

breathworks



THE  
**BREATHWORKS  
FOUNDATION**

*Trustees' annual report and financial statements  
for the year ended 31 December 2024*

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Company number: 06890078

Charity number: 1131851



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The trustees are pleased to present their report and the unaudited financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2024. Included in this report is:

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# ABOUT

Breathworks has been teaching mindfulness-based approaches for managing pain, illness and stress since 2001. Founded by Vidyamala Burch OBE, Breathworks developed the first Mindfulness-based Pain Management (MBPM) programme. This has been supported by research and health organisations around the world. We are a UK-based charity who are committed to making programmes accessible and inclusive through funding and support for those with financial (or other) barriers.



## OUR IMPACT

- Taught more than **124,000** individuals
- Trained over **900** mindfulness teachers across **40 countries**.

## OBJECTIVES

- To provide mindfulness-based tools to reduce the suffering of living with pain, illness and stress..
- To advance the education of the public in mindfulness-based activities.
- To undertake research into mindfulness-based activities and to publish useful results.



Breathworks Founder,  
Vidyamala Burch OBE



*Looking Forward with Positivity*

## **Prasadu Dharmachari, Chair of Trustees**

It has been an extraordinary privilege to serve as Chair of Trustees for the Breathworks Foundation over the past decade, and to witness Breathworks grow from its local origins into the international organization it is today. It has rightfully earned a reputation for excellence in the field of mindfulness.

Like many charities, the past year has brought its share of challenges. However, our first class team of experienced Trustees, supported by our extraordinarily dedicated staff team, successfully navigated these to ensure the organization remains strong and in good health. We are now looking forward to a successful year ahead, with exciting new projects underway.

I will soon be stepping down from my position as Trustee, which I have held since 2014. I do so with the utmost confidence that Breathworks will continue to flourish as it enters its next phase of growth and development. The organization is well-positioned to reach an ever-increasing number of people who can benefit from its unique blend of help and support.

I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to my fellow Trustees for their generosity, creativity, and unwavering dedication. Thanks to their commitment, the organization can look to the future with optimism and hope as we continue our mission to reach more people who need support and training.

*Accessible, affordable and tangible*

## **Vidyamala Burch, Founder & Honorary President**



I am delighted to reflect on another successful year at Breathworks. In these challenging times, the need for what we offer is greater than ever. Many of the communities we serve—people living with pain, illness, and other difficulties around the world—are part of ageing populations and rely on health services severely under strain.

Our approaches are accessible, affordable, and deliver tangible, evidence-based results. We are committed to ensuring that finances are never a barrier, and I'm proud of the depth and reach of our bursary and scholarship schemes. None of this would be possible without our generous donors, to whom I extend my heartfelt thanks.

I would also like to thank our team for their creativity, commitment, and dedication. Sustaining an organisation like Breathworks for nearly 25 years is no small achievement. The passion of our core team, alongside our community of teachers, associates, and service users, continues to inspire me every day.

Everyone at Breathworks is dedicated to making the world a better place. Human goodness runs deeply through all that we offer, which I find deeply inspiring and humbling. I am often profoundly moved by the stories that are shared, as I hope you will be as you read this report. People regularly report that our approach is life-changing, and in some cases life-saving. Thank you to all who contribute to bringing about these positive benefits for individuals and the world.



*Growing our Accessibility and Reach*

## **Colin Duff, CEO**

I am honoured to have been appointed CEO of the Breathworks Foundation in May 2025. Having worked with the Breathworks project since 2008, I have seen mindfulness change lives across a huge diversity of situations and lifestyles, and am passionate about making the Breathworks approach available to all who will benefit from it.

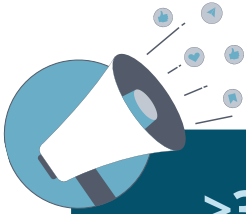
One of the pleasures of stepping into the CEO role has been seeing the steady stream of feedback from our events, which consistently show how mindful health management can change lives for the better. The courage and compassion demonstrated by those who find a new relationship with pain, illness and other challenges, can be humbling to witness.

The following pages give a brief glimpse into the work that we do. We are immensely grateful to everyone who has contributed to our successes over the past year, from our dedicated staff and trustees, to our skilful trainers and associates, to our compassionate community. We are especially thankful for the generosity of our funders and supporters, who make it possible for us to focus our work on reaching the people who will most benefit.

