



CBR PROJECT

CONTEMPLATIVE-BASED RESILIENCE

| Training Workbook



GARRISON INSTITUTE

This CBR Workbook Belongs to:

Contact Information:



GARRISON INSTITUTE

The Contemplative-Based Resilience (CBR) Project
Training Workbook

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Greetings and Welcome to Contemplative-Based Resilience (CBR)!

During our time together, we will learn from each other as we explore ideas and techniques designed to help us become more resilient, more able to cope with stressful situations and to recover from difficulties. This training integrates the best knowledge that is available about stress and how contemplative practices can increase inner resilience. Our context is completely secular and does not require you to adopt new beliefs or give up your existing beliefs. We ask that you come into the training with an open mind and take away the practices that you find most useful.

Whether you are in the working as a direct service provider or behind a computer, you regularly bear witness to traumas that you can neither predict nor control. What you can control is your reaction to these stressors, and the toll they take on your wellbeing. Knowing the causes and symptoms of stress is helpful but seldom sufficient: resiliency requires specific skills, and these skills can be learned.

Please make yourself comfortable and use this workbook for your own notes to create a personal toolbox of skills for enhancing your resilience and wellbeing. Feel free to write in whatever language(s) you like, draw, jot down any of your thoughts and reflections. This can be a first step to reflect on the changes you would like to make, as well as acknowledging the good things you are already doing and noting the techniques you find most useful.

We are a diverse group. Implicit in diversity is difference: we come to the training with different educations, cultural backgrounds, experiences, attitudes, and expectations. We seek to create and maintain an atmosphere of consideration and respect in order to foster learning and growth. We would like to work together in the spirit of friendly cooperation, exploration, and support.

Your faculty bring expert knowledge in their respective fields and we know you are also an expert in the work that you do; we strive to learn from one another. The tools and the techniques that we will share have been well researched and developed over time. This training is a starting point. The benefits come from integrating these ideas and practices into your daily life.

If you feel uncomfortable with any aspect of the training, please do not hesitate to speak with any of the facilitators.

Our objectives for the training are set on the following pages. As we begin together, we invite you to tell us about any specific thoughts you have for the things you hope to learn.

Warm regards,
The Faculty of the CBR Project

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The content of this book has been prepared with the intention of providing support to the professional service provider staff and should only be used for personal reflection or as a base to develop your own practice.

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RESPONSIBILITY FOR TEACHING

A strong self-practice is essential before being able to teach others. Collectively, the CBR faculty has over 50 years of experience with these practices, ensuring the quality of teaching and necessary duty of care. The training is a space for a self-reflective experience, as a catalyst for change.

CBR Training Learning Objectives:

1. Participants understand not only that work affects well-being, but also that well-being affects work.
2. Participants know how to detect their own sources of stress, the impact it has on them, and become able to monitor their reactions to stress and hardship.
3. Participants learn to be aware of their thoughts, emotions and body reactions, there by improving emotional regulation and stress management.
4. Participants understand the key role of awareness of thoughts, emotions and body reactions, as well as the role of compassion meditation and body-based techniques to regulate those reactions.
5. Participants gain contemplative-based resilience skills such as meditation, mindful movement, and loving-kindness and compassion practices.
6. Participants leave with a good working understanding of the psychology of basic, cumulative and traumatic stress.
7. Because stress management is an ongoing process, participants gain the relevant knowledge to prepare their own stress management plans and modify them as circumstances require.
8. Participants leave the training with practical skills and a strong foundation for increased resilience through awareness, balance, and connection.

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Introduction to the Contemplative-Based Resilience (CBR) Project

