

Mindfulness at Work: An Introduction to Mindfulness for Professional Care Partners



Laura Rice-Oeschger, LMSW

Disclosures

- Laura is not serving as a paid consultant for any pharmaceutical or medical device company

- Laura works for the University of Michigan Alzheimer's Disease Center – Dept of Neurology



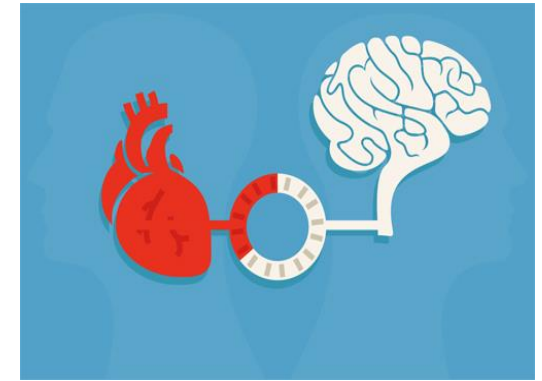
- Laura also works for Presence Care, a non-for-profit dementia care and mindfulness organization



- Laura is a founding member of the Ann Arbor Center for Mindfulness, a local non-for-profit



Agenda



- **Mindfulness & Meditation Overview**

- Intentions at work
- What Mindfulness is & what it is not
- How Mindfulness practice works & what this might mean for you
- 3+ practical & simple practices to use anywhere
- Some research highlights
- Resources & discussion

- **Mindfulness, Mindfulness Meditation Practice & Self Care**

- Formal
 - Informal
-

Presence Practice



Life is all a memory, except for the one present moment that goes by you so quickly you hardly catch it going.

~Tennessee Williams



*"Today I'm going to be unaware, uninvolved,
uncommitted, and self-centered."*

CN
COLLECTION

Assumptions

We care about being well

**We care about being well at work & in
the presence of others**

We are all care partners

There are only four kinds of people in the world -

Those who have been caregivers,
Those who currently are caregivers,
Those who will be caregivers and,
Those who will need caregivers.

- Rosalynn Carter



Ileana Ludae Bolea
Detroit, MI

What kind of care partner/provider do you intend to be?

What are the qualities you hope to cultivate?



What is Mindfulness?

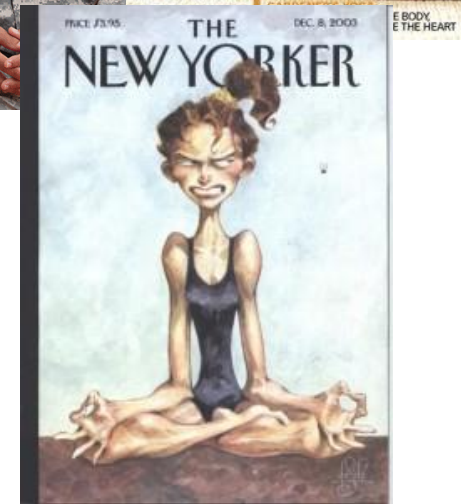
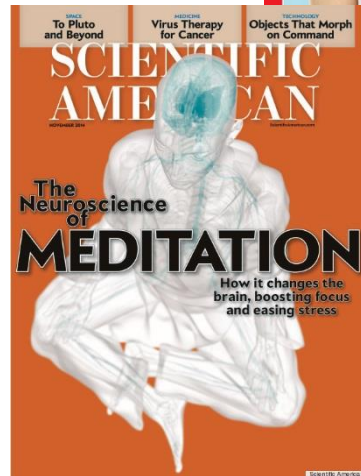
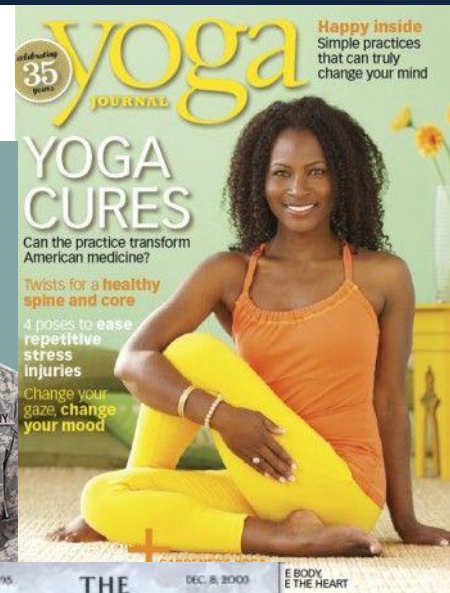
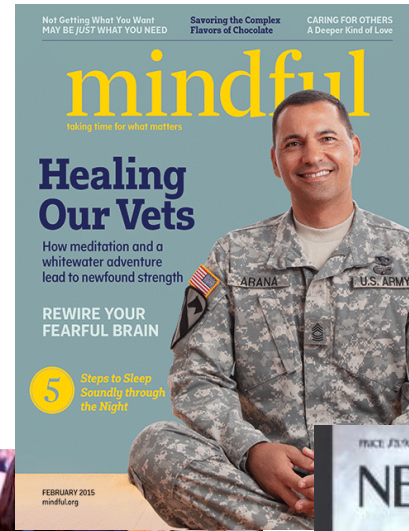
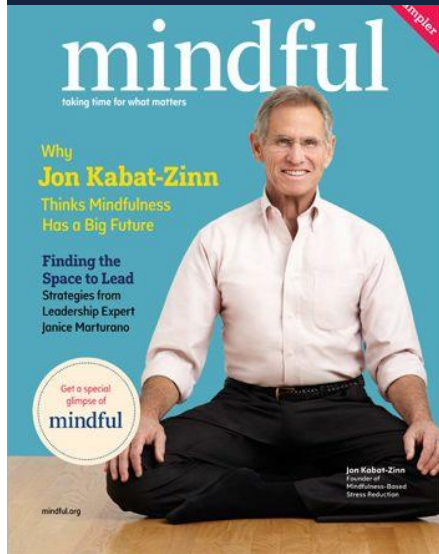
“Mindfulness means paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally.”

Jon Kabat-Zinn

Cultivating mindfulness is training the mind to develop greater awareness of the present moment, including current physical sensations, thoughts, and feelings, without judging one’s self or one’s experience.