While we are proud of the life changing impacts described here, we are also aware that we are reaching only a small number of the people who could benefit, and are working hard to make our services more widely accessible. We would love to hear from anyone inspired by our work, whether to get involved or to contribute.

# 2024

## YEAR IN NUMBERS



>3.5K

people learnt how to **manage pain, stress and illness** through courses taught by Breathworks & our network of teachers.

312

teachers maintained their accreditation to **teach Breathworks programmes**, with 40 new teachers accredited in 2024.

67.5K

**GBP awarded in bursary funding** in 2024, helping 388 people with pain and financial difficulty .

2.2K

people **accessed our free resources**, including our Toolkit for Tough Times and Mindfulness for Long Covid.

47K+

views of our **free 'Space to Breathe'** weekly guided meditations for pain.

9416

people reached by a live Breathworks event

## INCOME GENERATION



£131.6K

raised through donations

£15.8K

awarded in grant funding

£310K

raised in earned income

# COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

The beating heart of Breathworks' is our online mindfulness hub and e-learning platform. The **Community of Practice** allows everyone to access mindfulness for free.

**8980**

members accessed free resources, & events.



worldwide members in over **86** different countries

**208**

patrons generated over...

**£14.1K**

in donations in 2024

**86**

hours

**of live events**, including community meditations on Christmas eve and Christmas day as a vital support to those who find the festive season challenging.

**Silence for Seven**



Helping Young Adults Discover Mindfulness

The Silence for Seven fundraising challenge was a sponsored silence to raise funds for bursary places for young adults. Community members committed to periods of verbal and digital silence for seven days.

**Our members raised enough for 10 bursary places.**



"After a couple of days, I relaxed into the experience and began to see silence as a friend. I felt I had more clarity of thought, like cleaning a whiteboard and starting over"

**Kevin** completed 84 hours of verbal, digital and analogue silence



"I found the whole experience amazing... It felt great to give back to Breathworks, as they have helped me so much. I will continue with all of these activities going forward, as I really felt the benefits"

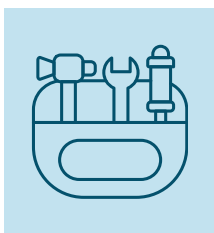
**Joanne** completed 560 minutes of silent meditation, absorbing nature and drawing

# COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE: IMPACT

Feedback tells us the three main ways the community helps members:



Build a regular meditation practice



Gain knowledge & tools to better manage health challenges



Feel less isolated & more like they belong

**86%**

would recommend to a friend

**78%**

said it helps them manage a health condition

**82%**

said it helped them maintain their practice

**72%**

said it helps them feel less alone



**Wendy**

Community member living with Hughes Syndrome, EDS and chronic pain

[On other social platforms], people with pain, sadly, can be very unkind in the way they speak. The Community of Practice is the opposite - all conversations are friendly & caring. People share how tough life can be living with pain, but there is always a light shining in hope, that things do pass.

A few words from a fellow member is worth more than anything in a day that feels like just survival. It's an incredible helpline that works so intuitively [especially for] people that can't afford therapists, or can't get help from other services easily or quickly.

# MINDFULNESS FOR HEALTH

Our award winning signature mindfulness for health course provides participants the tools and skills to live well with chronic pain and illness over 8 weeks. In 2024 we ran...

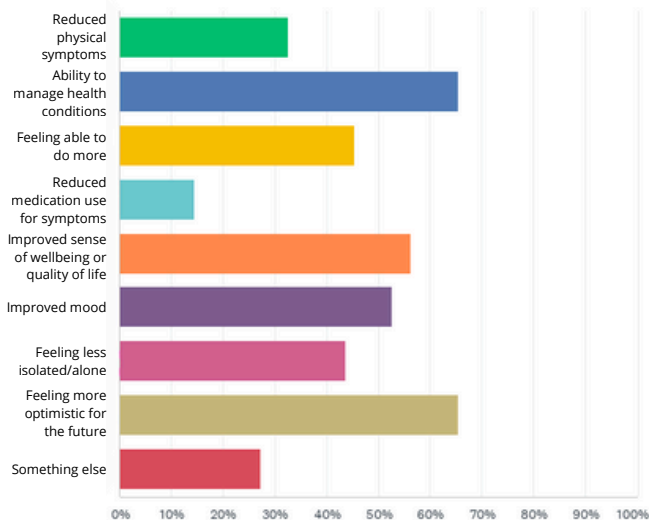
**12** public courses, reaching **154** participants