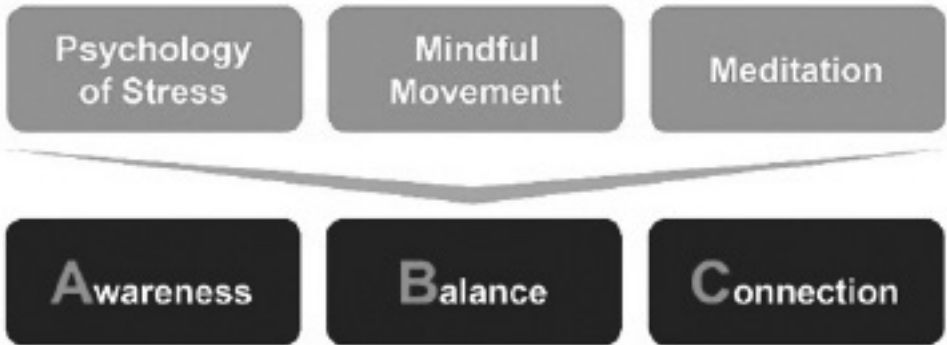
The CBR Project is designed to support professional service providers who may be regularly exposed to secondary and vicarious trauma of their clients as they support them through crises and difficulties. The skill set gained through the training helps to combat the physical and psychological effects of chronic stress experienced as a result of witnessing trauma. CBR draws on insight from social service practitioners, in addition to experts in psychology, meditation, and mindful movement to offer a secular program focused on educating care providers about traumatic stress. This program will guide participants to build on their own existing skills to foster resilience to the sometimes overwhelming demands of their work. Appropriate psychosocial support is not only important for staff members themselves, but also for the beneficiary populations they are working to serve.

Our credo is that in order to serve well, we need to be well.

Through the program's unique integration of psycho-social education, meditation, mindful movement and compassionate connection, participants in CBR trainings learn and practice the ABC's of Resilience: Awareness, Balance and Connection.

We provide knowledge, practical tools and peer support. The program is based on four components: Mindfulness and Compassion Meditations; Mindful Movement and Body awareness; Psychosocial Education; and Staying Connected/Building Community. This approach was shaped by an enormous body of medical evidence showing that meditation and mindful movement help reduce stress, anxiety, and depression as well as improve stress-management, self-awareness, creative thinking and concentration.

The CBR Approach



Awareness of:	Balance:	Connection:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is happening around us • How we are feeling (through our bodies) • How we are perceiving situations • How others around us are feeling • How our actions are impacting others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arousal balance • Emotional equilibrium • Between work and relaxation • Between short-term and long-term goals • Between our needs and the needs of others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With ourselves • With others, including co-workers, our families, friends and communities • With our values, aims

Contemplative practices, which are methods to train the mind and the body, contribute to **Awareness, Balance, and Connection.**

Meditation is a way to train the mind through familiarization with concepts that we want to become habitual, and to lessen the grip of mental habits and attitudes that aren't serving us well. Our thoughts wear grooves in the mind, the way that wheels might wear ruts in the field.



Attention training builds concentration.

Compassion is the wish for others (and oneself) to be free from suffering. Love is the wish for others (and oneself) to be happy. Loving-kindness is compassionate awareness which opens our attention and enables us to become more inclusive.

In Mindful Movement, we focus gently on the experience of synchronizing movement and breath. We can think of it as moving meditation.

Over the past 25 years, there has been a growing body of research on the psychological and physiological effects of contemplative practices, giving birth to a new field known as contemplative science.

The evidence base accumulated so far indicates that:

Contemplative practices <u>enhance</u>:	Contemplative practices <u>decrease</u>:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attention and concentration• Learning and problem solving• Flexible thinking• Positive thinking• Positive affect• Social support• Pro-social behaviors• Immune functions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Anxiety and stress• Depressive episodes• PTSD symptoms• Rumination• Inflammation• Blood pressure• Arthritis symptoms• Pain 

The positive effects are only observed when people actually engage in the practices. Listening to a talk, reading about them in a book, or watching other people practice is not effective.



PSYCHOLOGY OF STRESS & RESILIENCE

Introduction to Psychosocial

By: Helen Barley

CBR's Psychosocial curriculum aims to deepen our awareness of how stress functions as an inner process shaping our outer experience. In strengthening our understanding and self-awareness, the curriculum paves the way for us to connect with practices to support our resilience, including Meditation and Mindful Movement.

The Psychosocial journey begins with an exploration of stress; what it is, why it exists and how it manifests. As professional service providers, we may experience stress at an unconscious level, remaining unaware of what is happening in our bodies or why we experience certain emotions and feelings. This is a normal, human reaction and one which reflects our body's innate capacity to cope with enormous strain.