Mainstream Visibility



Meditation Overview

- Guided
- Mindfulness
- Mantra
- Tai Chi
- Yoga
- Qi gong
- Transcendental
- Guided visualization
- Kundalini
- Metta (loving kindness)
- Gazing





Meditation

vs.

Mindfulness



concentration
focussed attention

Hold attention on a primary object, usually your breath. Mentally note its movement. That's it!



attending
noticing

Concentrate while carefully naming thoughts, sensations and other mental processes and distractions.



open monitoring
witnessing

Closely watch your thoughts & activities. Let them come and go, without reacting, judging or holding on.



“Mindfulness is a Superpower”

Dan Harris – Author of *10% Happier: How I Tamed the Voice in My Head, Reduced Stress Without Losing My Edge, and Found Self-Help That Actually Works* (2014)

Mindfulness is not:

- a panacea or a cure for every ill
 - a religion
 - a state of bliss
 - an empty mind
 - mind control
 - something to harass yourself about
 - an assurance that you will always be happy, well, safe, and stress-free.
-

What talents, gifts & strengths do you bring to work/care partnering?



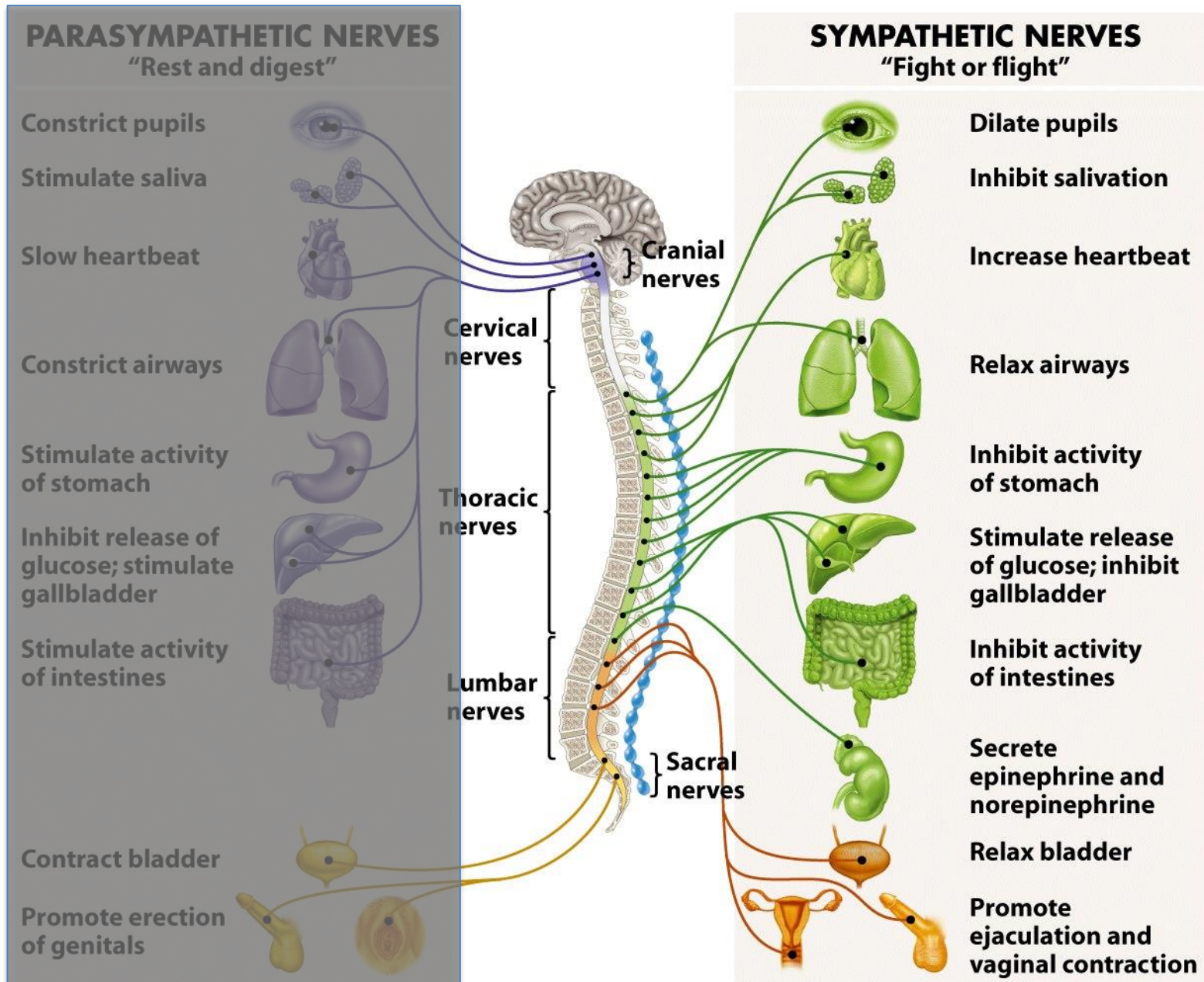


Figure 45-20 Biological Science, 2/e
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PARASYMPATHETIC NERVES

"Rest and digest"

