Healthy minds, healthy communities

10 years of promoting mental health and wellbeing all around the UK

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The Mindapples story

Mindapples helps everyone take care of their minds

We do this by equipping people with the awareness and understanding they need to take care of their minds, and helping organisations build cultures and movements to promote mentally healthy living.

We all have mental health, and what we do each day affects it. Just like **brushing our teeth**, watching our diet or getting our 5-a-day, we help people find the **simple daily activities** that help them stay happy and healthy.

A social mission

We began as a grassroots campaign, online, at festivals and in workplaces, to promote simple actions for mental wellbeing, and we have grown into one of the UK's leading organisations for public mental health.

Since 2008, our non-profit organisation – now a charity – has worked with partners in education, healthcare and the third sector to promote better mental health for everyone. Highlight projects include:

- Training student nurses at London South Bank University to support patients, and each other.
- Equipping mental health service users via Comic Relief with tools to manage their mental health.
- Supporting young volunteers through vinspired to promote mental health to thousands of people.
- Helping clinicians in Kings Health Partners and youth workers in London Youth promote wellbeing.

Read more about our projects and partners here, and online at www.mindapples.org/about/projects.



The case for mental health

A growing problem

The World Health Organisation defines mental health as a state in which individuals can **realise their potential**, cope with stress, work productively and innovatively, and contribute to their communities.

Despite growing attention on mental health in the media and political debate, mental health problems are on the rise. Depression alone accounts for 4.6% of the global burden of disease, yet annual global spending on mental health is less than US\$2 per person. When wider factors like addictions, obesity, unhealthy behaviours and domestic violence are also included, it's clear we need to do more to look after our minds.

A matter for everyone

Mental health is often seen as a matter for experts, something best left to doctors, therapists or specialist care. People may feel uneasy talking about difficulties, and reluctant to come forward with problems.

These reactive services are vital, but often come too late to help people stay well in the first place. We urgently need to do more to encourage a culture of open, stigma-free discussion of mental health. If we want people to talk about problems with their minds, first we need to get them talking about their minds.

Proactive, not reactive

Mindapples takes a **proactive**, **inclusive approach**, in which everyone can participate in a conversation about what their minds need. By sharing knowledge and starting conversations early, before problems arise, we can help reduce demand on health services by helping people **play an active role** in their own mental health.

By asking people what they do that is good for their minds, and encouraging discussion and personalised ways to wellbeing, we promote personal responsibility and **individual autonomy** that builds healthy minds, and **healthy communities**, and give everyone the opportunity to help **promote good mental health**.

Non-prescriptive models work best

Despite growing evidence that our daily actions can promote mental wellbeing, academic opinion varies on what people should do to maintain their mental health. Basic elements like sleep, diet, water and exercise are important, but so too are daily breathers and restorers to help stay calm, positive and mentally rested.

Research by Sarah Pressman and colleagues² suggests that whatever we do for our minds will be more effective if **we have chosen it, and we enjoy it**. They found people who do regular enjoyable activities tend to be happier, suffer less depression and stress, have lower blood pressure and enjoy better physical health. Scientific research can give us options, but each of us needs to **find our own ways to wellbeing**.

¹ World Health Organisation (2013). Mental Health Action Plan 2013-2020.

² Pressman, S. D., Matthews, K. A., Cohen, S., Martire, L. M., Scheier, M., Baum, A. & Schulz, R. (2009) Association of Enjoyable Leisure Activities with Psychological and Physical Well-Being. *Psychosomatic Medicine*, 71, 725-732.

How it works

Mindapples uses psychological insights to encourage discussion and reflection

Mindapples **encourages mentally healthy living** by helping people make sense of how their minds work. We use **peer-reviewed research** from cognitive science and health psychology to prompt discussion of health and behaviours, and work with people to help them **personalise these insights** to their situations.

This **non-prescriptive**, **person-centred approach** means everyone can play a role in promoting good mental health. Our focus on scientific evidence and practical experience **works across cultures** and in a wide range of contexts, and our campaign experience means we can support both individual and societal goals.

A bitesize approach

Our programmes are delivered face-to-face in bitesize workshops and half-day seminars, and digitally via webinars, telepresence discussions and e-learning. We also train people to act as wellbeing champions, and supply toolkits, books, learning materials and co-branded tools to help organisations promote wellbeing.

