

# Florida Maternal, Infant, & Early Childhood Home Visiting Initiative Evaluation

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## **Qualitative Report: Perceptions of the *Mindful Caring Pro* course among Florida MIECHV Home Visiting Staff**

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In Spring 2017, Florida home visiting staff were invited to participate in the *Mindful Caring Pro*(MCP) retreat and subsequent web-based series. The eight-week intervention was offered twice; initially in March (Cohort 1) and again in May (Cohort 2).



Participants voluntarily enrolled into the programs, which began with a retreat conducted to equip home visitors, administrators, and supervisors with the tools for stress management skills. Program activities were selected with an expectation that participants could apply these newfound strategies in both their personal and professional domains.

The qualitative data in the below report were obtained from the responses of those that completed at least one question from the surveys distributed by the University of South Florida Evaluation Team. Potential survey participants were invited via email to complete an online *Qualtrics* survey; responses were recorded, and later analyzed through the same software tool.

Of the 59 people invited to participate in the survey following the first MCP retreat (Cohort 1), 29 responses were gathered. Sixty-one people were invited to the Cohort 2 follow-up survey and 21 responses were collected from this group. Respectively, 43% and 50% of respondents in Cohort 1 and 2 surveys participated in the MCP series.

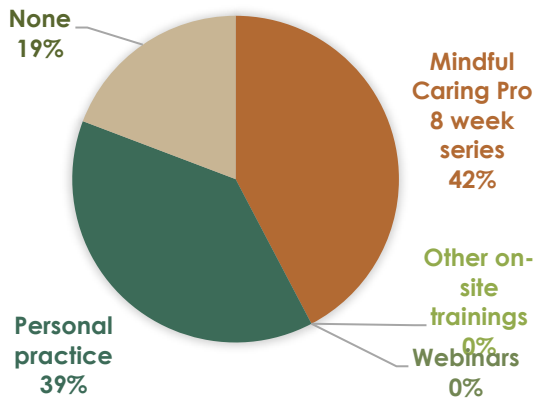
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### **What mindfulness activities have you participated in within the last 4 months)?**

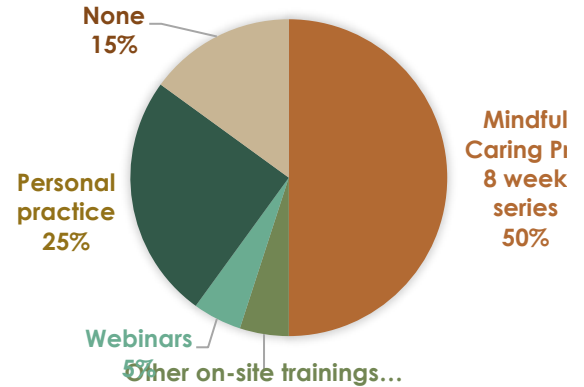
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While the majority (42%; 50%) of respondents indicated participating in the MCP series within the last four months , personal practice was also commonly chosen (39%; 25%) as another mindfulness activity.

**Cohort 1- Mindfulness Activities**



**Cohort 2- Mindfulness Activities**



## How has mindfulness practice positively impacted you and your work?

Below are the testimonies of several program participants; detailing how being mindful has impacted them or their work:

*It has helped me to slow down and listen to listen rather than listen to respond. To take a moment to be in the moment.*

*I feel more relaxed and confident that I can use it as I need it to alleviate stress and induce sleep.*

*I was already familiar with mindfulness practices and employ them several times a week, it has been helpful to reinforce/validate the positive practices.*