Constrict pupils

Stimulate saliva

Slow heartbeat

Constrict airways

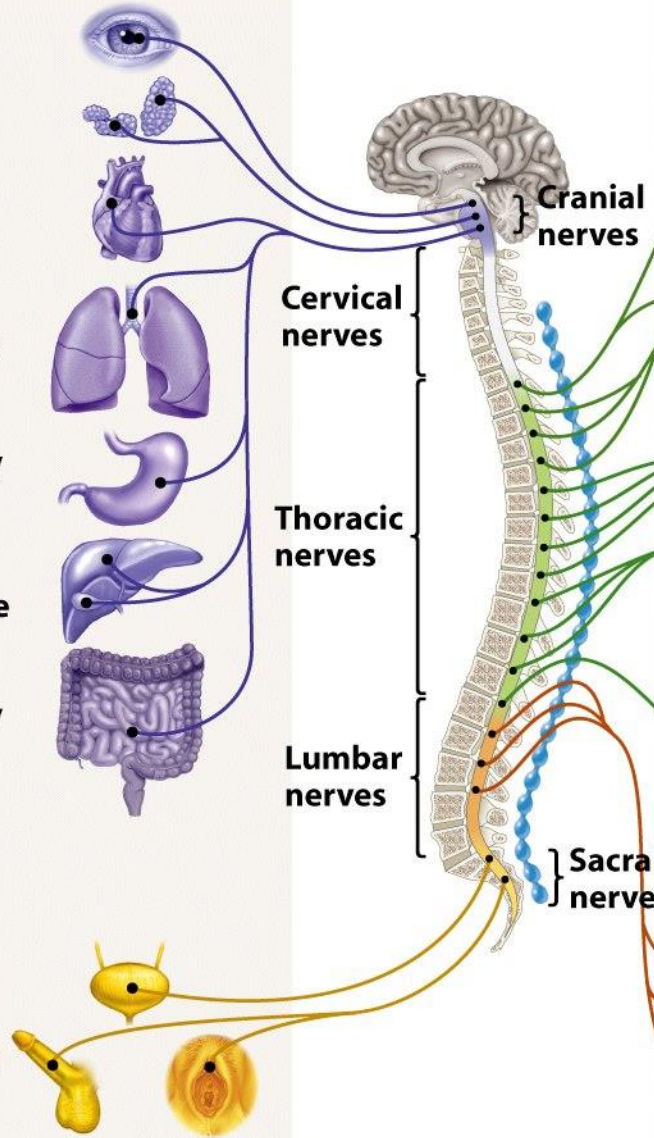
Stimulate activity of stomach

Inhibit release of glucose; stimulate gallbladder

Stimulate activity of intestines

Contract bladder

Promote erection of genitals



SYMPATHETIC NERVES

"Fight or flight"

Dilate pupils

Inhibit salivation

Increase heartbeat

Relax airways

Inhibit activity of stomach

Stimulate release of glucose; inhibit gallbladder

Inhibit activity of intestines

Secrete epinephrine and norepinephrine

Relax bladder

Promote ejaculation and vaginal contraction

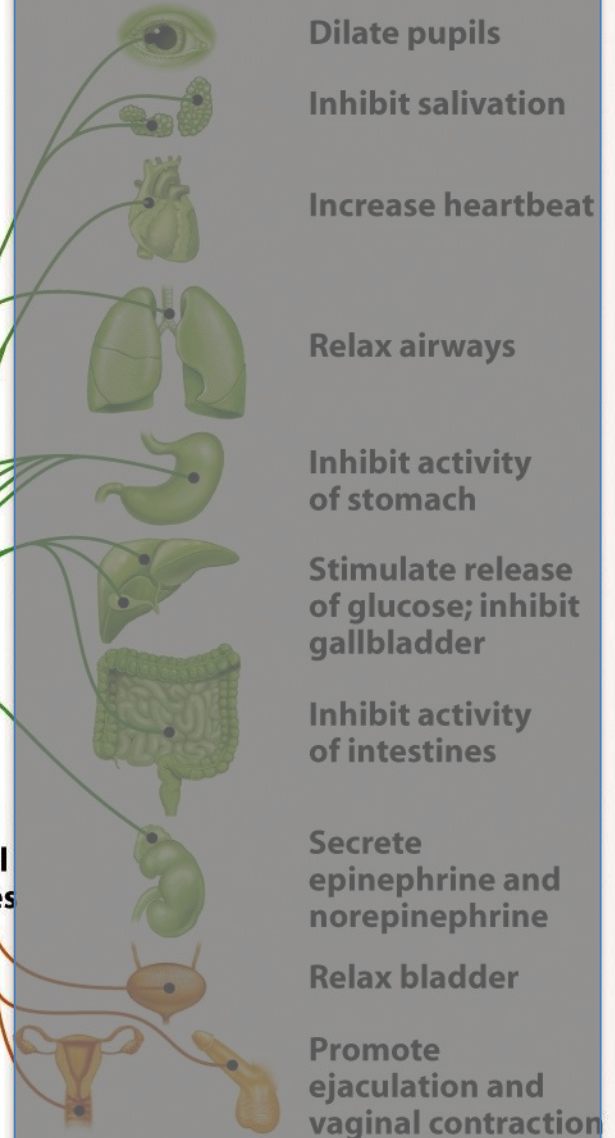
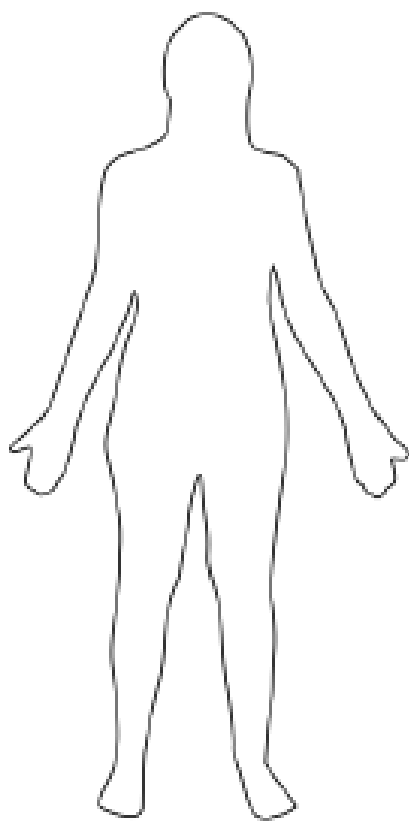
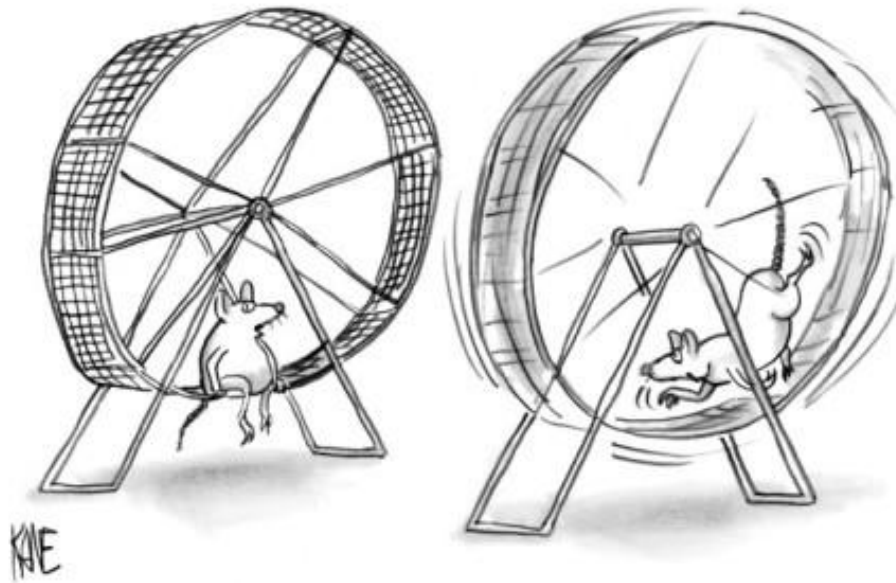


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"I had an epiphany."