Nevertheless, chronic stress and burnout are not inevitable outcomes of social service work. While we cannot control all external sources of stress, there are tools and techniques we can use to better manage our response to these triggers. In this regard, we start by exploring the resources and coping strategies we currently have, whilst also considering new methods we may be able to cultivate.

To build on this, the Psychosocial curriculum offers practical, self-reflective tools such as *Know Thyself*, *the Stress Curve* and *the Balance Wheel*. Through these guided reflections, we are invited to explore more deeply our own experience and activate our inner wisdom:

- *What is my current behavior / strategy / experience?*
- *How does this impact me?*
- *What changes / shifts could I make to support my wellbeing?*

As we undertake these exercises, we are encouraged to practice **self-compassion**; one of the cross-cutting principles within the CBR program. Self-compassion is a fundamental practice for building the muscle of resilience. By approaching the reflections with an attitude of gentle curiosity and letting go of any judgments which may arise in the process, we can create the space for transformation and change.

RESILIENCE

- Resilience is **flexibility** in response to changing situational demands and the ability to **bounce back** from negative experiences
- We are not static. Our ability to handle a given level of stress will differ at various points throughout our lives and in differing contexts
- Resilience encompasses a variety of traits, including **cognitive reappraisal** (recognition of one's negative response to a situation and reinterpretation of the situation in a more positive light) and **metacognitive awareness** (awareness of one's thinking process).
- Resilience traits are not innate talent—they **are learnable skills and can be built up and strengthened**. The resilience building practices are evidence-based, that means their effectiveness has been scientifically proven through a growing field of research encompassing psychology, neurobiology, and psychotherapy.
- We can't prevent all trauma and stress, but we can change how we respond to those actions.



Characteristics of Resilience

- effective problem-solving skills
- optimism & confidence
- ability to cope with stress in a healthy manner
- helping others
- seeking help
- belief in one's own capacity to cope (internal locus of control)
- social support & connections with others
- spirituality
- sense of meaning
- identity as a survivor (vs victim)
- ability to be self-aware & regulate emotions

Types of coping strategies

Active coping – Initiating actions and increase the efforts to eliminate sources of stress

Instrumental Support – Seeking advice, information and/or help

Emotional Support – Seeking understanding, moral support

Behavioral disengagement – Diminishing efforts to actively confront a given difficulty

Positive re-framing – Re-framing a situation in positive terms, transforming the experienced feelings

Humor – Using humor about a situation to make one feel better

Acceptance – Acknowledging the existence and importance of the present difficulties

Religion – Make use of spirituality in order to obtain either emotional support or re-framing of the current situation.

Self-distraction – seeking distraction as a way of not thinking about problems.

Venting – Being centered in one's distress and continuously expressing it.

Denial – Rejecting existence of a problem or acting as if it did not exist.

Substance Use – Use of alcohol or drugs in order to feel better and think less about the current problems.

Without being harsh or judgmental with yourself, would you be able to identify what your typical coping styles at the moment would be?

Section 1: Awareness

Notes

Know Thyself

PROPOSALS FOR SELF-MONITORING YOUR WELL-BEING

Being aware of ourselves, our reactions, our feelings, our thoughts and our body are essential to maintaining balance and resilience. Regular self-monitoring is encouraged. The following questions help to guide this monitoring and observation.

If you work on the front lines, providing direct service and invaluable care, please consider these questions as related to your life “outside” of your work, meaning when you are NOT on the job.

Part 1. Know Thyself is the starting point.

What is normal for you when you are well and relaxed?

How many hours a day do you sleep? How is your sleep?

How many times do you need to eat in a day?

What type of food do you need or want when you feel healthy?

Section 1: Awareness

How is your libido (sexual appetite and energy) under normal circumstances?

What makes you feel irritable or upset with others?

What things trigger anger or sadness in you?

How do you feel about yourself? Do you generally focus more on your positive traits or on the negative?

How do you feel about your work? Do you believe in what you do? Do you believe that what you contribute has value?

Section 1: Awareness

Why do you engage in social service work?

How open are you to social interaction and spending time with others?

How often do you laugh? What are the things you do for pleasure and how often?

How good are you at keeping healthy habits and self-care? For example: healthy eating and exercise habits.