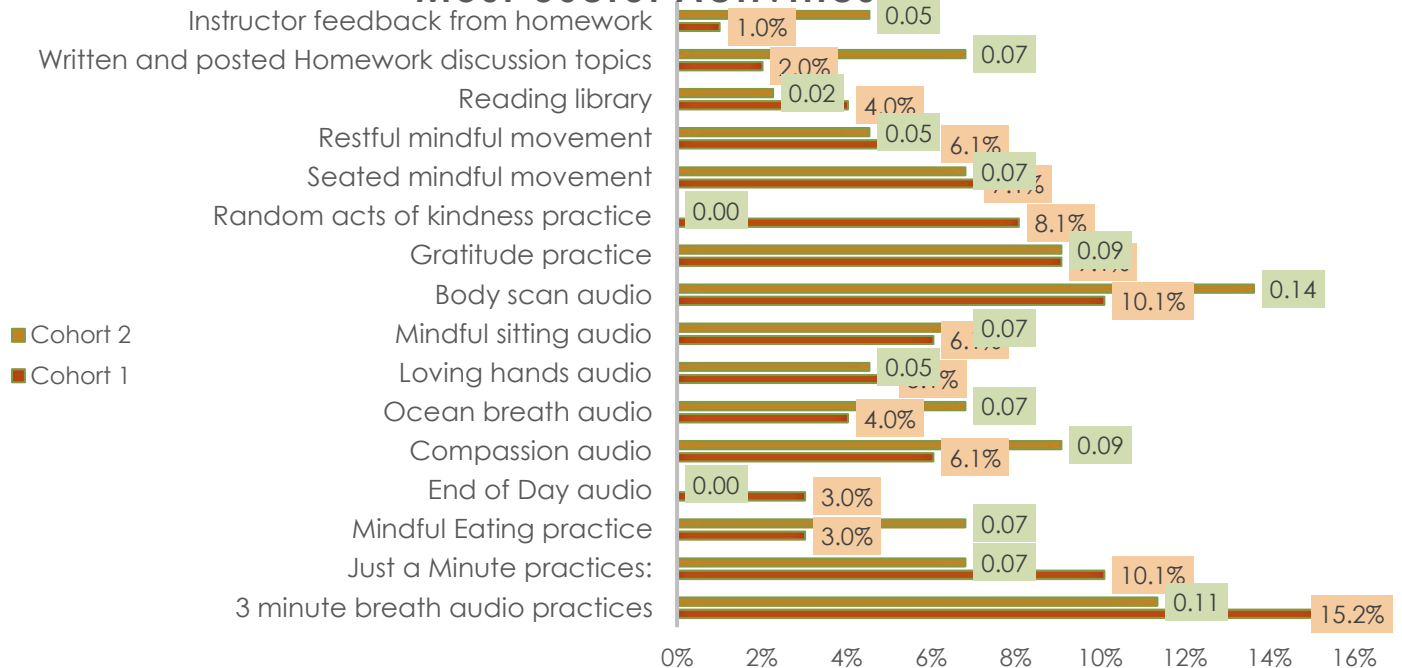
*I find myself less reactive, more curious, more reflective, listening more and speaking less.*

*Improved my work and private life by reducing stress and better handling stressful situations.*

## Which mindfulness activities/practices did you find most useful?

Participants in Cohort 1 found the '3-minute breath audio practices' (15%), 'Just a minute practices' (10%), 'body scan audio' (10%), and 'gratitude practice' (9%) to be the most useful among the practices described in the program. While Cohort 2 respondents perceived the 'body scan audio' (14%), '3-minute breath audio practices' (11%), 'compassion audio' (9%) and 'gratitude practice' (9%) in order as the most useful practices.

## Most Useful Activities



Among the least reported activities from Cohort 1 were the 'instructor feedback from homework' (1%) and 'written and posted homework discussion topics' (2%). Cohort 2 reported utilizing those two activities more often than Cohort 1 and listed 'random acts of kindness' (0%) and 'end of day audio' (0%) as the least useful activities.

## Which of the following *Just a Minute* techniques did you find most useful?

Participants were asked to rank *Just a Minute* techniques from 1 to 7, in order of most to least useful. In both Cohorts, 'waiting' was identified as the most useful technique. 44% of participants in Cohort 1 and 67% of respondents in Cohort 2 reported 'waiting' as their most useful strategy. The ranking of the other techniques differed based on the cohort, with Cohort 1 favoring 'morning meditation' over their Cohort 2 counterparts.