"Some terrible things have happened in my life, some of which have actually happened."

~Mark Twain

Guidelines for Mindful Living

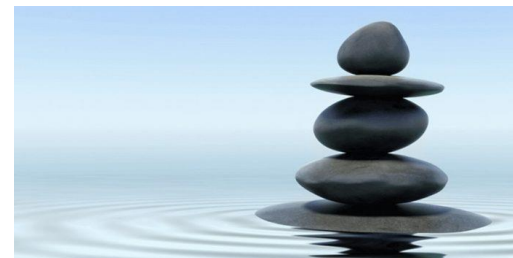
Step 1: When possible, do just one thing at a time.

Step 2: Pay full attention to what you are doing.

Step 3: When the mind wanders from what you are doing, bring it back.

Step 4: *Repeat step 3 several billion times.*

Step 5: Investigate your distractions.



Larry Rosenberg



Name some obstacles, distractions & challenges to your presence (intentional attention) at work? How do these impact the care partner you hope to be each day at work and in life?

Internal/External examples

Mindful & Mindfulness

- **Mindful** – anything we do that brings us into the present moment. Attentive, *aware* and appreciative.
- **Mindfulness** – maintaining a moment-by-moment *awareness* of our thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations, and surrounding environment. Includes formal, secular practice of present moment awareness through meditation. Characterized by certain attitudinal foundations (non-judgment, acceptance, curiosity, patience...)



Wholehearted, unrestricted, cooperation with the unavoidable



Mindfulness is:

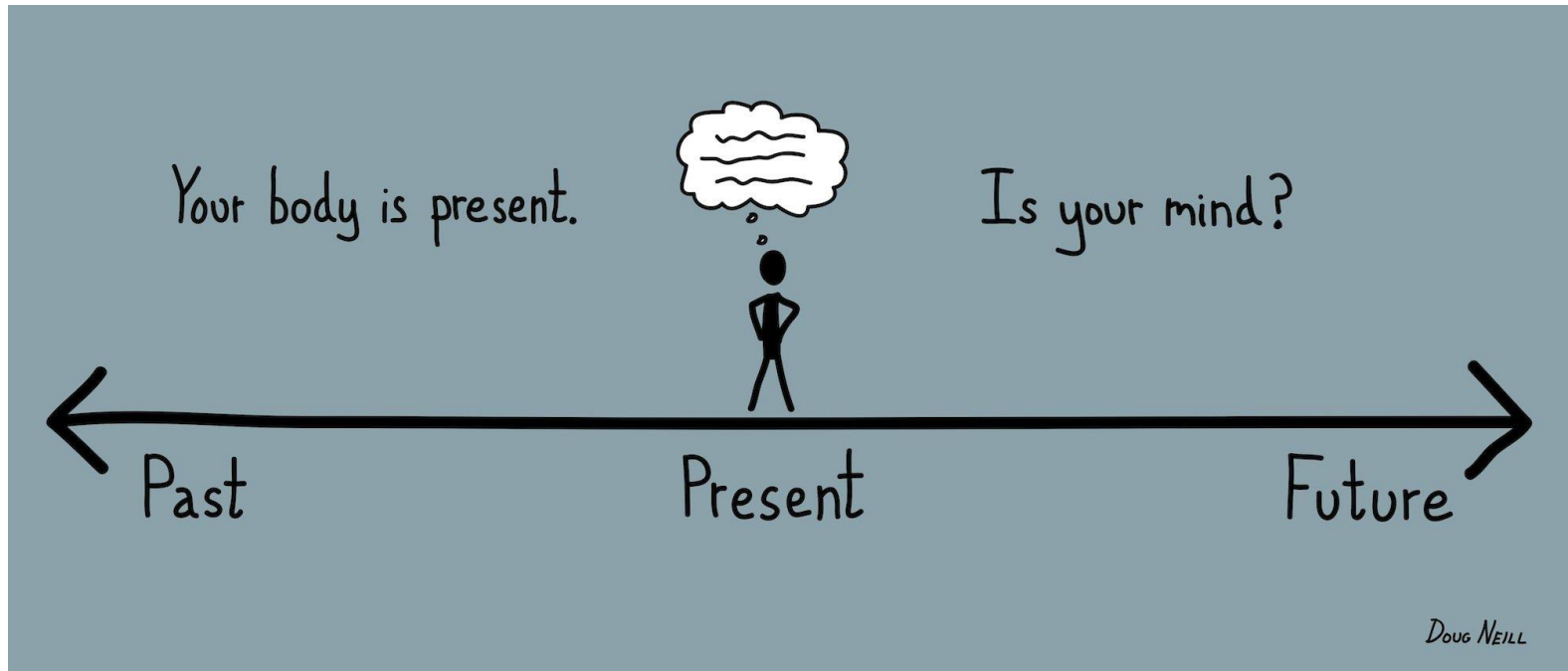
- A practice and a way of being in wise relationship with the moment and in our lives
 - about becoming less reactive and more intentionally present
 - a willingness to modify our perspective and includes attitudinal foundations/pillars which support practice
(non-judging, patience, beginner's mind, trust, non-striving, acceptance, letting go/be..)
 - fostered by “assuming the stance of an impartial witness to your own experience.” (J.K-Zinn)
 - being aware of our proclivity to become entangled in our stories, lost in our incessant thinking and doing.
 - observing our impulses and ultimately, having skillful means to respond to life as it unfolds – moment by moment
-

Presence Practice



When I am constantly running there is no time for being. When there is no time for being there is no time for listening.