Do you have a regular religious or spiritual practice? What is it? When do you practice?

Please add any other area of your life which you believe is important for you to monitor:

Section 1: Awareness

Part 2. Monitoring your well-being when you are on the job.

CHANGE is the key to detecting danger signs

- BE AWARE OF YOUR CHANGES – KNOW THYSELF.

Step 1. **Look back at the answers you gave to the questions of what is "normal" or "baseline " for you. Reflect on any changes.**

Take into account that for change to be significant, time and intensity are important! For example, it's not relevant if you didn't sleep well one night. It is very relevant if you have not slept well for a week...

And it's not important if you awoke once at night, it is relevant if you wake up very early and cannot go back to sleep for several nights...

Step 2. Reflect on these other questions too:

Do you feel out of control?

Do you find yourself over-reacting (showing emotions that later you worry were not adequate/useful for the situation)?

Section 1: Awareness

Are you feeling extremely fatigued (even after you have rested)?

Can you see yourself working more, but achieving less (problems concentrating, self-doubt)?

Are you having more infections, fever of unknown origin, stomach problems?

Are you enjoying life?

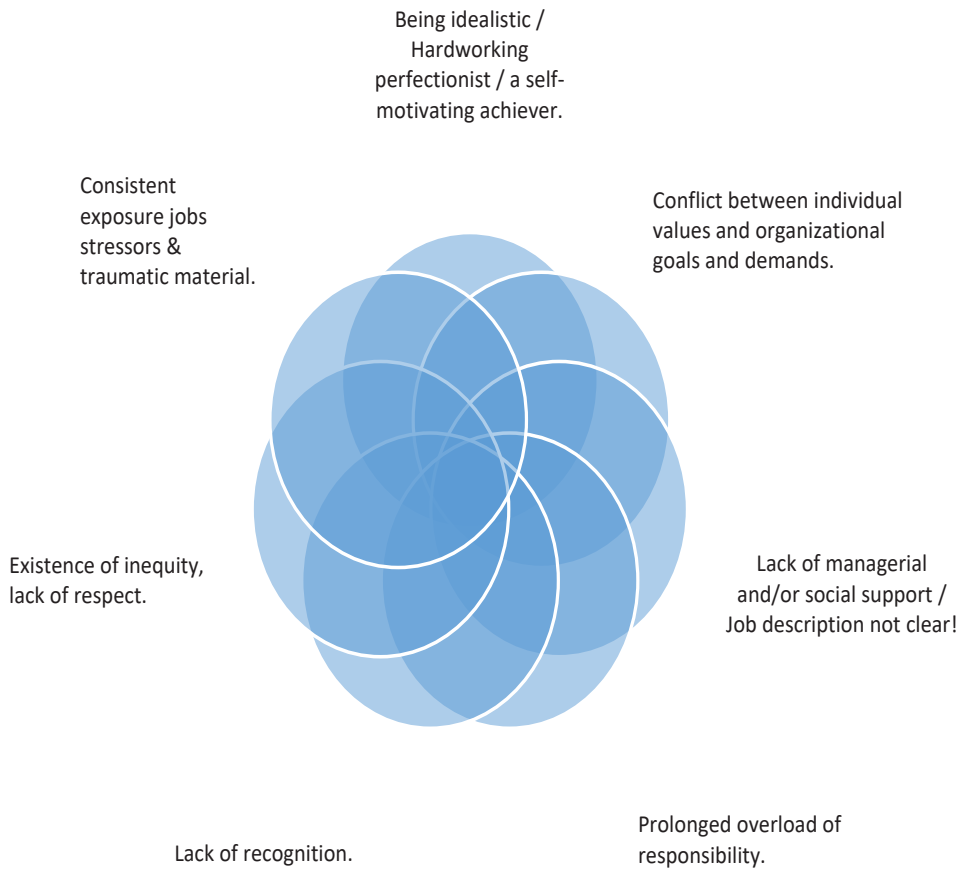
Step 3. Choose a person who will be your “scale.” Ask someone you trust to act as your stress questionnaire, someone who can give you feedback when they see you are not well.