### Cohort 1 activity ranking:

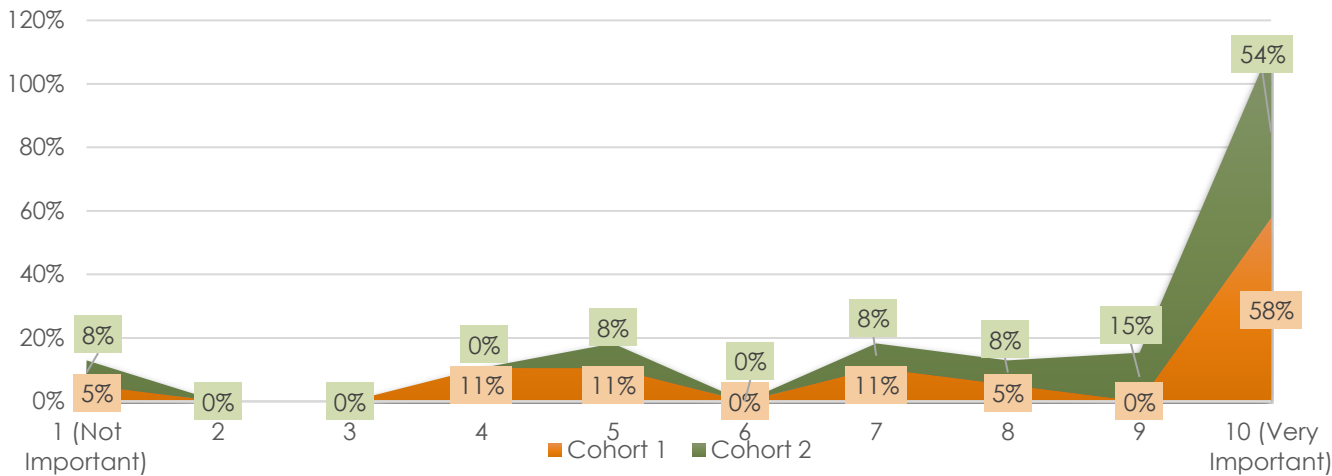


### Cohort 2 ranking:



**How important were the retreats in informing you about mindfulness & the MCP course?**

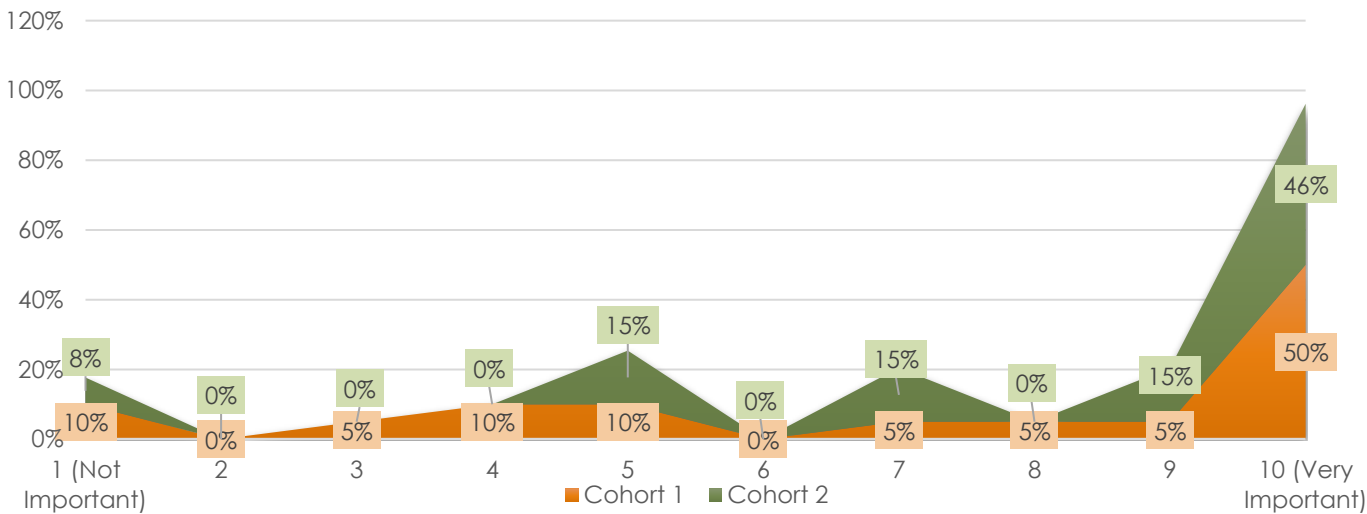
**Importance of retreat in informing about mindfulness**