This bitesize, group-based approach allows for more learning time with less contact time, meaning **lower** costs and greater impact. Rather than setting prescriptive solutions, we can work with people to identify personal goals and embed new habits, without the need for intensive one-to-one interventions.

Training for better health, work and relationships

Mindapples divides content into bitesize slices covering key aspects of modern life. Content can be delivered as **standalone sessions and in combinations**. Here is a brief selection of our most popular topics:

Mental health and resilience		Life and work		Relationships	
Feed your	Master	Get	Work	Know	A mind for leadership
mind	your moods	motivated	smarter	yourself	
Be happy	Keep calm	Make good decisions	Think creatively	Help people	Work together
Handle	Be	Train your	Change	Influence	Get your
pressure	resilient	mind	your habits	people	way

Our education and healthcare programmes, and charitable projects, make use of the core materials on mental health, resilience, relationships and employability skills. The full range of topics is available to the public via our workplace wellbeing programmes, public events, books and digital services. (More information on our workplace training and e-learning is available separately on request and at www.mindapples.org/business.)

A train-the-trainer model

We want to reach millions of people with positive messages about looking after our minds, and we can't do it alone. That's why we developed the Mindapples Champions initiative: a train-the-trainer programme to support other organisations and volunteers to promote mental health and wellbeing in their communities.

We teach participants the core materials of the Mindapples programmes, and then help them adapt and personalise these materials to suit the people they want to support. There is **no licence fee** or ongoing costs: trained "Mindapples Champions" are free to use the materials for **any non-commercial purpose they like**, including running programmes on behalf of other charities, schools, universities and healthcare bodies.



Outcomes and impact

We focus on scale as well as depth, reaching large numbers of people with our "5-a-day for your mind" campaign, then working in more detail with specific groups, and training champions to embed change.



Our programmes deliver a wide range of outcomes, from **employability skills** and improved motivation, to better self-management, emotional resilience and **mental wellbeing**.

We subjected our programmes to **rigorous independent scrutiny by the University of York**. In two separate studies, they found significant increases in knowledge of the mind, ability to cope with stress, and mental wellbeing.¹ These effects continued after the programmes had finished, indicating **sustained impact**.



¹ Webber, M., Murdock, A. & Scott, C. (2015). Evaluation of Mental Effectiveness Training Pilot. York, University of York.

Case study: youth work and healthcare

In 2015 and 2017, Mindapples undertook two projects to train professionals in the charitable and healthcare sectors to use our training to support the public. Funded by The Big Lottery and Guy's & St Thomas's Charity, we worked with London Youth to train youth workers, and Kings Health Partners to train health workers.

Pilot 1: promoting mental health in youth work

London Youth run a network of youth clubs across London, and work to raise the quality of youth work in the UK. They were aware of the importance of mental health and wellbeing promotion for their work, but as they were not specialists in this area, they wanted to partner with a specialist charity to deliver material that was evidence-based, highly engaging and could be adapted successfully to youth audiences.

Mindapples developed a **train-the-trainer programme** to teach youth workers the key principles of our wellbeing and resilience programmes and support them to use this material to help disadvantaged young people. By doing this, we hoped to increase the wellbeing and life chances of the young people and develop a model for **expanding our reach and impact** by training other to promote our core campaign messages.

Programme structure

The programme delivered was a **2-day course**, held off-site, which covered topics related to wellbeing as well as practical delivery, communication and presentation skills. The course was delivered to groups of roughly ten participants at a time, allowing plenty of discussion and dialogue.

Day One covered an introduction to mental health promotion, health psychology and the core Mindapples training content, covering mood management, wellbeing, stress management and motivation theory.

Day Two gave the participants time to adapt the materials to the needs of their patients and colleagues, and supported them to present the materials and engage people in inclusive conversations about mental health.

Participants who attended the course were given free ongoing usage rights to all the Mindapples materials covered in the course, including Powerpoint presentations, trainer notes and our guide to promoting mental health and wellbeing. We also laid the foundations for ongoing support for participants, including plans for a Mindapples champions community that can share best practice and ongoing peer support.

Outcomes

31 youth workers were trained, from a range of backgrounds and specialisms. They went on to reach 196 young people across London via workshops, activities and programmes based on Mindapples' materials.

