



breathworks



# MINDFULNESS FOR STRESS

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## 2022 Evaluation Summary

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# ABOUT BREATHWORKS

Breathworks is a UK based charity, which has been providing and developing mindfulness courses since 2001. Courses have been shown to provide a wide range of physical and mental health benefits, and are now provided across 35 countries by more than 600 Breathworks trained and accredited teachers.

Courses are offered in a range of community and clinical settings; high training, accreditation and supervision standards ensure robust governance and evidence-based programme fidelity.

Our handbook 'Mindfulness for Health' was awarded first prize in the BMA Medical Book Awards (category clinical books for the general public), and is recommended by the UK Reading Well Books on Prescription Scheme.

# THE RESEARCH WE CONDUCT

We invite those who enrol onto our 8-week courses to participate in a series of online questionnaires:

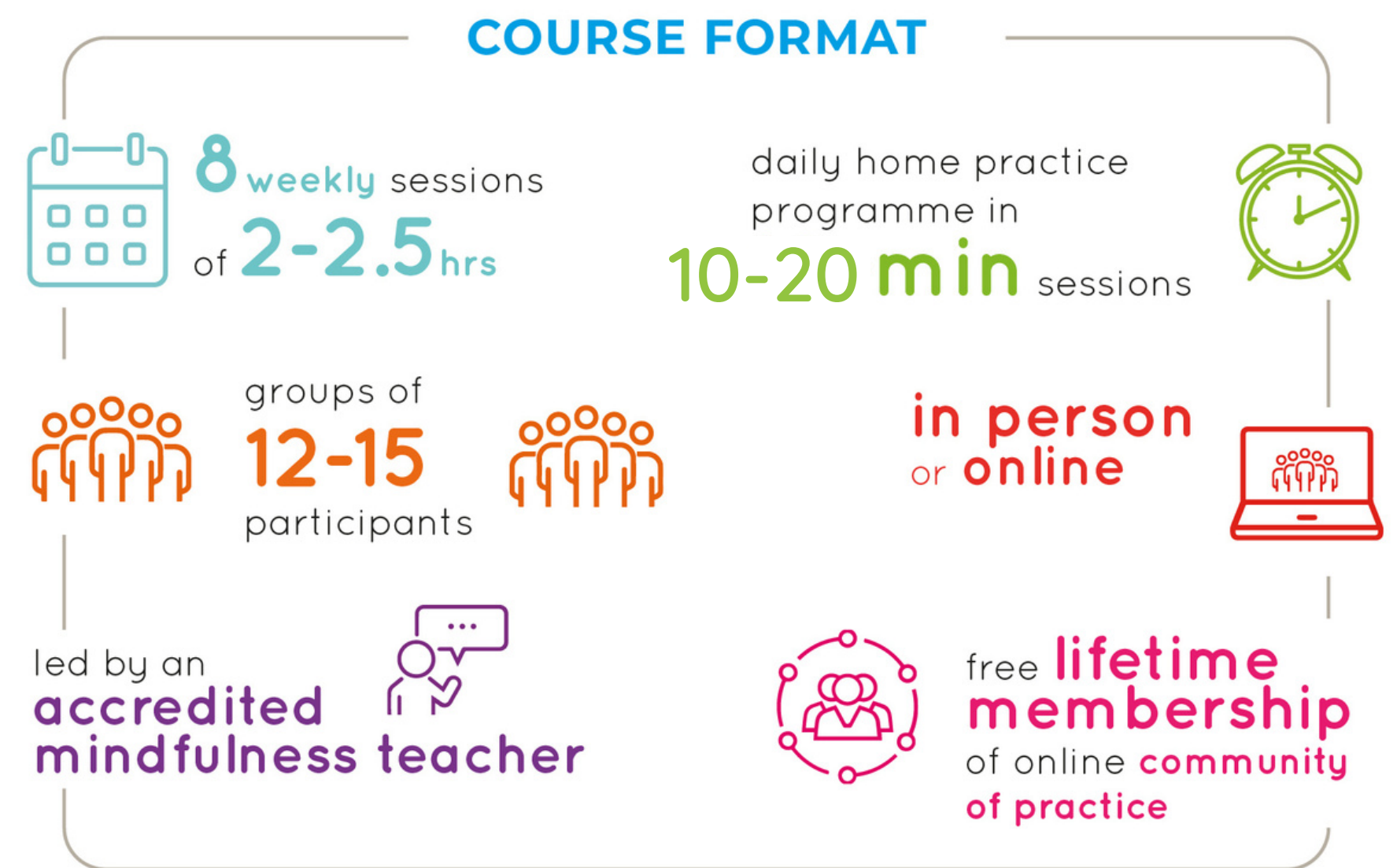
- Before the course begins (pre-course)
- Upon completion of the course (post-course)
- 3 & 12 months after completing the course

These questionnaires allow us to assess various areas of physical and emotional wellbeing over time, including anxiety, depression, quality of life, fatigue interference, social isolation, self-compassion and level of mindfulness. Further details about the research presented can be found on the final page of this document.