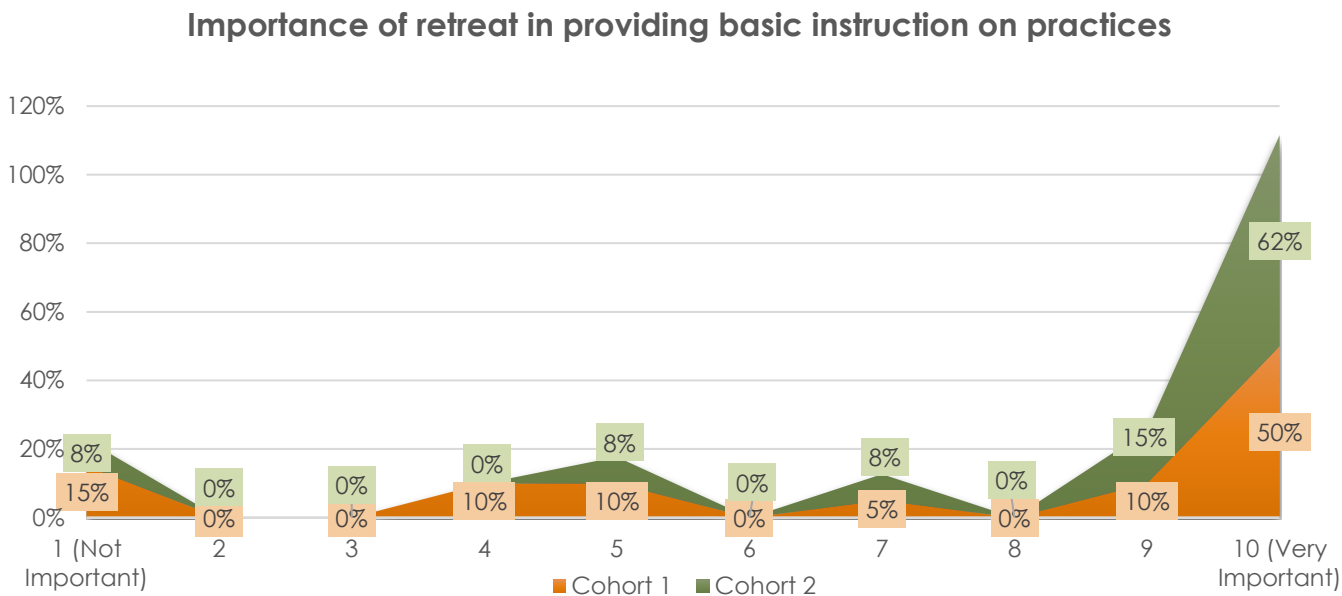
Overall, the majority (58%; 54%) of participants in both cohorts believed the retreats were 'very important' in informing them of mindfulness and the web-based series.

**How important were the retreats in creating greater connection with the instructors?**

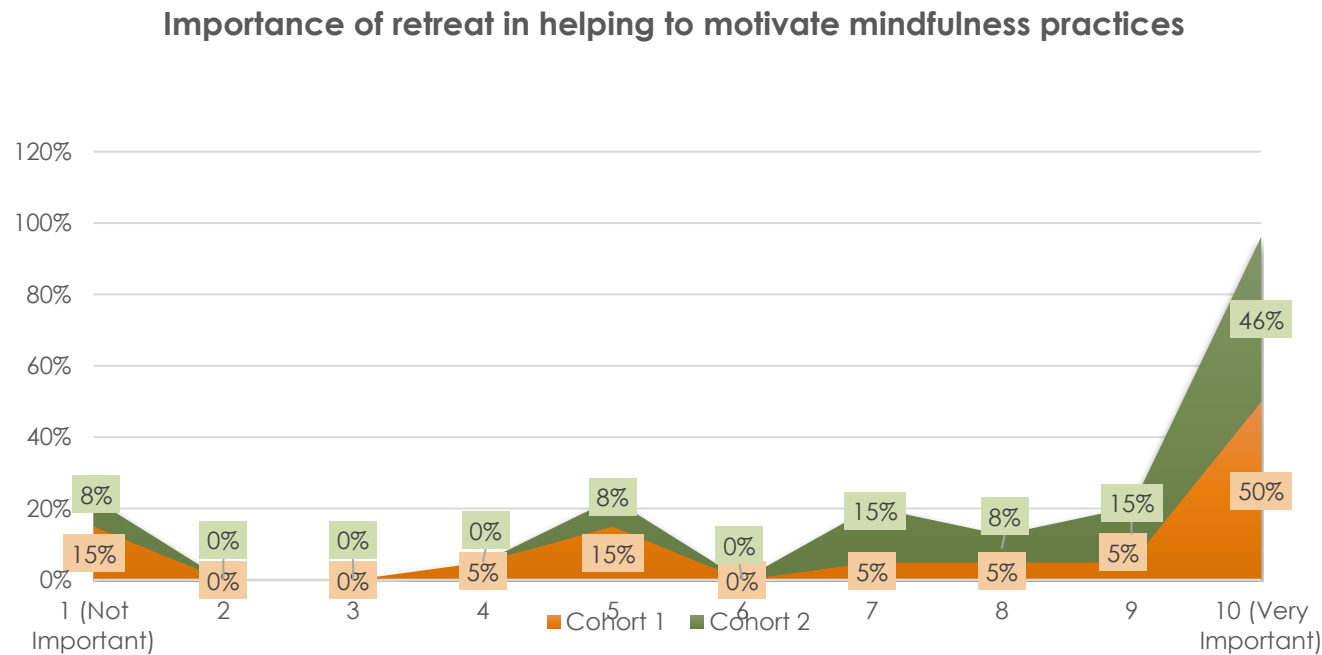
**Importance of retreat in creating greater connection with instructors**