They adapted the materials in a wide variety of ways, from simply using the presentation materials as visual aids to discussion, through to developing new materials, designing role-play scenarios, creating games with the young people, and putting up posters in common spaces to prompt discussion and reflection.

The programme has since been rolled out to a number of schools, to support pastoral care staff, form tutors and student wellbeing teams to promote mental health and wellbeing for young people.

Mindapples has also subsequently partnered with Young Minds to supply co-branded applecards to youth groups around the UK, supporting their volunteers to reach 5,000 young people every year with positive messages about mental health and wellbeing.

Participant feedback

Virtually all attendees found the content helped their young people, and also felt it helped them too.

- "All the young people that attended demonstrated quite a lot of interest, and a degree of self-awareness on the topic. It was very positive to seeing them slowly opening up."
- "What seemed to stick the most with my mentee was the idea of your '5 a day' and she was extremely motivated to find out what her 5 things were that she can do to feel better and to write them down."
- "The motivation training also contributed to our work on employability. It addressed a gap in understanding how to get them into the workplace as having motivation is a key factor for this."
- "Some young people have been victims of bullying so explaining the differences between moods and emotions helped them to be more aware of how they are feeling, and to think of others."
- "I like that it is grounded. I don't need to know too much to use it, not scared of it."
- "Most of the young people we work with have experienced 'mental health' issues personally or with families/friends. This training addressed a complex topic in a simple, approachable and practical way."

Pilot 2: healthcare

Guy's & St Thomas's Charity wanted to deliver mental health interventions to improve public health in Lambeth and Southwark. Healthcare specialists in Lambeth's **Public Health team**, Southwark's **Mental Wellbeing in the Workplace** team, and **King's Health Partners**, felt that the Mindapples training aligned with their 'Making every contact count' and 'Mind & Body' programmes.

The aim was to harness Mindapples' proven training content to create a **public health capacity-building programme** which could be rolled out across King's Health Partners and expanded into the wider population in a similar way to Mental Health First Aid, perhaps even as a **wellbeing promotion qualification**.

40 participants were recruited and trained, from a wide range of backgrounds and specialisms, including doctors, dentists, psychotherapists and physiotherapists. Participants were not divided by background and all were encouraged to share experiences, so that clinical and non-clinical staff were able to contribute equally.

Participant feedback

All participants expressed satisfaction with the training, and feedback was almost universally positive, with 39 out of 40 participants giving positive ratings to course content, quality of materials, learning outcomes and applicability to their work. 100% of participants said they would do things differently as a result of the course, and most were very clear as to what changes they would implement.

- "All areas were useful. The trainers are great, very interactive and really helpful. I really liked the different modules and giving participants space to fully participate with the session."
- "I found doing the presentations really helped to solidify how training can be useful in practice"
- "...excellent because it was presented as a continuous whole, one complementing the other."
- "I am more aware of stress consequences and will certainly look after my mind better. "
- "Great that we can get the resources virtual and manual. I will use them. I can generate ideas for the Mindapples Community and spread the word!"

Outcomes

The success of this pilot suggests this is a cost-effective and valuable model for delivering much-needed public health and wellbeing support to the general public via the healthcare system. This support can be delivered by clinical and non-clinical staff in the course of their normal duties, as well as in more formal health training and advisory settings, with minimal cost for service providers.

This project helped public health staff in Lambeth and Southwark spread messages about mental self-care and resilience. All 40 staff members said they would **use what they had learned** in their work with patients. An adapted programme is now being rolled out to public service teams in Southwark and other boroughs.

Case study: Young volunteers

Helping young people promote mental health in their communities

vInspired is a leading UK youth charity that provides 14-30 year olds with opportunities for volunteering and social action. In 2013, we partnered with them to deliver a co-ordinated volunteering campaign to support **100 young volunteers** to spread positive messages about mental health around the UK.

Making time for your mind

Mindapples delivered training to 100 young volunteers as part of the "Team V" campaign. We also supplied co-branded materials for all the volunteers, co-designed with the young people, so that all the teams had high quality materials for engaging the public and running their own Mindapples events. Team V volunteers asked the public "What's the 5-a-day for your mind?" and invited people to pledge one thing they will do to look after their mental wellbeing. Mind and Action for Happiness also supplied follow-up materials.