— Madeleine L'Engle



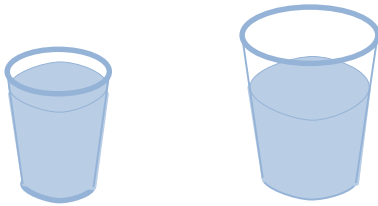
To move in the direction we intend to go, we must first know where we are.

The ABC's of Mindfulness



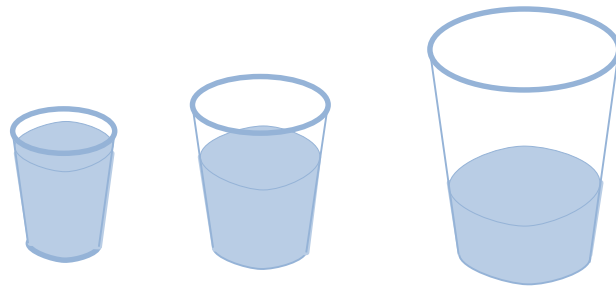
~by Suryacitta Malcom Smith, <https://www.mindfulnesscic.co.uk/>

The ABC's of Mindfulness



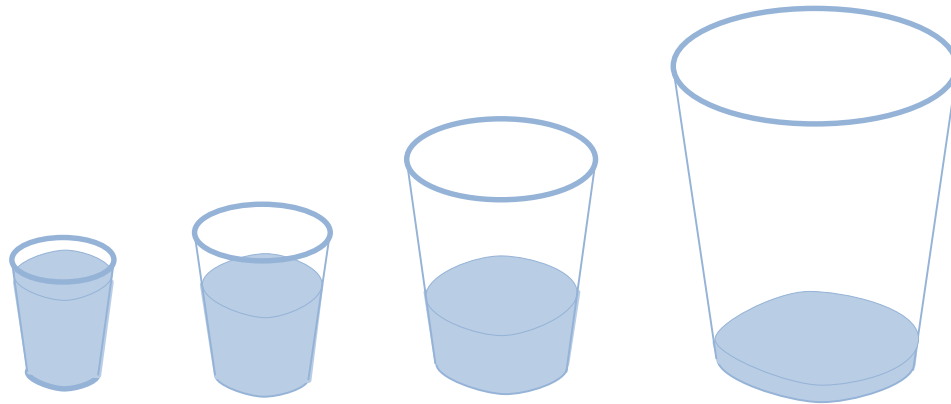
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The ABC's of Mindfulness



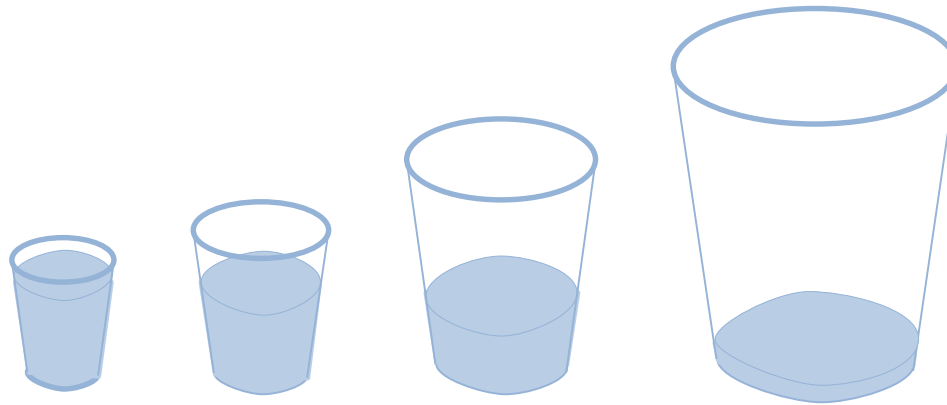
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The ABC's of Mindfulness

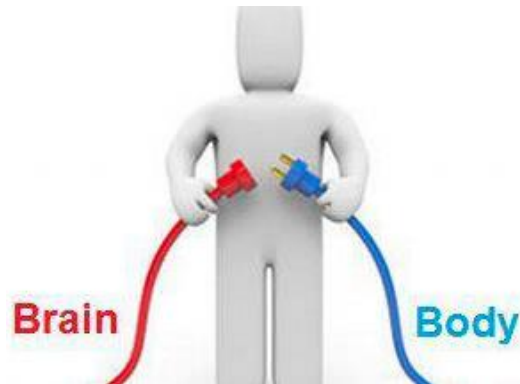


~by Suryacitta Malcom Smith, <https://www.mindfulnesscic.co.uk/>

The ABC's of Mindfulness: **A Bigger Container**



~by Suryacitta Malcom Smith, <https://www.mindfulnesscic.co.uk/>



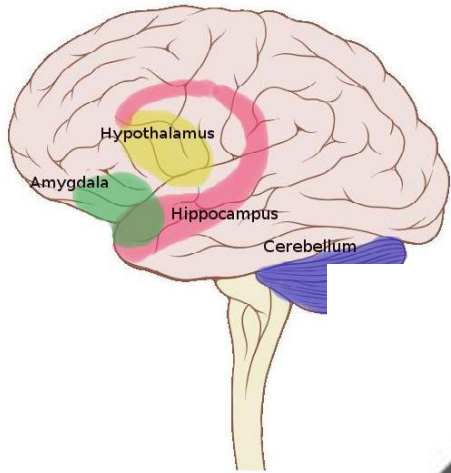
“One very important domain of our lives and experience that we tend to miss, ignore, abuse, or lose control of as a result of being in the automatic pilot mode is our own body.”