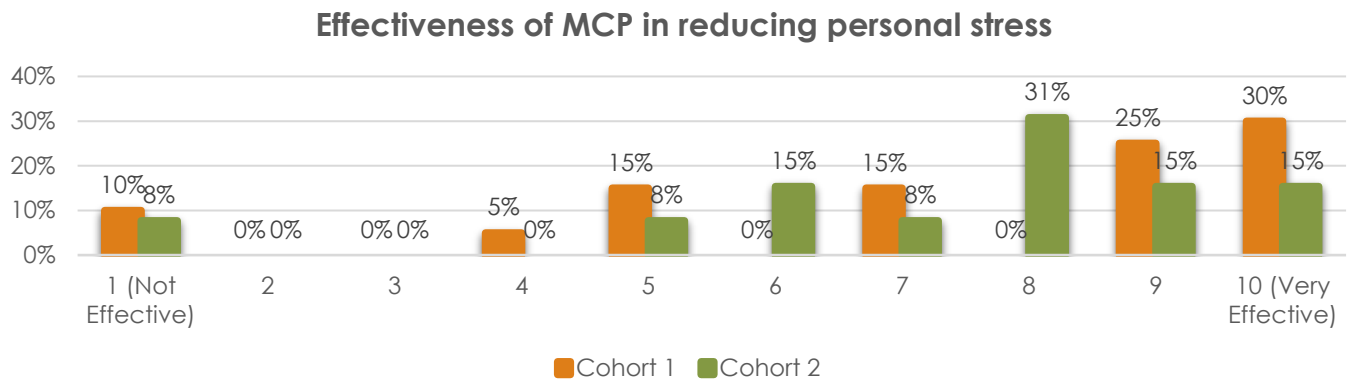
**How important were the retreats in providing basic instruction on the practices?**



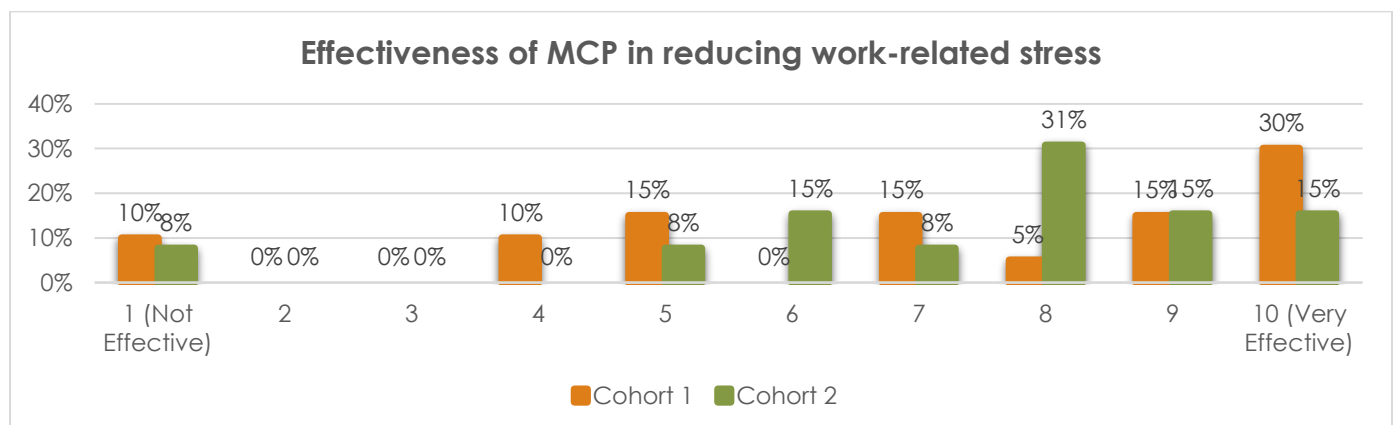
**How important were the retreats in helping to motivate and support your mindfulness practices?**