# OUR MINDFULNESS FOR STRESS COURSE

Mindfulness for Stress is a comprehensive 8-week mindfulness course providing meditations, daily life exercises and strategies, and a wide-ranging toolkit of skills and practices for ongoing use.

The course is a development of the well-known MBSR and MBCT curricula, with added emphases including practices to develop kindness, self-compassion and connection with others, shorter more accessible home practice formats, and teaching methods to accommodate different learning styles.





9.1

### AVERAGE RATING

out of 10 awarded to our Mindfulness for Stress course by 95 participants over the last 12 months

“

This course is a revelation. I have always read and heard about how mindfulness can be impactful but have never believed it. This course focused on explaining how mindfulness affects us and proceeded to pin-point exactly what the habits that are derailing my progress are and presented tools to tackle them.

I really loved that multi-faceted approach that can be applied to many situations in life. I leave the course feeling more confident, having a better understanding of what stresses me and how to tackle it, and feeling a sense of community and belonging knowing that I'm not alone.

- 2021 course participant

73%



reported increases in  
SELF-COMPASSION

68%



reported decreases  
in ISOLATION

67%



reported improved  
QUALITY OF LIFE

The data above represents individual pre- to post-course changes in sample of between 120 and 141 course participants

### WHY DO THESE RESULTS MATTER?

Self-compassion has been associated with improved physical and mental health, as well as engagement with health-promoting behaviours and danger avoidance (Phillips & Hine, 2021; Macbeth & Gumley, 2012).

In addition, research suggests that loneliness and isolation can be as detrimental to health as cigarette smoking (Holt-Lunstad, 2010).



“

The course and my continued mindfulness practice have noticeably helped me deal with a number of personal challenges over the past year.

Dealing with the pandemic, family ill health and also bereavement has been difficult at times but my practice has allowed me to be as kind and compassionate to myself as possible.

- April 2020 course participant reflecting on the impact of the course 12 months later

# OVERVIEW OF OUTCOMES: % CHANGE

between mean pre-course score & mean follow-up score

The graph below presents an overview of the data across all time points and measures. The three different coloured bars represent the groups of people who completed a post-course questionnaire (light blue), a 3-month questionnaire (pink) and a 12-month questionnaire (grey) for any given measure (horizontal axis).

Each bar shows the percentage difference between two scores; the average score for the group at the given time-point (indicated by the colour) and the average score for the same group in their pre-course questionnaire. I.e. how did the average score for these people change over time?

All improvements were statistically significant (meaning there was more than a 95% probability the changes were due to the effects of the course and not chance) with the exception of pre-to-post changes for fatigue interference and pre-to-12 month changes in social isolation.

## EXAMPLE

If we look at the quality of life measure, we can see that the grey bar reads at about 38%. This means that the average quality of life score for those completing this measure at the 12-month mark, was 38% higher than the average score for this same group of people before the course began.