~Jon Kabat-Zinn, PhD

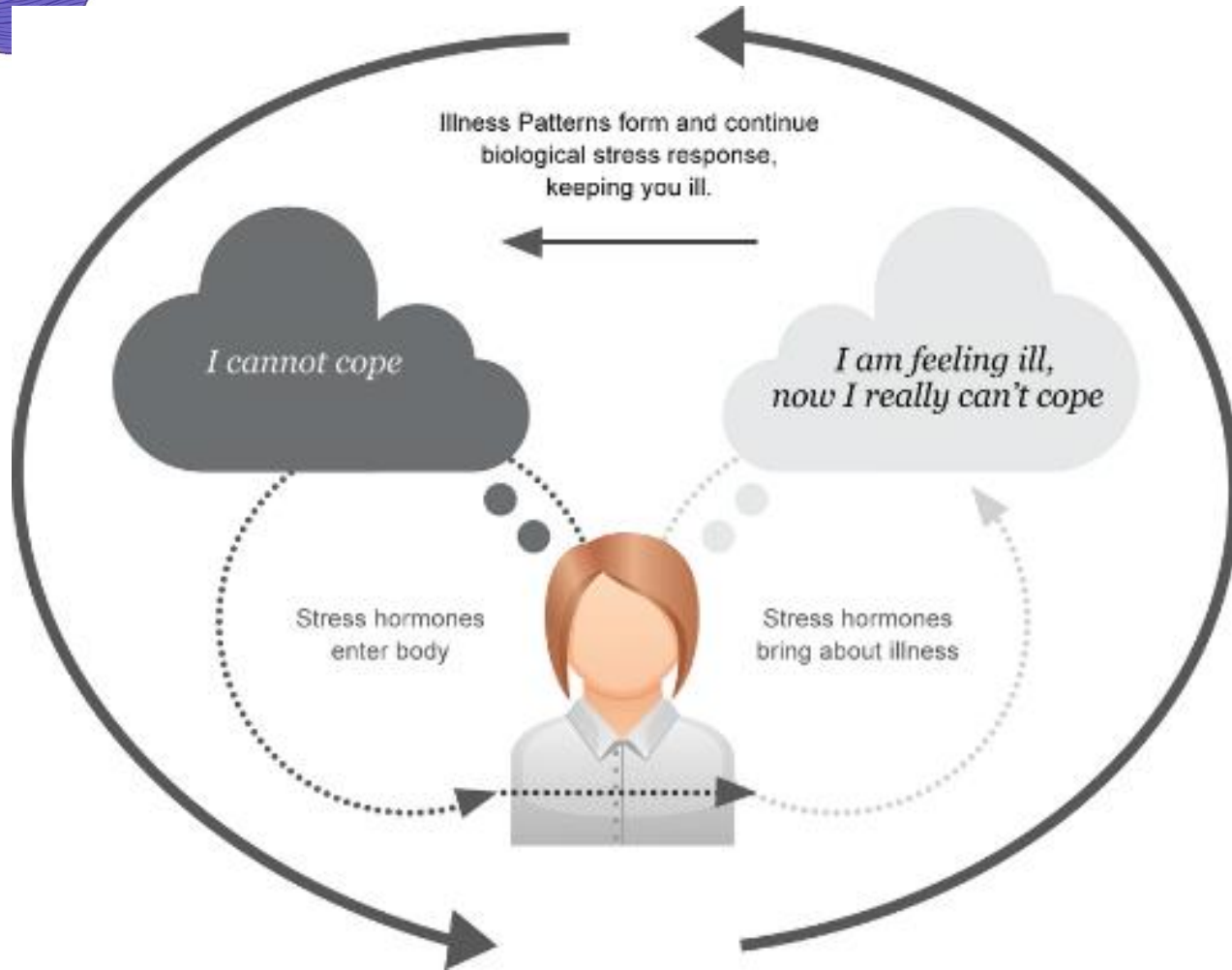
Researcher, Author & Stress Reduction Teacher

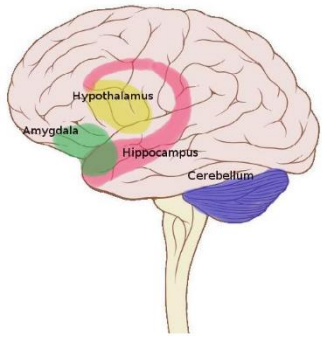
Fight - Flight

Freeze



Amygdala
Hijack





Knowing You've Been Hijacked

- Strong and sudden emotional reaction
- Say or do something insensitive, hurtful, counteractive to our intention
- The after effect lingers & we do not recover easily
- It taints our behavior, mood and decisions beyond the time of the interaction



S.T.O.P.

Stop

Take a breath (take note of where you feel it most easily in the body)

Observe (acknowledge what is happening in this moment)

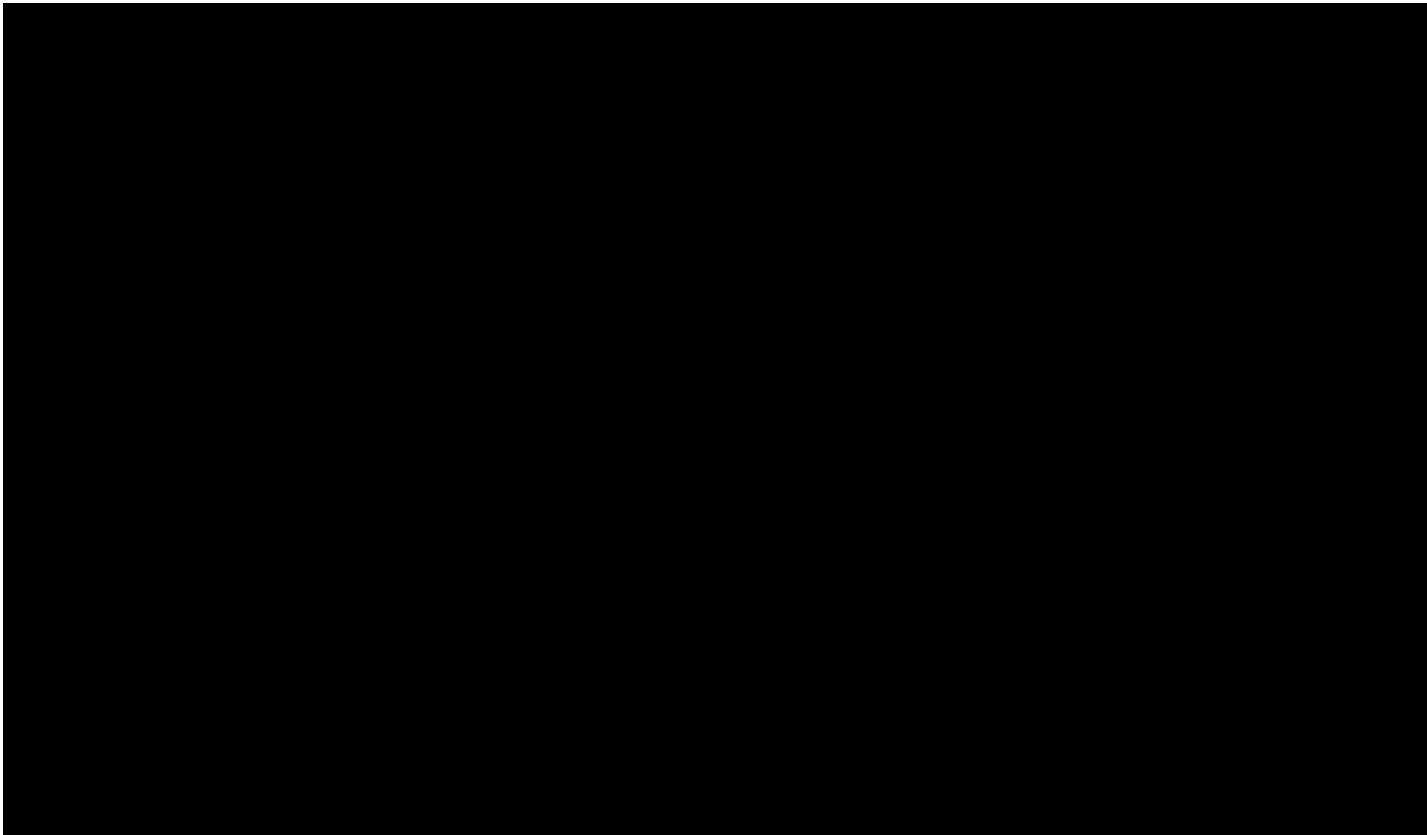
Put aside (pause, proceed, plan....)