**97%** of participants said the course gave them something of lasting value

**4.8** out of 5 average rating by participants

**65%** feeling better able manage their health condition and feeling more optimistic or positive for the future

On completing the Mindfulness for Health course, participants reported:



# MINDFULNESS FOR STRESS

Our 8-week mindfulness for stress course teaches people how to increase their happiness and wellbeing, finding new sources of resilience, joy, and calm in their lives.

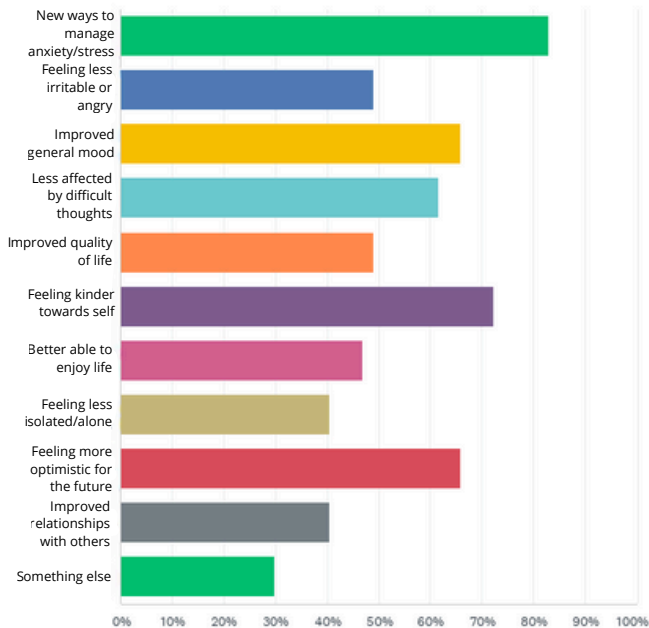
**11** public courses, reaching **171** participants

**97%** of participants said the course gave them something of lasting value

**4.8** out of 5 average rating by participants

**83%** reported having new ways to manage anxiety, stress or overwhelm

On completing the Mindfulness for Stress course, participants reported:



# BURSARIES: HEALTH AND STRESS COURSES

Our bursary funding is available to support people experiencing financial barriers to accessing our services. Our partial bursaries support people from marginalised or under-served groups, especially people whose health conditions are a barrier to work.

1/3

of places on our courses are bursary funded

43

Teacher Training students received bursary funding in 2024

36

Mindfulness for Health students received bursary funding in 2024

46

Mindfulness for Stress students received bursary funding in 2024

I suffer from a long-term health condition which causes me substantial levels of pain and discomfort on a daily basis. Mindfulness - and especially the Breathworks approach - has transformed the way I manage my condition, relieving much of my secondary suffering.

A generous bursary from Breathworks in 2024 has allowed me not only to take the Mindfulness for Health course to live with less pain and stress, but also to embark on the teacher training programme.



**Christophe**  
Mindfulness for Health  
Bursary recipient

"I had a difficult year health wise in 2023 with diagnosis of some rare cardiac and vascular compressions. A bursary place on the Mindfulness for Stress course in 2024 helped me to find a supportive meditation routine and a slower, kinder approach to life.

I've since been diagnosed with young onset Parkinson's disease also. What I learnt on the course helped me to manage and face the difficult diagnosis one step at a time while also having a young family. When I meditate all my PD symptoms recede into the background.



**Charlotte**  
Mindfulness for Stress  
Bursary recipient

# HEALS: WHOLE LIFE HEALTH

HEALS, newly launched to the public in autumn 2024, uses awareness training, habit methodology and principles from the growing field of lifestyle medicine to create sustainable changes to physical, emotional, and psychological wellbeing.