Impact

The "Making time for your mind" campaign was extremely popular with young people and the public. The initial training session was very well-received, with 100% of the young volunteers rating the session as useful, and one participant commenting: "I would love to work for mindapples. They sold the organisation so well and inspired me to begin working in my community with this."

vlnspired evaluated the project and reported that between them the 100 young volunteers had:

- run 68 mindapples events
- spoken to 3687 people about their minds
- collected 2942 applecards
- ...and recorded that 2271 people said they would do something more to look after their minds.

The project leader for vinspired commented "It was one of our strongest partnerships and Mindapples' expertise was essential in helping us to design an effective youth-led campaign."

Case study: Music festivals

Reaching young people with positive messages about mental health

In 2011, Mindapples was hired by the leading mental health charity, **Mind**, on behalf of the *Time to Change* campaign, to promote social contact between people with and without experiences of mental ill-health. The focus of the campaign was to deliver the Mindapples "5-a-day" engagement model at summer festivals across England and Wales and use it to start positive conversations about the health of our minds.

The campaign

The target was to reach 32,000 people with positive messages about mental health on a budget of £28,150.

We developed co-branded materials with *Time to Change* to ask festival attendees to share the "5-a-day" for their minds, and **promote conversations** between attendees and our volunteers, all of whom had lived experience of mental distress. Working with product designers and volunteers, we built **new Mindapples trees** and took them to six festivals: Larmer Tree, Secret Garden Party, Camp Bestival, Big Chill, Wilderness and the Thames Festival. We also ran tents and programmed content about wellbeing at some festivals.

Impact

Reach and impact were assessed by counting applecards and estimating conversations, and showed:

- 7,899 mindapple cards were completed across the six festivals
- Approximately 15,798 additional conversations happened at the trees
- Roughly 7,500 further primary contacts were made around the sites
- ◆ An estimated 32,197 social contacts were made in total across the six festivals
- We also achieved over 1,000 follow-up digital contacts at <u>www.mindapples.org</u>

The campaign beat its targets, achieving a **cost-per-contact of** <**£1** for positive mental health messages, making it the most successful element of Time to Change's social contact campaign that year.





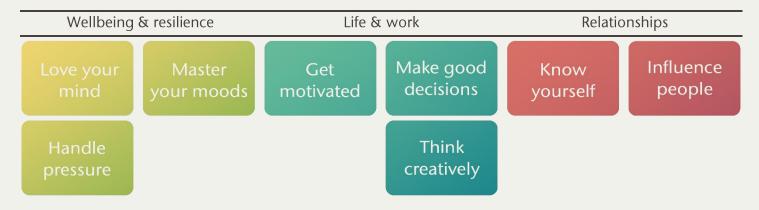
Case study: Universities

Wellbeing promotion and mental health education in universities

In 2014, Mindapples was funded by **Guy's & St Thomas' Charity** to train **nursing and social care students** at **London South Bank University**. The aim of the programme was to teach them about managing their minds and relating well to patients, to improve their own wellbeing and their skills as nurses and care staff.

Design

A waiting-list controlled trial design was used for the evaluation. 101 undergraduate nursing students were recruited from a London university and completed a baseline questionnaire, 57 in the intervention group and 44 in the waiting-list control group. The Mindapples training was delivered in 8 weekly sessions to the intervention group. The control group then received the training at the end of the study.



Results

Data on mental wellbeing, ability to self-manage stress and knowledge of the mind was gathered from both groups using **self-completed questionnaires** prior to the training, on completion, and **three months later**. Additionally, **two focus groups** were held to explore students' perceptions of the usefulness of the training.

Wellbeing and resilience

Students receiving the Mindapples training improved their ability to **self-manage stress** and increased their **knowledge of the mind** in contrast to the control group. These improvements were statistically significant and maintained at the three-month follow-up, and after differences between the intervention and control groups were considered. A statistically significant increase in **mental wellbeing** was also found for the intervention group post-training, though this difference did not persist at three-month follow-up.

Oualitative feedback

The focus groups revealed that the students had engaged with the Mindapples training and were prepared to make the **voluntary commitment** to come to the sessions, often overcoming several barriers to doing so. They also provided examples of how it had **benefitted both their academic work and clinical training**.

- "It's important to everyone the world would be such a better place, it should be compulsory"
- "Interactive they got us on board, explaining things to us, relating it to everyday life"
- "We are practising really practising!"