Breath - Body - Thoughts

Beginning: Why the Breath as an Anchor?

- Always available
- Accessible, easily felt
- Connects mind and body
- It is a measure of well-being
- Quick assessment & response
- Fairly neutral





S.T.O.P.

Why is listening so challenging?



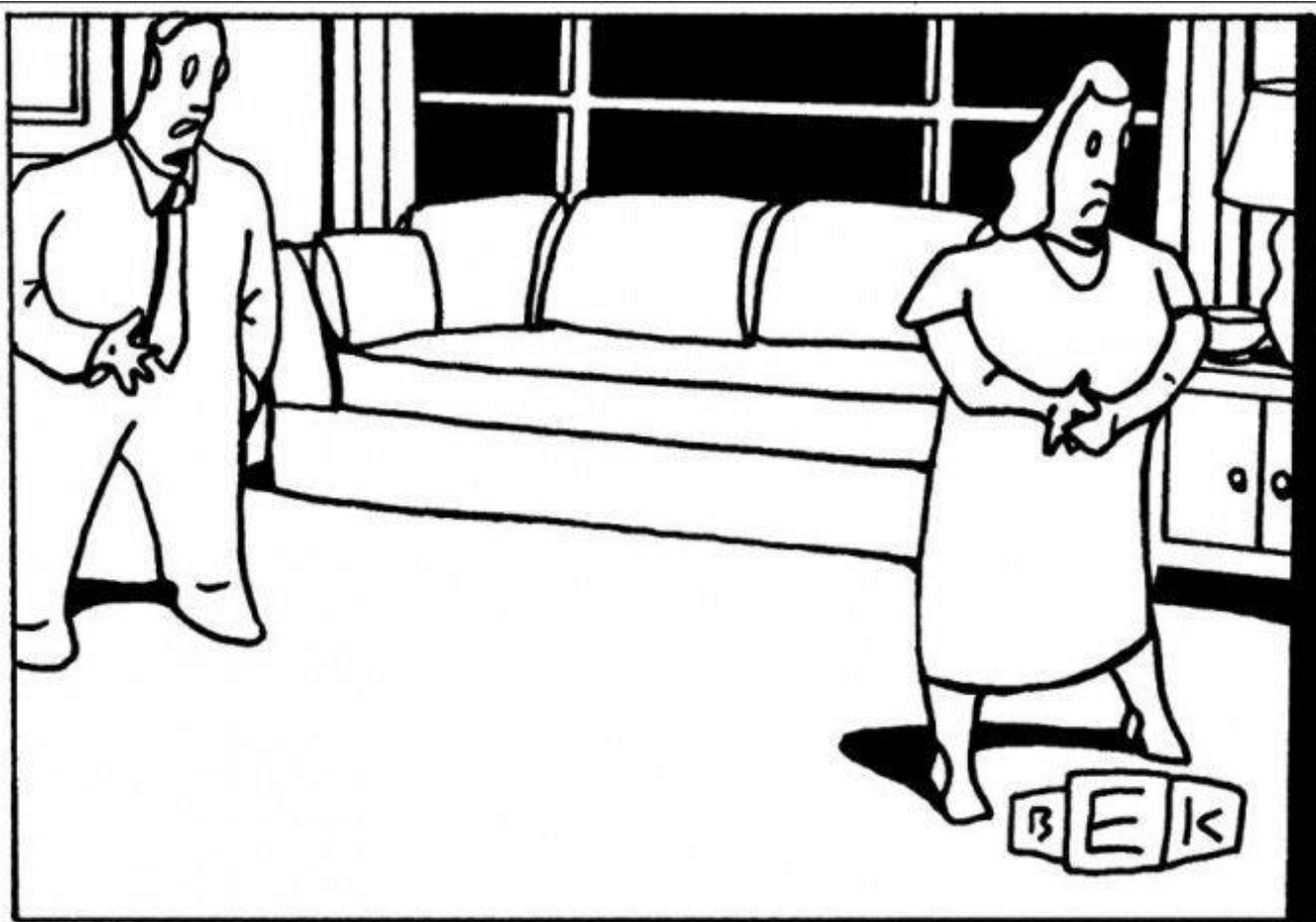
- We tend to speak ~100-175 words a minute and can think at 600-800 words a minute
 - Attention span today is ~3 seconds versus 15 seconds a few decades ago
 - The mind is a time traveler & chronic wanderer
 - Constant stimulation, distraction & conditioned reactivity to smart phones, email (2+), social media...
 - Requires presence and patience in a fast paced, impatient environment
-

Mindful Communication

Clients, colleagues, family & friends

- S.T.O.P.
- Begin by creating space within yourself
 - Slow down and take a brief, quiet moment
 - Pay attention to your breath
 - Notice how you are feeling
 - Recognizing any tension
- Notice your thoughts – without judgment
 - The future is unknown
 - Create room for listening, communication and possibility
 - Quiet expectations, assumptions or anticipated frustration