Step 4. If you feel your resilience level is low...
Make a plan! Practice the habits you know are good for you. Start now!

Section 1: Awareness

Notes

The Harmful Effects of Burnout



Section 1: Awareness

Notes

Anatomy of stress

- Stress is the state of arousal (activation) we experience when we confront a challenge, a threat or a change (the stressor).
- Stress and trauma lie in the eye of the beholder. The perception of stress depends on how we interpret the demand (the stressor) AND the resources we perceive are available.
- Stress in itself isn't good or bad: if we aren't challenged enough, we will be bored. But if the demands on us are too great, or we don't have sufficient resources to cope, we can become overwhelmed.

Types of Stress:

- Normal daily stress
 - Cumulative/Chronic stress (ongoing)
 - Burnout
 - Critical incident stress (life-threatening situation)
 - Vicarious stress¹
 - Secondary stress
- The fight or flight response reaction was first described by William Cannon, identifying both noticeable and hidden effects. His work was later extended to encompass a third stress reaction: Fight, flight or freeze.
- Why zebras don't get ulcers: when a lion stops chasing a zebra, the zebra relaxes. The zebra doesn't think "What if the lion returns? What if I didn't outrun the lion?" In contrast, people often continue mental dialogues, such as "What if things were worse?" and continue worrying. Also, people often ruminate, which is when we think about something again and again. If a zebra acted like a person, the zebra's body would continue reacting to the mental dialogue about the lion, **as if the lion were still really there.**
- **General adaptation system** (Hans Selye): Our natural state is one of balance and equilibrium. In response to a stressor, the body will first go into a state of alarm, and then attempt to restore balance. But when stress is ongoing, we cannot go back to our baseline. Over time, in situations of chronic stress, we can lose the ability to return to the balanced state.
- Burnout is a process that takes place over time. Prolonged exposure to occupational stressors, prolonged exposure to emotionally demanding situations, and/or overly high intensity of stress can all contribute to burnout. Burnout can cause people to lose their connection to their sense of purpose and meaning of life. Resilience is essential to preventing burnout.

¹ **Primary traumatization** = impact of the traumatic incidents on the obvious victim (survivors of all kinds of traumatic events)
Secondary traumatization = families of those affected who may suffer from loved ones trauma (i.e. spouse of a rape victim), therapists/helpers who become overwhelmed by what they see and hear in person, witness the effects, casualties, other people's suffering (while not being primary casualties)
Vicarious traumatization = impact of the exposure to traumatic experience of the patient on the therapist's nervous system
Definitions after: Babette Rothschild "Help for the Helper: The Psychophysiology of Compassion Fatigue and Vicarious Trauma. 2006. Norton Professional Books. W.W. Norton & Co (p.14-15)

Harmful effects of stress

Excess stress is often known as distress.

chronic stress = ongoing

acute stress = overly severe

Stress becomes a risk to your health if it is **too intense, too frequent, or too long-term**. Too much stress over time can lead to exhaustion, ill health, and, eventually, burnout.

Excessive stress also affects our capacity to think clearly, make judgments, or make decisions. Professionals providing direct service in challenging environments, if not in good physical and emotional shape, are at risk of making irrational, reckless, or impulsive decisions which affect their safety, well-being, and the service to the people they assist.

Chronic stress has a profound impact on the body. Without the possibility of decreasing activation, cortisol levels become deregulated and damage the body's systems (immune, hormonal, nervous). Instead of staying high in the morning and decreasing throughout the day, the cortisol levels start varying, which affects attention, memory, circadian rhythm (sleep pattern), appetite, and metabolism.

If cortisol levels are elevated over time, they disrupt the functions of adrenal glands (adrenal fatigue), deplete nutrients, and affect the hormonal balance in the body.

Primary Components of Lifestyle Leading to Adrenal Fatigue ²	Signs and symptoms of Adrenal Fatigue:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of sleep • Poor food choices • Using food and drinks as stimulants when tired • Staying up late even though fatigued • Being constantly in position of powerlessness • Trying to be perfect • Staying in double-binds (no-win situations) over time • Lack of enjoyable, rejuvenating activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty getting up in the morning • Continued fatigue not relieved by sleep • Lethargy (lack of energy) • Increased effort to do everyday tasks • Decreased sex drive • Craving for salty foods • Increased time to recover from illness • Lack sense of pleasure, less enjoyment or happiness in life • Thoughts less focused or fuzzy • Memory less accurate • Decreased ability to handle stress • Decreased productivity at work

² James L. Wilson N.D., D.C. Ph.D. "Adrenal Fatigue" 2004 Smart Publications, p.17

Section 1: Awareness

Harmful Effects of stress continued.