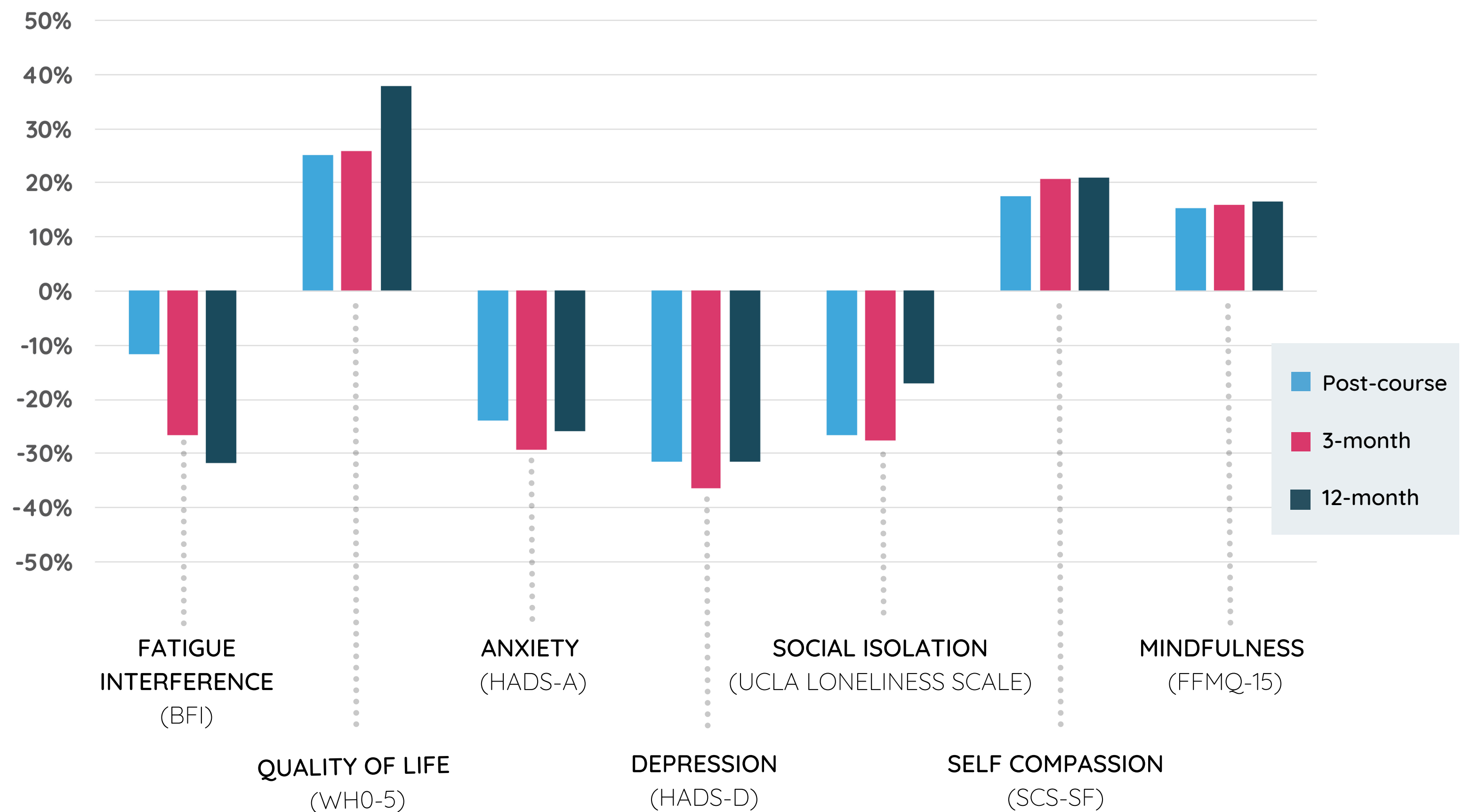
## SUMMARY MESSAGE

Improvements across all measures were found following participation in our Mindfulness for Stress course.

These improvements were evident both immediately following the course, as well as 3- and 12-months later.

## SCALES USED

The scientifically validated scales used to assess each measure is given in brackets. For more information, please see the final page of this document.



# CLINICAL CHANGES IN MENTAL HEALTH

## Movement between clinical boundaries upon course completion

### SUMMARY MESSAGE

The vast majority of people presenting with anxiety or depression experienced a clinically meaningful reduction in symptoms