*"Of course I care about how you imagined I thought
you perceived I wanted you to feel."*



Mindful Listening

- STOP & slow down - be where you are
 - Remove any distractions – turn smart phone on silent
 - Set aside the plan, recognize if there are assumptions and predicting/mind reading (inner posture)
 - Listen without judgment
 - Be curious and ask open ended questions
 - If possible, listen to the other person for the first several minutes
 - Be aware of the tendency to finish the sentence of the other person or to interrupt
 - Pay attention to the body language of the other person and your own
 - Listen for what is being said and for what is not
-

Mechanisms of Change Associated with Mindfulness Training



Based on neuroimaging, self-report and behavioral research, individuals practicing mindfulness experience increases in:

- Attention regulation
- Body awareness
- Emotional regulation, including
 - Reappraisal
 - Exposure, extinction, and reconsolidation
- Changes in perspective on one's self
- Compassion toward self & others

A Brief Summary of Research on Mindfulness's Effects



Research on mindfulness-based interventions is growing and now includes neuroimaging studies and sophisticated research designs.

Effects include:

- Reductions in depression, anxiety, substance abuse, eating disorders, stress, and pain.
- Increased immunological response, reduced blood pressure and cortisol
- Increased psychological well-being and enhanced cognitive functioning.

Some Specific Findings:



- Improvements in ratings of pain & other medical symptoms.
- Decreases in anxiety and depression.
- Improved eating patterns & mood among those with eating disorders.
- Fibromyalgia patients improved.
- Psoriasis cleared faster in patients exposed to recordings of guided mindfulness meditation than those who were not.
- Decreases in substance use both in MBRP & other MB interventions.
- *Changes appear to persist.*

**American Mindfulness Research
Association**

<https://goamra.org/>

Cellular Aging in Chronic Caregiving Stress



Telomeres – Stress, age-related disease, lifestyle decisions...



Dr. Elizabeth Blackburn
2009 Nobel Prize in Medicine
UC – San Francisco

For the discovery of how chromosomes are protected by telomeres and the enzyme telomerase.



"I can't sleep. I think I'll get up and solve all my problems."

Transition Practice



Life is like a ten speed bicycle. Most of us
have gears we never use.

~Charles Shultz



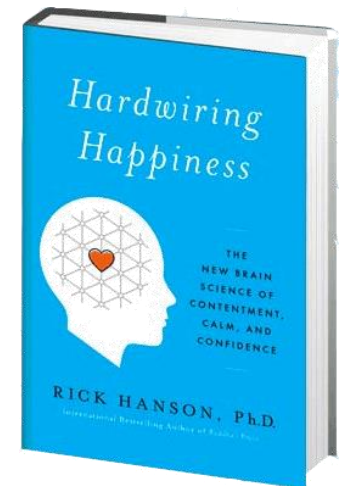
“Self-care is never a selfish act – it is simply good stewardship of the only gift we have to give...ourselves. Anytime we can listen to the true self and give it the care it requires, we do so not only for ourselves, but for the many others whose lives we touch.”

~ Parker Palmer

H.E.A.L.

1. **H**ave a positive experience.
2. **E**nrich it.
3. **A**bsorb it.
4. **L**ink positive and negative material.

Rick Hanson, PhD – *Hardwiring Happiness: The New Brain Science of Contentment, Calm, and Confidence*



Where to Begin?

Simple, Intentional Practice



Tiny Habits

- Door knob, car door
- Doorway, room entering and exiting
- Walking – in the offices, to meetings, to car
- Sitting & standing, between tasks
- One-bite each meal
- One-breath, many times
- Book-ending the day – arrival & departure
- Book-ending the day itself – upon waking & before sleeping



“The Fly”



Meditation 101

Dan Harris – Author of *10% Happier: How I Tamed the Voice in My Head, Reduced Stress Without Losing My Edge, and Found Self-Help That Actually Works* (2014)

Mindful Check-in

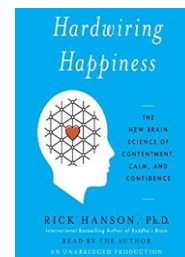
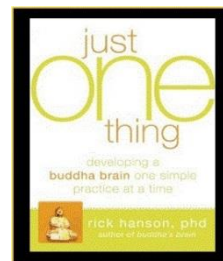
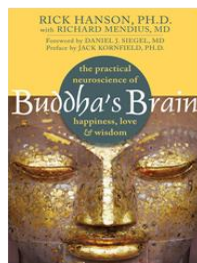
3 Minute Breathing Space



“Every time you take in the good, you build a little bit of neural structure. Doing this a few times a day—for months and even years—will gradually change your brain, and how you feel and act, in far-reaching ways.”

~Rick Hanson, PhD
Neuropsychologist

Buddha's Brain: The Practical Neuroscience of Happiness, Love and Wisdom



Where to Begin?

Simple Intentional Practice

- Experience small doses
 - Read, listen, practice at home or locally
- Take an MBSR class or MBCT
 - 8 weeks is really just a beginning. Experience before referring. Experience before seeking training.
- Experience a mini-retreat, ½ day facilitated day of mindfulness



Local, Secular Resources for Mindfulness Training & Practice

Ann Arbor Center for Mindfulness

www.aacfm.com

Mindful City Ann Arbor

www.mindfulcityannarbor.org

MC4Me – MI Collaborative for Mindfulness in Education

<https://www.mc4me.org/>



Mindfulness Education & Training Resources

- **Center for Mindfulness in Medicine, Health Care, and Society - UMASS Medical School** <http://www.umassmed.edu/cfm/>
 - **Center for Mindfulness – UC San Diego**
<https://health.ucsd.edu/specialties/mindfulness/Pages/default.aspx>
 - **The Center for Mindfulness Studies – Toronto**
<http://www.mindfulnessstudies.com>
 - **PESI training – On-line & In Person Introductions**
<http://www.pesi.com/>
 - Jon Kabat Zinn, Daniel Siegel, Elana Rosenbaum.....
 - **Sounds True – On-line MBSR & other resources**
<http://www.soundstrue.com/store/the-mbsr-online-course-3226.html>
-

*Almost anything will work again
if you unplug it for a while ...
including you.*

- Anne Lamott