Do you see any of the components or symptoms in your life?

Your stressors and hot buttons

What are your sources of stress?

Use + to mark things you believe you can control or influence to some degree.

Use — to mark things you believe are beyond your control.

Push my buttons

On your list of stressors, which are your top 3 **hot buttons**³? Hot buttons are reactions or situations that make you react with a lot of emotion or have difficulty controlling yourself.

1

2

3

What provokes those hot buttons?

How do you usually react?

³ Adapted from the book "I am here now - a creative mindfulness guide and journal" Ebury Press 2015

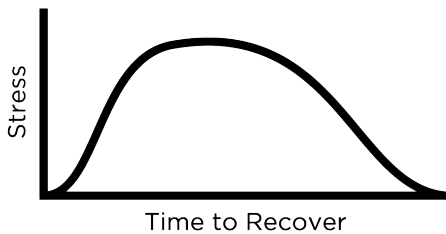
Notes

The optimal stress curve

Imagine that you are about to run in a big race, perform in a concert, or take an important test. Would you want to be yawning and dozing off? Probably not. On the other hand, you wouldn't want to be so nervous that your mind was racing and you were unable to concentrate.

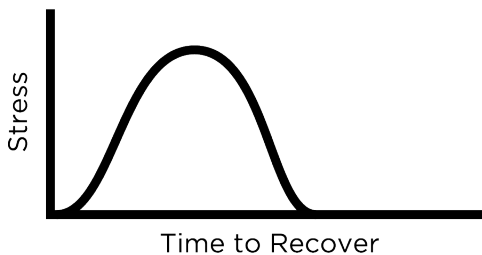
Too little or too much stress prevents us from doing the things we want to do and can even cause health problems. For each of us, there is an optimal level of stress that helps us do our best and stay healthy. Stress not resolved, without the possibility to recuperate, accumulates and its charge builds up. In order to do our best, we have to be at medium levels of stress - awake, alert and able to focus.

Here is a very basic stress curve, with 1 stress spike:



Notice that the increase in stress is very quick and the recovery takes a lot of time.

This is the same stress spike, but with a faster recovery:



What makes the difference?
Resilience.

We can't control external stressors, but we can affect how we react.

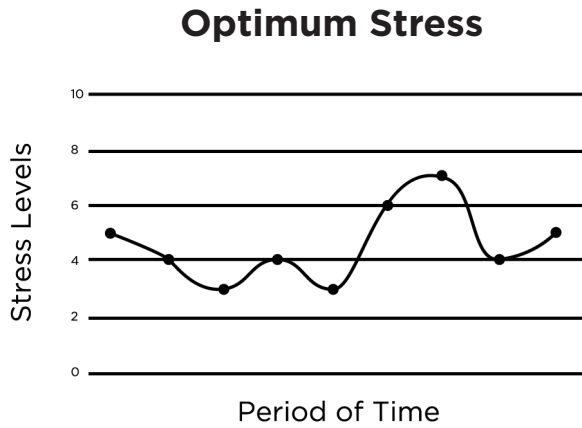
Why resilience matters

Resilience is the capacity to recover, to return to balance. Resilience helps by:

1. Making the stress spikes smaller - The same stressful event produces less of a reaction or disruption.
2. Decreasing the recovery time - We return to balance more quickly.
3. Lowering your typical level of stress - We have a lower stress level, so a stress spike won't go as high.
4. Not having a stress spike - We can respond to stressful situations more effectively, without them affecting us as strongly.

