringing 100 percent of our attention to our movements.

With mindful movement your body learns (or re-learns) how to move optimally with ease. It's also a great complement to cardiovascular or weight bearing exercises because it can give anyone – from beginners to elite athletes – an extremely well-rounded fitness regimen that works the whole body and invigorates the mind.

How can I benefit?

Mindful movement is an effective way to reduce stress and its physical consequences. There are specific physical benefits associated with mindful movement practices. Research shows yoga, for example, has health benefits including increased strength and flexibility, better balance and coordination, improved reaction times, better lung function, heightened cardiovascular conditioning, and weight loss.

Psychological benefits of mindful movement practice include relaxation, greater equanimity, better concentration, and improved mood. Scientific studies have found yoga as a useful adjunct to the care of such conditions as asthma, arthritis, carpal tunnel syndrome, multiple sclerosis, and heart disease.

Mindful movement exercise's that I teach include:

- Yoga (qualified as yoga teacher with Yoga Fellowship of NI 2006)
- Khi Cong with a stick (only teacher of this in Northern Ireland)
- The ten mindful movements (as taught in Plum Village)

Others include:

- Pilates
- Tai Chi

The Ten Mindful Movements I teach are series of physical exercises introduced to me at Plum Village Mindfulness Practice Centre in France. Body movements are flowing and graceful and not too rapid. Each movement is coordinated to be in harmony with our breathing. The mindful movements give us a chance to exercise. They allow us to practice sensitivity and awareness to our body, our breathing, and the interconnectedness between our body, our breathing and our mind.



While many types of aerobic and anaerobic exercise promote physical and mental wellbeing, there are specific "schools" of physical activity with a more distinct mind-body approach.

Khi Cong with a stick is a system of physical exercises that is believed to facilitate the flow of chi/qi/khi(life force/prana) in the body, promoting good health and vitality. It utilizes movements that are Yin Yang opposites: softness and strength, forward and backward, action and calm.

Are there any precautions?

Mindful movement practices are undoubtedly physically and mentally beneficial. However, overly strenuous physical activity can lead to injury. Check with a doctor before beginning any exercise regime. And **be sure to listen to your own body and do only what feels comfortable to you.**

Me teaching Khi Cong with a stick on raining morning in Ballycastle