2 public courses, reaching

95 participants

4.5 average rating from participants



90% felt better able to manage pain or health conditions



87% felt better able to make positive changes to their health and wellbeing



82% felt more compassionate towards themselves



"The HEALS course was one of the most significant learning experiences I've had with respect to learning to thrive with chronic pain. Anyone who struggles with health issues or wants to improve their life experience would find this course invaluable."

"I'm a C5/6 tetraplegic wheelchair user. My Spinal Injuries Consultant suggested I look at Mindfulness and I very luckily found Breathworks. To anyone thinking about doing the course I would say "Please do this HEALS course you'll enjoy it and get lots from it. After a while you'll find out how much better you feel in the whole of your life"



# GRANT FUNDED PROGRAMMES

The '**Take Back Your Life**' program, funded by the UK Government Shared Prosperity Fund, in partnership with the Workers' Educational Association (WEA), **provided mindful pain and illness management courses for 32 residents of highly deprived areas in Salford and Trafford** who have been economically inactive and socially isolated due to health challenges.

This initiative was designed to **equip participants with a toolkit of self-management skills** to help them **overcome barriers to employment and community involvement**.

The project was underpinned by local community partnerships, and has led to a **repeat commission in 2025**.

Participants reported significant improvements in confidence:



engaging with people, including participating in groups



using new skills to manage health challenges and improve wellbeing



moving towards employment, training or volunteering.

For many, these were **hard-won changes** for those with very significant health challenges who have often been **economically inactive and socially isolated for long periods**. Many participants mentioned the **value of being in a group with "people like them"** who understand the challenges of living with pain and illness.

Participants securing employment and voluntary work included:



A domestic violence worker, signed off long-term with stress after work related trauma, now retraining as a counsellor.



A health professional, off long term with painful adenomyosis, reported that the skills learned on the course meant she could return to work



A participant out of work for 3 years with PTSD, put in his first job applications with support from our team

# WELLBEING IN THE WORKPLACE

Breathworks once more provided tailored programmes for the NHS and other public bodies that help improve and support staff mental wellbeing. Partnership projects delivered in 2024 included commissions from:



## Client: The Eastern Region Special Operations Unit

The Eastern Region Special Operations Unit (ERSOU) operates at the frontline of national security, requiring exceptional leadership in a high-stress environment. Breathworks' Mindful and Compassionate Leadership course for 10 management staff focused on stress resilience and compassionate leadership under pressure.

Participants reported outcomes including:

- Making more skilful decisions
- Better relationships with colleagues
- Increased confidence
- Improved leadership skills

“ *This course has given me the skills to be a better, aware and observant leader. I feel empowered to be better every day, and to bring my team along with me.* ”  
Tactical Firearms Commander

## Client: Calderdale + Huddersfield NHS

Breathworks Mindfulness for Resilience sessions in West Yorkshire hospitals were attended by clinicians, nurses, and administrative staff, to promote staff wellbeing. 100% of attendees reported gaining useful tools for managing stress, including taking skills home to support family members.

“ *I've realised I have more negative thoughts than I thought! I now know how to manage this.* ”

“ *I learnt that by acknowledging myself there is more time than I thought originally.* ”

“ *The session was so valuable to learn how to train your mind; it has given me hope on some recovery and self care in my thoughts.* ”

# MINDFULNESS TEACHER TRAINING

In 2024, we launched our **new modular teacher training programme**. This includes our newly developed **Facilitator Training**, a two module (43 hour) certification designed to enable people to lead short mindfulness sessions in their community or workplace. This opened up our successful Teacher Training programme to be **more accessible**, especially for those who don't want to complete the full 12-month training programme to provide full-length courses.



40 newly accredited teachers



36 certified Mindfulness Facilitators



43 bursaries awarded to trainees

The initial response to our new Facilitator Training was highly encouraging, with many courses selling out, bringing **75 new students to the Breathworks training pathways** in 2024. This included our new Going Deeper module, which can be taken as a standalone course with one-on-one mentorship.

The start of 2025 has seen continued growth, with an **88% Stage 1 booking rate** in Q1.