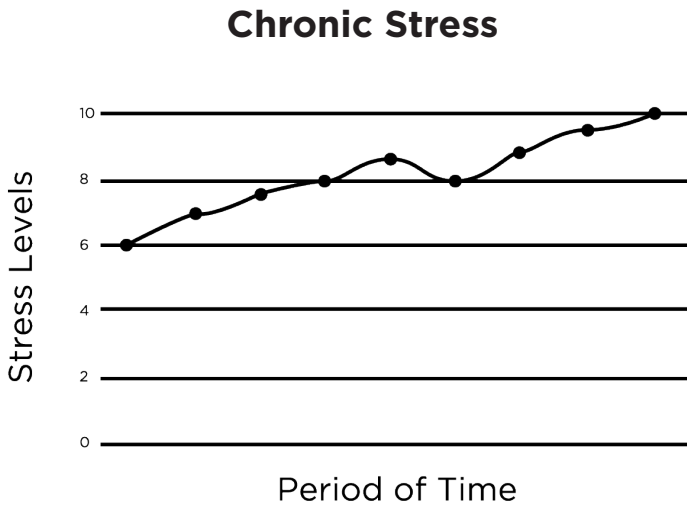
Section 1: Awareness

The below graph shows a **healthy** stress curve:



Notice the moments of intense stress. Often, stress increases very suddenly, as shown on the graph. Depending on the person, we may recover slowly or quickly. In the optimal stress curve, the recovery is very quick; the curve is steep. Resilience helps us recover quickly.

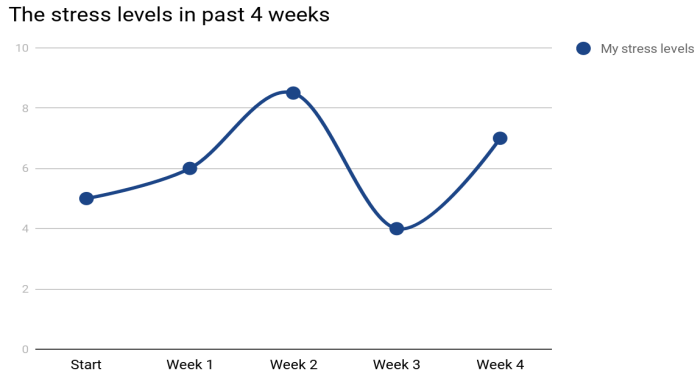
This graph shows a **chronic** stress curve:



In this example, the stress is less sudden. But there is not much recovery, so it builds over time. The moment of recovery is slower, showing low resilience.

Section 1: Awareness

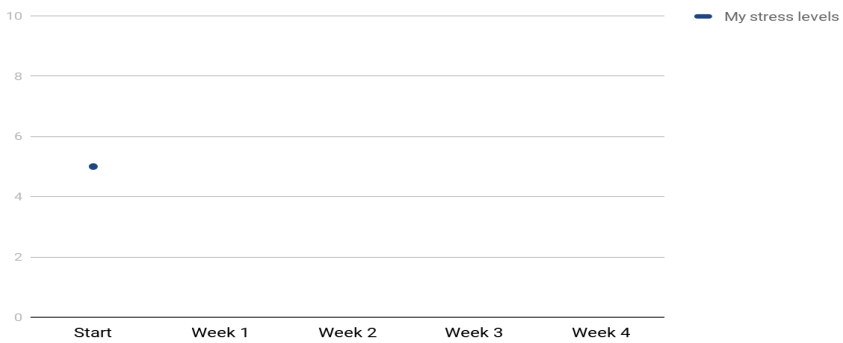
Here is an example of a stress curve in a single month:



Draw your stress curve. Think about your life in the past month:

- What good things were happening?
- What challenges did you have?
- change?
- What external factors affect your life the most?
- What were the moments of increased activation?
- What helps you manage your stress?
- Did your levels of stress change?

The stress levels in past 4 weeks



Other considerations:

- What is the stress curve for your team?
- What is the stress curve for your supervisor?

Section 1: Awareness

Consider alternatives to decrease activation and mitigate stress

- What else could have helped you recover?
- What could you have done in moments of peak stress?

Section 1: Awareness

Emotions

Emotions provide valuable, relevant **INFORMATION**. They inform us of “what is happening inside me.”

Emotions have an important **FUNCTION**. Emotions connect our body and mind, informing us of our needs and the needs of others in that we can “read” the other through their body reactions.

