

Mindfulness in the Workplace: A Practical Application

Cathy J. Peters, MS RN PMHNP-BC

Susan M. Ciurzynski, PhD RN-BC PNP VCE

University of Rochester Medical Center/ School of Nursing

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Disclosure & Objectives

The speakers have no conflicts of interest to disclose.



Objectives:

1. Discuss the current science of mindfulness.
2. Demonstrate practical mindfulness techniques for use in a workplace or clinical setting.
3. Identify the mindfulness resources available to psychiatric-mental health professionals.

Background



“Care providers are unique people. We have the gift of being able to connect with others in ways that are difficult to explain and even more difficult to understand. Our unique ability to join with our clients (patients) that allows us a near first-hand experience of their inner world is perhaps our greatest gift; it is also our greatest challenge.”

LaRowe, 2012

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The Art & Science of Mindfulness

- Jon Kabat-Zinn: Since 1979...Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (M.B.S.R.)
- Mindfulness-based interventions improve mental and physical health
- We are wired & tired...performing like human *doings* instead of human *beings*

Mindfulness is about putting down our juggling balls even for a bit!



Kabat-Zinn, 1994a

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Definition of Terms

Meditation is to engage in mental exercise (such as concentration on one's breathing or repetition of a mantra) for the purpose of reaching a heightened level of spiritual awareness



Mindfulness is paying attention in a particular way; on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally

Definition of Terms

Self-Care

- any activity that we do deliberately to take care of our mental, emotional, and physical health
- something that refuels us, rather than takes from us

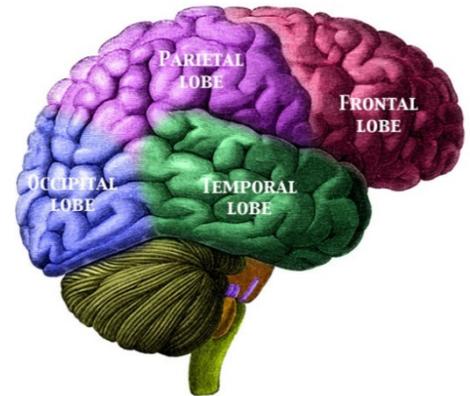


Resilience is the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties

Current Science & Benefits

Mindful practice can...

- calm the brain's jumpy "fight or flight" center, the amygdala:
 - lead to more efficient learning
 - help keep a cool head in the workplace
- boost the activity of the insula:
 - increases empathy / relationship building
- influence interactions with others, boost creativity, planning, & many other aspects of work



Epstein, 2003; Kabot-Zinn, 1994b; Kabot-Zinn, 2013; O'Morain, 2014

Current Science & Benefits *(continued)*

- Six reasons to be mindful...

1. Lowers stress
2. Better sleep
3. Pain relief
4. Less illness
5. Improve your diet
6. Mellow your kids



Practical Tips for Work Settings



- How to prepare for the day
- Focused attention during the day
- How to end the day



Connelly, 2005; Epstein, 2003; Krasner, 2004

Resources on Mindfulness

- Sample of resources (see handout)
 - On the web
 - Popular Smart phone Apps
 - Books
 - [also see reference list]



- Worksheet activity: Personal Wellness Plan
(see handout)

Mindfulness Resources

On the Web:

Free mindfulness: www.freemindfulness.org

Everyday mindfulness: www.everyday-mindfulness.org

Mindful: www.mindful.org

Wildmind: www.wildmind.org

ToDo Institute: www.todoinstitute.org

Breathworks: www.breathworks-mindfulness.org.uk

Mindfulness matters: www.mindfulnessmatters.ie

Mindfulness in schools: www.mindfulnessinschools.org

Padraig O'Morain: www.padraigomorain.com

Simple Mindfulness Exercises: <http://www.practicingmindfulness.com/16-simple-mindfulness-exercises/>

Advanced Mindfulness: <https://www.udemy.com/active-mindfulness>

40 Ways to Bring Mindfulness to Your Days: <http://leftbrainbuddha.com/40-ways-bring-mindfulness-days/>

Pocket Mindfulness: <https://www.pocketmindfulness.com/6-mindfulness-exercises-you-can-try-today/>

Popular Smartphone Apps:

Insight Timer: <https://insighttimer.com/>

The Mindfulness App: <http://themindfulnessapp.com/>

Headspace: <https://www.headspace.com>

Books:

Wherever you go, there you are: Mindfulness meditation for everyday life, Jon Kabat-Zinn