4.5 average rating for Stage 1 modules



91%

facilitators felt more confident sharing mindfulness



4.8 average rating for Stage 2 modules



4.6

average rating of the mentoring experience

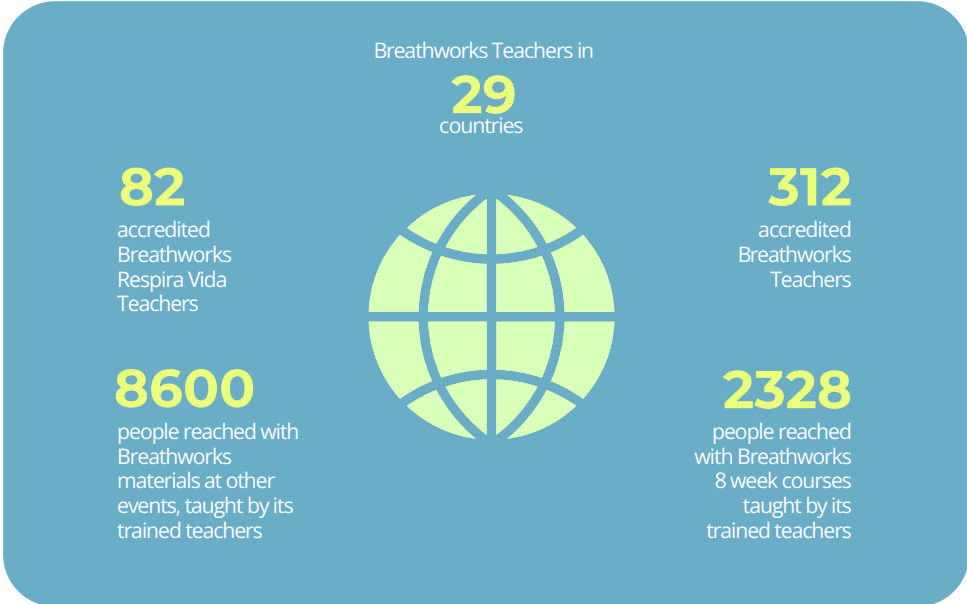


**Naomi**  
Training Bursary recipient

The Breathworks mindfulness course has been of incredible use in my work with survivors of sexual and domestic abuse and with people facing terminal illness. As the founder of a small and very grassroots non profit group, the Breathworks bursary enabled me to progress my training, so I can then offer a programme to those people we work with across North Devon.

# GLOBAL TEACHING COMMUNITY

Our community of accredited teachers across the world teach Breathworks materials in a wide range of contexts. Our annual survey showed that in 2024 there were:



We asked our teachers to share what was most impactful or rewarding experience in your teaching this year. They said:



## Witnessing transformation in students

Teachers repeatedly mentioned how rewarding it was to see participants develop in their practice, experience breakthroughs and to receive feedback that the course had been life-changing for students



## Building Connection and Community

Teachers found real value in building community. For some this was through hosting regular meditations and keeping in touch with students and for others this was through peer support with other teachers.



## Adapting Mindfulness to meet specific needs

Teachers mentioned getting fulfilment from adapting the 8-week course materials to support specific groups including people with cancer, PTSD, neurodiversity or in specific contexts like hospices, prisons or workplaces.

# Trustees' annual report for the period ended 31 December 2024

## Report Overview

The trustees are pleased to present their report and the unaudited financial statements for the year ended 2024.

The trustees review the aims, objectives and activities of the charity each year. The trustees have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the charity's aims and objectives and in planning its future activities. In particular, the trustees consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives that have been set.

The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the memorandum and articles of association and the Statement of Recommended Practice - Accounting and Reporting by Charities: SORP applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102.

## Reference and administrative information

Company Number 06890078

Charity Number 1131851

Registered office and operational address: 16-20 Turner Street, Manchester, M4 1DZ

## Trustees

Trustees, who are also directors under company law, who served during this year and up to the date of the report were as follows:

Dharmachari Prasadu

Gillian Parry

Menka Sanghvi

Ruth Cheesley

Dominic Houlder

Karim Rushdy

Robert Jones

Sally Jones (resigned 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024)

No trustee held title property belonging to the charity during the reporting period or at the date of approval.

**Key Management Personnel:** Nathan Jarvis, Chief Executive (in post till 15/04/2025)

**Bankers:** The Co-operative Bank, PO Box 250, Skelmersdale, WN8 6WT

**Independent examiner:** Kate Adderley CA, Third Sector Accountancy Limited, Holyoake House, Hanover Street, Manchester, M60 0AS