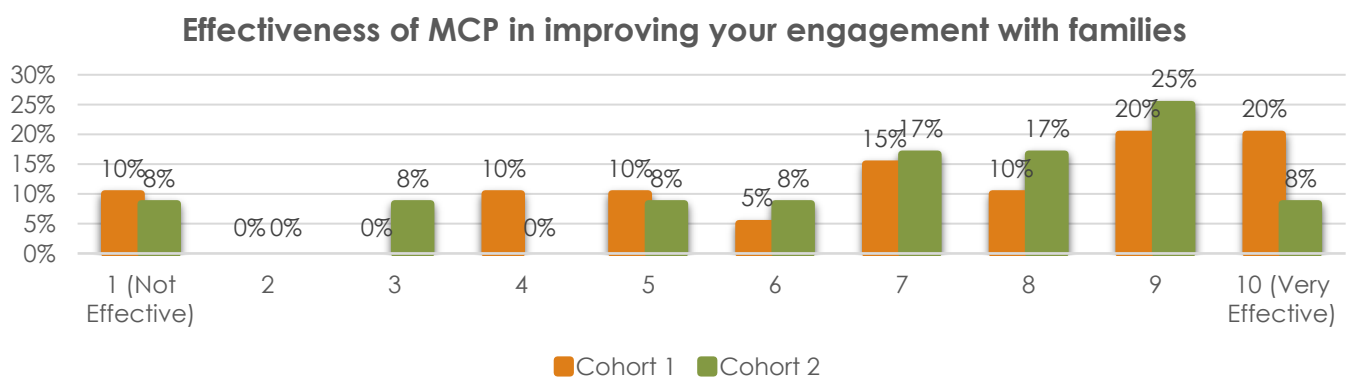
## How effective was the *Mindful Caring Pro* series in reducing personal stress?



## How effective was the *Mindful Caring Pro* series in reducing work-related stress?



## How effective was the *Mindful Caring Pro* series in improving your engagement with clients/families?



Participants in Cohort 1 were more likely (20% vs 8%) to report MCP as contributing to the improvement of their client engagement.

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## What did you like BEST about the *Mindful Caring Pro* series?

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- Having interaction with the instructors
- Experiencing the peaceful setting and connection Attending the retreats
- Learning new mindfulness activities
- Using personal practice activities to complete in the comfort of home



*"The audio mindfulness practices. Her voice is heaven, I loved listening to the audio practices they enhance relaxation."*

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*"Being guided or coached through it was nurturing and motivating to do it for myself. This is the only thing so far that actually helped me feel better. Talking about trauma and secondary trauma and recognizing it is valuable but it is intellectual and does nothing for the actual feeling part of it. Mindfulness addresses and helps with the experience and emotions of secondary trauma."*

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## Do you have recommendations for improving the *Mindful Caring Pro* series?

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While most participants reported 'loving' the experience of MCP, a few recommendations were noted:

- Receiving a certificate after completion
- Extending the retreat for a weekend
- Having the retreat more often at a closer proximity
- Creating a local practice community for further support
- Making it easier to log into the system and to access the website
- Finding ways to balance work/caseloads with MCP homework and activities

*"It is too much commitment for those carrying a full case load, and it would have been better to have day of learning, and retreat, then coming back in 3 to 4 weeks to discuss what worked and the challenges that were faced incorporating mindfulness practices into each day, with a refresher retreat."*

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