- "It was relaxed, interactive, we could be true and say what we thought and not feel we were being judged or assessed – and able to recognise self, know what you are"
- "You didn't get bored, they were gripping, it was interactive as well, asking our opinion, puzzles, mind games that kept you gripped short and sweet, just enough, fitted in with day ok"
- "It highlighted different aspects of how we think brought that to the surface, making us conscious of how we do things and why we do it that way and that there could be a better way of doing it"
- "I'm a better mother, wife and a better friend. This is something I'll take on for the rest of my life.

 Don't beat yourself up. Take time to enjoy, time to work. It's perfect for me. I'm a better person"
- "I'm more self-aware and can manage others better as you know how your personality is and how you deal with stress or any difficult situations so you would benefit your practice"
- "Dealing with patients, different people with different minds, see how their minds work and where they're coming from, and you understand them better, and learn that everyone isn't the same"
- "I think it's relevant to nursing. We don't as adult nurses touch on the mental health side of nursing so it gave us a little bit of an insight into psychology, the mind"
- "I feel now more motivated to do things earlier and not to leave them because I now acknowledge about resources and time being an important resource, to do things better"
- "I can use my own resources time management, learn how to plan starting things and finishing them this helped with essays, going to the library, having a plan. I manage my emotions better..."
- "We cannot avoid stress but we can deal with it. We can challenge it differently. And some of the techniques we've been taught, we're using them. Like recognising first symptoms of stress in yourself so you know when to relax and distract your thoughts from the stressful situation"
- "Mindapples helped me to take a step back, relax. That was when I got my highest grades"

Recommendations

This pilot study found that the Mindapples training programme had a moderate statistically significant effect on students' knowledge of their minds and their ability to self-manage stress. Given its effectiveness, it was recommended that the Mindapples training be used routinely in undergraduate nursing programmes.

The efficacy of the programme might be improved if it was delivered as part of the **core curriculum** of an undergraduate nursing programme, to encourage attendance. The study proposed that training should be scheduled in the **first year of undergraduate nursing programmes** to equip students with knowledge and skills in self-management of stress at the beginning of their professional careers.

Toolkits for student wellbeing groups

In addition to this formal programme, Mindapples also provides **event toolkits** and guidance for student wellbeing groups to promote positive mental health in their institutions. Working directly with student volunteers, we have supplied thousands of applecards for use at mental health days and Freshers' events.

Student groups typically use applecards to ask students what they do to look after their minds, and encourage people to talk more openly about their mental health. Some groups have also used the cards to gather insights from students about what they like doing to stay mentally well, and have then used that to inform their wellbeing programme for the year. More than **75 universities** are now using Mindapples toolkits in the UK and Ireland.



Case study: Mental health services

Equipping people with knowledge to manage their minds

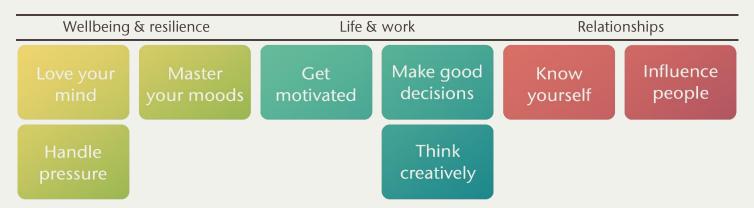
In 2014, Mindapples was funded by Comic Relief to run a controlled trial of our training programmes for users of mental health services. We partnered with the National User Survivor Network (NSUN) and the University of York to deliver our training programmes to users of UK mental health services.

Design

The study aimed to evaluate the feasibility of adapting and delivering the Mindapples training programme to people with experience of mental health service use; its effectiveness in improving mental wellbeing, ability to self-manage stress and knowledge of the mind; and their perspectives on its **usefulness for their lives**.

A waiting-list controlled trial design was used for the evaluation. 82 people with experience of mental health service use chose to take part in the study and completed a baseline questionnaire, 39 in the intervention group and 43 in the waiting-list control group, who received the training at the end of the study.

The Mindapples training was delivered in eight weekly sessions to the intervention group:



Results

Data on mental wellbeing (using WEMWBS), ability to self-manage stress and knowledge about the mind was gathered from both groups using **self-completed questionnaires** immediately prior to the training, on completion of the training and three months later. Additionally, **two focus groups** were held to explore participants' perceptions of the usefulness of the training three months after it finished.