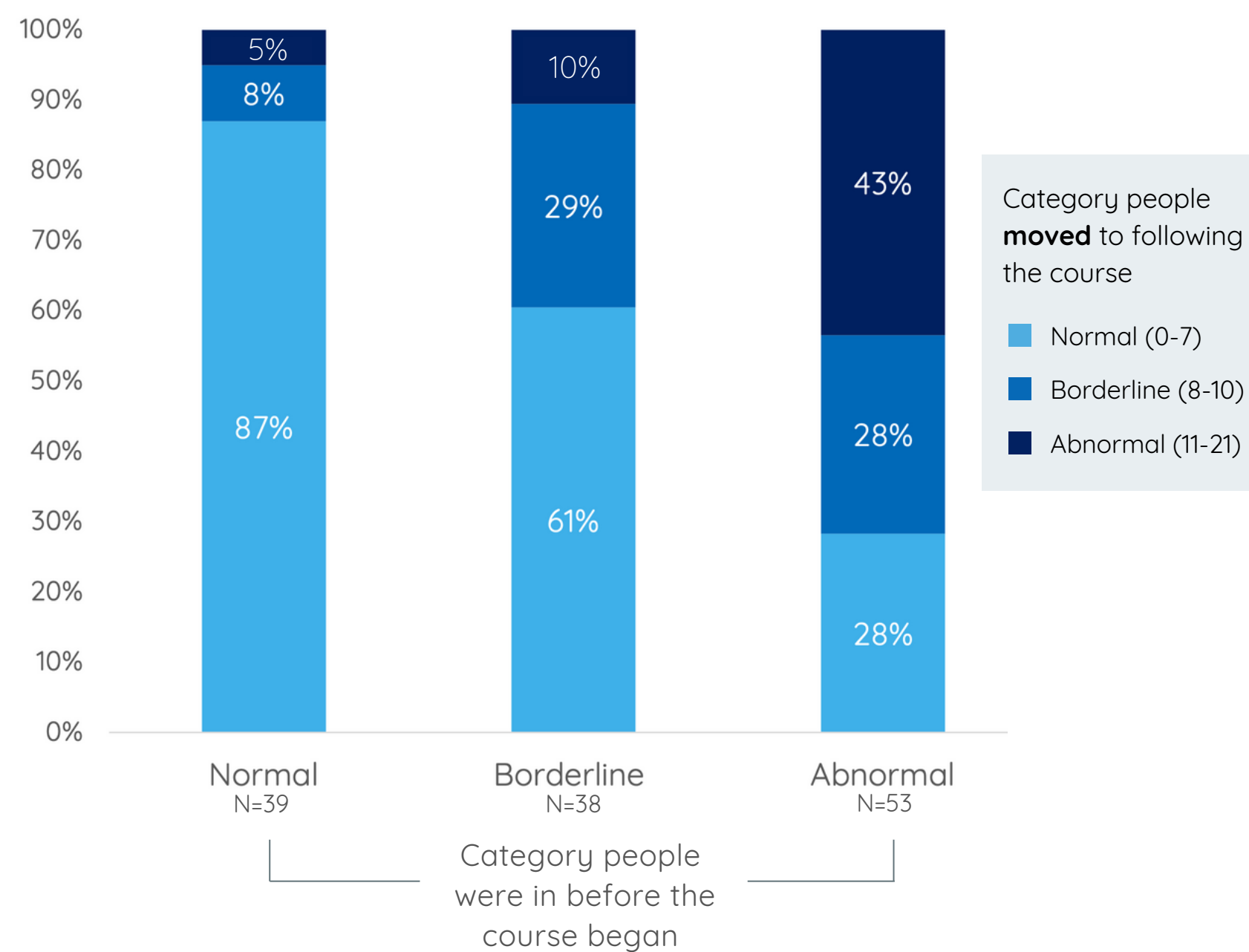
A person's scores on the Hospital Anxiety & Depression Scale (HADS) can be used to indicate whether they are experiencing normal (scores of 0-7), borderline (8-10) or abnormal levels (11-21) of anxiety and depression.

Each graph below presents three groups of people; those who began the course with normal, borderline and abnormal scores for anxiety and depression. Each bar shows the percentage of people in this group who finished the course in a given category (see key).

Example: If we look at the graph for depression, the bar furthest on the right-hand side shows that before the course, 22 people had "abnormal" scores for depression. The colours in the bar show that 50% of these people ended the course with a "normal" score, and 18% ended with a "borderline" score. 32% of these people remained in the "abnormal" score range.

