

## Depression treatment trial launch

**" My heart rate lowers, I can breathe again and my mind becomes clear so I can deal more effectively with the situation "**

Ruby Wax on Mindfulness

**Hundreds of volunteers are being urged to take part in trials for a treatment for depression known as Mindfulness.**

Comedian Ruby Wax says she benefited from the techniques, which is explained as a way to teach people to approach their problem in a different way.

She has visited Bangor to speak about it, and universities in the Gwynedd town and Oxford are joining forces to seek 150 volunteers from each area.

It is claimed the treatment could also help people with chronic pain.

"The way in which we react to stressful or emotional situations we face can cause further stress," said Rebecca Crane, director of training at Bangor University for Mindfulness Research and Practice.

"Mindfulness is effective in reducing this extra layer of difficulty and struggle," she added.

"The acceptance of pain reduces the struggle we experience around the pain and so reduces the stress.

"This can often have the effect of reducing the actual experience of pain," she added.

Professor Mark Williams from the University of Oxford (and formerly Bangor University) said people suffering from depression could learn skills to stay well.

### **Early signs**

"Sir Winston Churchill famously described it as his 'black dog'", he said.

"People who have had one major attack of depression are more likely to experience further episodes.

"Our research, however has shown that they can learn skills to stay well," he added.

Key to this was recognising the warning signs early enough, and then be able to stand back and not be sucked in by negative feelings, he said.

"It takes some effort to learn how best to do this, but it can be done," he added.

Ruby Wax said of her experience: "Under stress the only way I can reduce my anxiety, both physically and mentally, is by practising Mindfulness.

"My heart rate lowers, I can breathe again and my mind becomes clear so I can deal more effectively with the situation," she added.

**Anyone interested in taking part in the trial is invited to contact either Bangor University or the University of Oxford.**

Story from BBC NEWS:

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/1/hi/wales/north\\_west/7710606.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/1/hi/wales/north_west/7710606.stm)

Published: 2008/11/06 07:13:42 GMT

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