The happiness trap, Russ Harris

Mindfulness: A practical guide to finding peace in a frantic world, Mark Williams & Danny Penman

Sane new world: Taming the mind, Ruby Wax

Light mind: Mindfulness for daily living, Padraig O'Morain

How to train a wild elephant & other adventures in mindfulness, Jan Chozen Bays

Mindfulness for health: A practical guide to relieving pain, reducing stress, & restoring wellbeing, Vidyamala Burch & Danny Penman

[Also see our Reference list at the end of our slides]

50 Ways to Take a Break

- 1. Take a Bath
- 2. Listen to Music
- 3. Take a Nap
- 4. Go to a body of water
- 5. Watch the clouds
- 6. Light a candle
- 7. REST your legs up on a wall
- 8. Let out a sigh
- 9. Fly a Kite
- 10. Watch the stars
- 11. Write a Letter
- 12. Learn something NEW
- 13. Listen to a guided relaxation
- 14. Read a Book
- 15. sit in NATURE
- 16. Move twice as slowly
- 17. Take Deep Belly Breaths
- 18. MEDITATE
- 19. Call a friend
- 20. Meander around Town
- 21. WRITE in a journal
- 22. Notice your Body
- 23. Buy some Flowers
- 24. Find a relaxing Scent
- 25. WALK Outside
- 26. Go for a run
- 27. Take a bike ride
- 28. Create your own coffee break
- 29. View some ART
- 30. Eat a meal in SILENCE
- 31. Turn off all electronics
- 32. Go to a Park
- 33. pet a furry creature
- 34. Examine an everyday object with Fresh Eyes
- 35. Drive somewhere NEW
- 36. Go to a Farmer's Market
- 37. read or watch something FUNNY
- 38. COLOR with Crayons
- 39. Make some MUSIC
- 40. Climb a Tree
- 41. Let go of something
- 42. Engage in small acts of KINDNESS
- 43. Do some gentle stretches
- 44. Paint on a surface other than paper
- 45. Write a quick poem
- 46. Read poetry
- 47. Put on some music and DANCE
- 48. Give Thanks
- 49. Forgive Someone
- 50. Forgive Someone

Horneffer-Ginter, nd; used with permission

Goal: Better manage stress

Activities:

- Notice my personal signs of stress (headache, tight shoulders, etc.) & respond to the warnings
- Take 3 deep breaths before a stressful event, such as a meeting or presentation
- Each day, rate my level of stress from 0 (no stress) to 10 (high stress) & watch for patterns
- Use relaxation techniques, such as meditation, deep breathing or massage, regularly
- Make a point to laugh each day
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Goal: Think and act more positively

Activities:

- Create a positive & motivational phrase I can say to myself each day
- Write a positive note to myself or send one to someone else
- Express kindness to others
- Express my gratitude each morning
- Look for deeper meaning & purpose in life
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Goal: Nurture my spirituality

Activities:

- Identify those things that give me a sense of spirituality or purpose
- Spend at least 15 minutes each day engaging in nature
- Practice personal reflection—prayer, meditation, or journaling
- Visit a place of worship
- Take part in music or art activities
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Goal: Be more optimistic

Activities:

- Spend more time with optimistic people
- Find a mentor
- Each day, state or write down something for which I am grateful
- Look for positive opportunities during challenging times
- Acknowledge my successes
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Goal: Enrich my current relationships

Activities:

- Set aside my cellphone & computer & visit with people
- Each day, intentionally reach out to 1 person
- Listen to the conversation instead of thinking about what I'm going to say next
- Create new rituals with friends & family, such as Sunday brunch or craft night
- Schedule regular date nights with my spouse or significant other
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Goal: Develop more social relationships

Activities:

- Take part in activities within my community or place of worship
- Accept invitations when asked to do something or join a group
- Sign up for an exercise class instead of exercising alone
- Set up weekly lunch or dinner dates with friends or family
- Reach out to people I miss & haven't seen in a while
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Goal: Take a stress management class

Activities:

- Check if my employer offers a class
- Ask my doctor for suggestions
- See if my fitness center offers stress management classes
- Sign up for a community education mindful movement class
- Monitor my stress level during & after the program to gauge its effectiveness
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Other Goal:

Activities:

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Conclusion/ Final Thoughts

1. Discussed the current science of mindfulness.
2. Demonstrated practical mindfulness techniques for use in a workplace or clinical setting.
3. Identified mindfulness resources available to psychiatric-mental health professionals.



Questions/Comments?



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