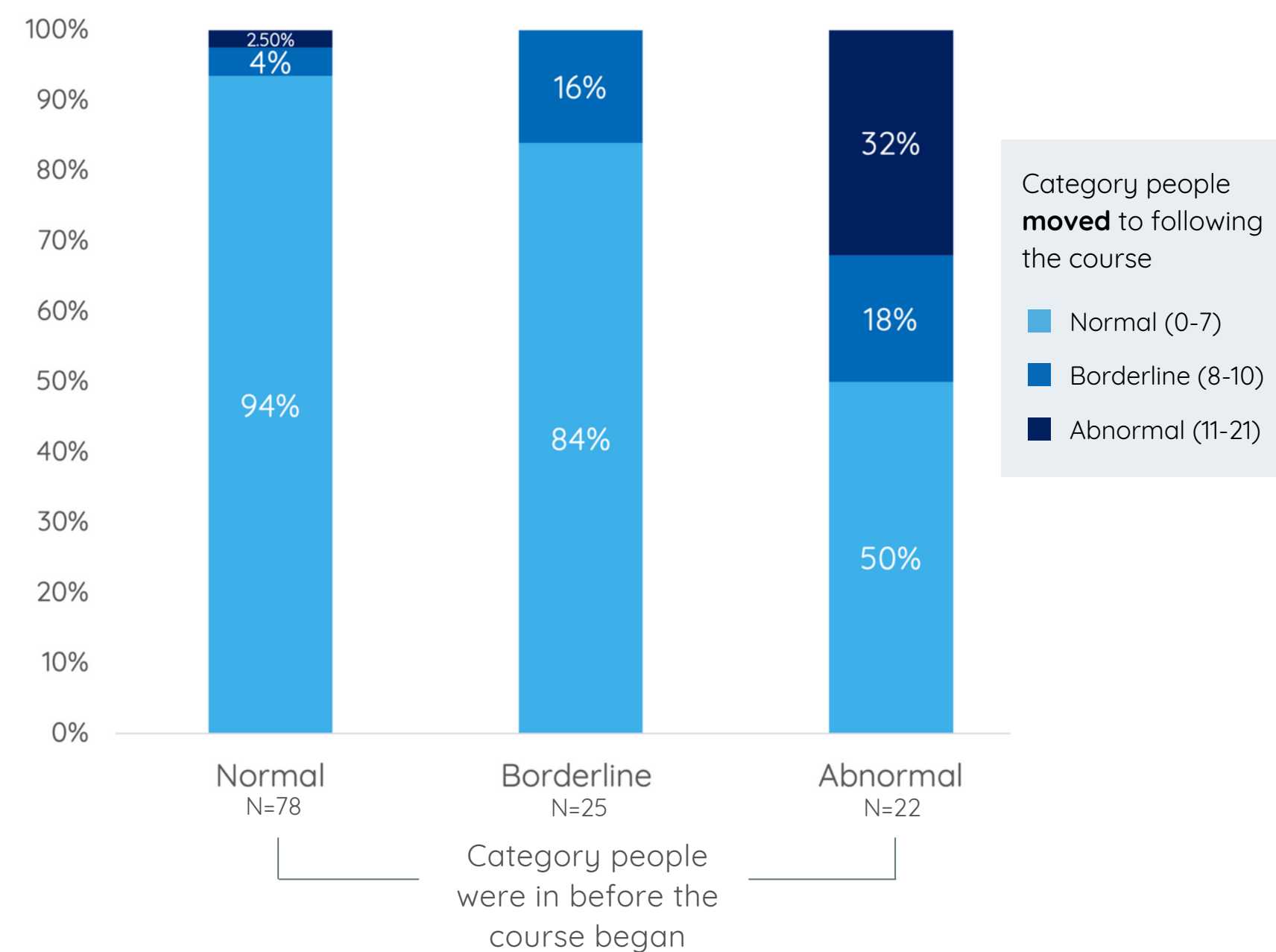
### CHANGES IN ANXIETY

Total N=130



### CHANGES IN DEPRESSION

Total N=125



79%

of people with symptoms of anxiety at baseline reported a reduction in their score following the course.

“

I had no idea how transformational this course would be! The shift in mindset is profound. The skills to take back ownership of your thoughts and reframe your negative patterns is absolutely life changing. Thank you for sharing these teachings in such a manageable week to week structure. This really gives time for the practices and material to become embodied and truly experienced in everyday life. Imagine if these beautiful skills were taught to our children in school before they became stressed out adults.

- 2021 course participant

87%

of people with symptoms of depression at baseline reported a reduction in their score following the course.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The statistical data reported in this document was collected from courses with start dates between October 2017 and May 2021. Course feedback and testimonials includes data collected up to April 2022.

In addition to a pre-course questionnaire, 141, 86, and 35 people responded to a post, 3-month, and 12-month questionnaire respectively (with slight variations between measures due to incomplete completion rates etc).

A variety of wellbeing measures were assessed using scientifically validated research scales:

- Fatigue interference (Brief Fatigue Inventory)
- Quality of life (WHO-5 Wellbeing Index)
- Anxiety & depression (Hospital Anxiety & Depression Scale)
- Social isolation (UCLA Loneliness Scale)
- Self-compassion (Self-compassion Scale)
- Mindfulness (Five-Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire - 15)

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## REFERENCES

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Macbeth, A. & Gumley, A. (2012). Exploring compassion: A meta-analysis of the association between self-compassion and psychopathology. *Clinical Psychology Review*, 32(6)

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## CONTACT US

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If you're interested in partnering with Breathworks, please contact Colin Duff at [colin.duff@breathworks.co.uk](mailto:colin.duff@breathworks.co.uk).

For more information about our Mindfulness for Health course, please visit our website:

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or contact our friendly team

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