Improvements in self-management

The main finding of this study is that the Mindapples training significantly improved participants' knowledge of the mind in comparison with the control group. This improvement was maintained three months later, suggesting that the learning was internalised and could be drawn upon in the future when required. Those who attended more sessions scored higher on knowledge measures, confirming the value of the sessions.

The training was also associated with improvements in the intervention group's **ability to cope with stress**. However, their ability to cope with stress was higher than the control group at baseline which influenced this improvement when examined in the longitudinal analysis, and may merit further investigation.

A trend towards an improvement in **wellbeing** for the intervention group may suggest that, given more time, a statistically significant improvement may emerge for this factor too.

Qualitative feedback

The participants were very positive about the Mindapples training and provided many practical examples of how it had **helped them in their lives**. They found the focus on mental health (rather than illness) refreshing and supportive of their recovery, were keen to share what they learnt and would recommend it to others.

Overall, participants found the whole course to have a positive impact on their understanding of their minds and many found it improved their mood and mental health management, feelings of positivity, confidence, self-esteem and self-concept, at least in the period immediately after the course.

- ullet "Coming regularly to the course helped with life difficulties over the period."
- "I understand it's important to love all aspects of yourself. Even your mind."
- "It's like recovery and being recovered."
- "The course has given me a different perspective."
- "It gives me more of an understanding of myself."
- "It's changed my attitude."
- "I can think I've got traits like that but I'm actually alright."
- "I started looking upwards instead of downwards."
- "It's helped in my day to day work, it's given me guidance... I feel I've made better decisions."
- "I've got a decreased sense of self-blame and less of a sense of 'being wrong'."
- "It helped to not react badly to other people's negativity. I felt overall more positive, thinking more positively helps wellbeing."
- "It's made me a better paranoid schizophrenic."
- "It's sparked me into wanting to learn more...kick started my wanting to learn stuff again"

Generally the training was felt to be empowering, and its practical nature effective. The majority of participants said they would recommend the course to peers, relatives and employers.

- "It was like a helping hand."
- "It's good because it's so practical."
- "Thanks for this opportunity. I am whole-heartedly recommending it to my service-user peers."
- "I have been able to implement the course into my life and would recommend it to everybody."
- "I recommended it to my council training officer."
- "I went through it with my kids...I think it should be taught in schools."

Recommendations

The findings from this pilot study support the view that the Mindapples training is safe to use and helpful.

The training could be most effective if used with people after their first experience of mental distress, or as part of public health preventive interventions. However, participants with a long history of service use did say the course was **different to anything they had done previously**, so it is recommended that future pilots of the training are fully evaluated to understand where this intervention fits into existing provision.

This study concluded that it is feasible to adapt and deliver the Mindapples training programme to people with experience of using mental health services. While some felt that the content was not appropriate for them, many welcomed its focus on mental health rather than illness and took away many learning points. The **high attendance** at the training provides good evidence that it readily engaged the participants.

It was also suggested by several participants that it would be best delivered by people with experience of mental illness, and it could be feasible to train programme participants to become trainers themselves.

Working with us

We're seeking partners in and outside the mental health sector to help take these valuable tools to the public.

Train your staff and volunteers

We can equip your staff and volunteers to use our materials in their own projects. Whether it's a one-off event to support key people in your organisation, or a larger programme to **build capacity in your workforce and volunteer teams**, we have the tools to help you promote mental wellbeing better.

Fund our programmes

We need generous individuals and organisations to fund new programmes. With your support, we can continue to train teams in schools, universities, healthcare, youth work and beyond to promote good mental health. There are thousands of organisations who need what we offer, so please help us to help them.

Support our growing community

We've trained nearly 200 people to use our champions training materials, and we have hundreds more who have purchased our campaign toolkits. We need to **support this community to take action**, so if you have experience co-ordinating volunteers and supporting activist networks, we'd love to work with you.

Grow your own mindapples

Anyone can use mindapples. From student wellbeing days to school events, hospitals to youth clubs, if you want to **promote mental health**, visit <u>www.mindapples.org/shop</u> and start growing your own mindapples.



Love your mind

Want to know more?

We'd love to hear from you. Contact us now to discuss how we can work together.

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