

# BENDING WITH THE BREEZE

*Integrative Strategies for Wellness Across the Seasons*

## INTEGRATIVE MEDICINE AT HENNEPIN HEALTHCARE

*The Person-Centered and Culturally-Inspired Division of Integrative Health at Hennepin Healthcare is grounded in a multi-disciplinary team dedicated to partnering with patients, community, and each other to nurture healing, uncover root causes of illness, and offer whole-person, customized care to cultivate well-being for everyone.*

## FINDING YOUR TRUE NATURE THIS SUMMER

*Cass McLaughlin*

**Mindfulness practices** can feel like a summer breeze when experiencing both the ouches and wows in life! It is a healing balm when difficulties arise and supports being present to savoring those special moments too. The evidence is in with my own mindfulness practice, even before my first **Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)** course in 2004. It is a process, and I like to say we can never lose what we practice—the impact of my mindfulness practice for the last 30 years (12 of them teaching mindfulness and MBSR) started out slowly. In kinship with MIT's Peter Senge's system thinking principle, "slower is faster and faster is slower," I am always reminding myself of this principle when I need to "slow down." Watching the changing seasons supports both slowing down and mindfulness.

Like so many, I embarked on this path of mindfulness with frustration and with several starts and stops. I have experienced the power of how mindfulness affects health, wellbeing, and resilience by decreasing the impact of anxiety, and patiently coasting through, challenges and life's adversities. Mindfulness practice has an ongoing impact on my own body, heart, mind, and it inspires a life well lived inspiring choices for what has meaning in my life. Moving from "I'll-ness" to "we'll-ness" - meaning we are all in this together. Making clearer choices on how I related to life experiences and what I take in, cultivating more kindness or heartfulness towards myself and others. It is an ongoing process, growing into the embodied experience of the interconnection of self, others, and all beings. Being of a certain age, I appreciate how mindfulness protects the brain from aging, and stress enhances focused attention and emotional regulation, influencing skillful mood outcomes and agency. Research has indicated that mindfulness meditation practices might even slow down

cellular aging. I was part of the Samatha Research Project ([www.saronlab.ucdavis.edu/shamatha-project](http://www.saronlab.ucdavis.edu/shamatha-project)) for 3.5 months in 2007. I blurted to my then supervisor at the University of Minnesota that I wanted to participate in a 1–3-month silent retreat in response to a significant and tragic loss of a family member. Having already been meditating off and on for ten years, my intention was to use this time for my own healing, and healing on behalf of family and our collective communities. Altruistically, to forward this research with lay mediators for the flourishing of mindfulness in our Western culture.

In the summer months, I choose to be both mind-full, and/or mindfully, "mindless" – and the key word here is choice. Meditation and Medication are so closely related and spelled the same – just change the "c" to a "t." Studies have suggested that experienced mediators may experience less mind wandering and an increased ability to shift out of ruminative thoughts and improve focus. Research has suggested the positive impact that mindfulness meditation can have on sleep, self-confidence, and enhanced individual skills, inspiring vision, and applying moral intelligence. The mechanisms of Mindfulness explored in Shauna Shapiro, PHD's research is a balance of intention, attention and attitude creating a field for mindful presence.

What better time to me mindful than when immersed in the beauty of **Nature in our Minnesota's summers!** These are reasons enough for me to continue practicing and teaching the MBSR Program. Will you join me on an MBSR course? Whenever you decide to take an MBSR course it may end up being the best season of YOUR life!

Shapiro SL, Carlson LE, Astin JA, Freedman B. Mechanisms of mindfulness. J Clin Psychol. 2006;62(3):373-386. doi:10.1002/jclp.20237

## Roasted Veggie Tacos

### Ingredients:

- 1 cup roasted root veggies of your choice
- ½ cup cooked or canned black beans, rinsed
- 2 tsp extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 1 tsp chili powder
- ½ tsp ground coriander
- ¼ tsp kosher salt
- ¼ tsp ground pepper
- 4 corn tortillas, lightly toasted
- ½ avocado, cut into 8 slices
- 1 lime, cut into wedges
- Chopped fresh cilantro & salsa for garnish



### Instructions:

- Combine roasted root vegetables, beans, oil, cumin, chili powder, coriander, salt and pepper in a saucepan. Cover and cook over medium-low heat until heated through, 6 to 8 minutes.
- Divide the mixture among the tortillas. Top with avocado. Serve with lime wedges. Garnish with cilantro and/or salsa, if desired.

# SUMMER OFFERINGS

## Classes

**Gentle Yoga for Cancer Care** - Tues 10-11am (zoom) - contact [riki-ann.thomford@hcmcd.org](mailto:riki-ann.thomford@hcmcd.org) for more info

**Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)** - Sat mornings 6/15 (orientation) through 8/17 (skipping 6/22) from 8:30–11AM at Whittier Clinic and all-day retreat on Sun, 7/28. Email [mindfulness@hcmcd.org](mailto:mindfulness@hcmcd.org) if interested.

## Group Medical Visits

**Monthly Rest and Renewal Whole Person Connection** - 6/22 - 5:45-7:45pm (zoom)

**Ear Acupuncture Points for Pain, Stress, & Anxiety (drop in)** - Weekly, Tues 1:30-3:30pm (in-person, Whittier)

**Rest & Renewal Lifestyle** - 7/10-8/28 (skipping 7/31 and 8/21), Wed 10am-12pm (in-person, Whittier)

**Life Beyond Cancer, drop-in** - 7/11, Thurs 9-11am (hybrid in-person or zoom, Whittier)

**Blood Sugar Balance for Diabetes, Heart Disease, & Brain Health** - Eight weeks, 7/25-9/19, Thurs 10am-12pm (hybrid - in-person or zoom, Whittier)

**Healthy for Life** - Six weeks, 7/17-8/21 (in-person, Downtown CSC)

## Community Events

**Heals on Wheels** - community workshops on holistic strategies for chronic pain management, contact [catherine.justice@hcmcd.org](mailto:catherine.justice@hcmcd.org) for more info

**Mid-day Mindfulness Practice Breaks Practice Breaks** - Thursdays 12-12:30 (zoom) - contact [mindfulness@hcmcd.org](mailto:mindfulness@hcmcd.org) for details



## PROVIDER SPOTLIGHT

*Brooke Darst Rice, DPT*

**What is your specialty?** Integrative Physical Therapy and Pelvic Health Physical Therapy

**What do you love most about your job?** I am honored to have the opportunity to support people in the journey toward their goals. I work hard to stay knowledgeable about the variety of tools I have to make that journey as quick and fulfilling as possible, but much of the time I notice that I am joyful from learning and growing by sharing their experiences. It feels great to connect with people.

**What do you most enjoy about the summer?** At this time in my life, joy in summer is watching my teenagers explore their independence and going along for the ride when it's right. Winter vacations are my happy place, so summertime is helping to get my kids where they want to be when I can,

watching lots of soccer, and getting an extra half hour of sleep in the morning.

**What is a healthy pleasure of yours?** I love the 30 minutes I take each day to work up a sweat. I do something different every day, but that time is for me to get my wiggles out, feel strong, and enjoy my body. I am a much happier person after I exercise.

### A Green Thought

by Katharine Towers

*Say instead it was an evening in head-high  
bracken with its smell of dark and medicine.  
Thinking green of the infecting fern  
where you may crouch and not be known,  
lodging your feet for good amid the stalks.  
A bower is a dwelling place or once it was  
a cage for pent-up singing birds.  
Look down to see the warp and weft of root.  
All the world is in these clutches.  
Look up to clock the fern's drab underneath  
blotched with spores you mustn't breathe.  
Breathe in deep. There's nowhere else to  
live.*