Recognizing the emotion gives us **POWER**, creating the possibility of “responding” instead of “reacting.” This is our space of liberty.

Naming the emotion is **SOOTHING** in itself. Accepting it and allowing it to be brings us calm.

The **R.A.I.N.** exercise (full meditation found on page 73) can help us to regulate our emotions:

- **RECOGNIZE** the emotion in your body
- **ALLOW – ACKNOWLEDGE** it is there with acceptance and kindness towards yourself and your emotion.
- **INVESTIGATE** with curiosity and open mindedness.
- **NON-IDENTIFY** with the emotion. “I have an emotion but I am not that emotion.”

Primary Emotions and their Functions

Each of our emotions play a unique role. New scientific advancements have enabled researchers to identify the psychological functions of each emotion.⁷

Anger -- Blood flows to the hands, heart rate increases, and a rush of adrenaline generates a pulse of energy strong enough for vigorous action.

Fear -- Blood flows to the large skeletal muscles, readying the body for flight. Simultaneously, the body momentarily freezes and hormones are released to allow the body to be alert to the threat, enabling time for quick safety planning and decision making.

Happiness -- Increased activity the brain inhibits negative feelings and fosters an increase in available energy. Physiologically, quiescence allows the body a general rest, and readiness for task(s) at hand.

Love -- Tender feelings, and sexual satisfaction entail parasympathetic arousal – dubbed the “relaxation response” – a body-wide set of reactions that generates a general state of calm and contentment, facilitating cooperation.

Surprise – The widening of the eyes allows the taking in of a larger visual sweep, permitting more light to strike the retina. This offers more information about the unexpected event, making it easier to concoct the best plan for action.

Disgust – Our reaction indicates something is offensive in taste or smell, or metaphorically so. The universal facial expression attempts to block the nose of a noxious odor or spit out a poisonous food.

Sadness - We experience a drop in energy and enthusiasm for life’s activities. This introspective withdrawal creates the opportunity to mourn a loss or frustrated hope, grasp its consequences for one’s life.

⁷Adapted from: Daniel Goleman. *Emotional Intelligence*, 1994 Bantam Dell

Section 1: Awareness

How do you recognize different emotions in your body? What sensations do you notice? (For example: tension, relaxation, softness, hardness, heat, cold, sweat, breath changes.)

These various functions of emotions give us a lot of power. They send important information in the communication and comprehension of what's happening around us and inside ourselves. Having that information allows us to react or respond. There is an important difference.

Emotions give knowledge about what is happening. This knowledge creates the possibility of responding, rather than reacting. This space is freedom.

Notes

Fostering Health & Well-Being

We invite you to practice the skills of **attentive awareness** and **self-monitoring**. They are important skills that can help us to discover and integrate new values and practices into our daily routine to support our individual resilience.

DISCOVER⁷

Think of a time **when you felt healthy**. What did you appreciate about the experience? What was it about you that made this happen? What was it about other people that made this happen? What other circumstances supported this experience?

Take a moment to think about what **health and well-being** means to you. Think of the time when you felt very **healthy and alive**. Why was it powerful? What are the **good things about you** that helped make this a special time? Did you learn anything new about yourself? Who else was involved and how did they help? Was there anything else that helped make this time special?

⁷ The questions adapted from "Promoting Health Behavior Change Using Appreciative Inquiry" Shirley M. Moore, PhD, RN; Jacqueline Charvat, MS, Fam Community Health, Supplement 1 to Vol. 30, No. 1S, pp. S64–S74 c 2007 Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, Inc.

It is important to make time for contemplative practices in our schedule. However, it is equally important to reflect on our own personal balance and identify changes or adjustments (big and small) that will help us each to remain healthy, satisfied with our life, and able to perform our job of serving others.

Contemplative practices tremendously help our body and mind. But it is equally important to have proper nutrition and sufficient sleep.

What proportions of your life would you like to change to feel more in balance?

MORE

LESS

What is the physical and mental activity balance that keeps you in an optimal level of activation?

Balance between:
work & personal life
concern for self & concern for others
short-term goals & long term goals
emotional reactivity & emotional response
physical arousal & relaxation

Section 2: Balance

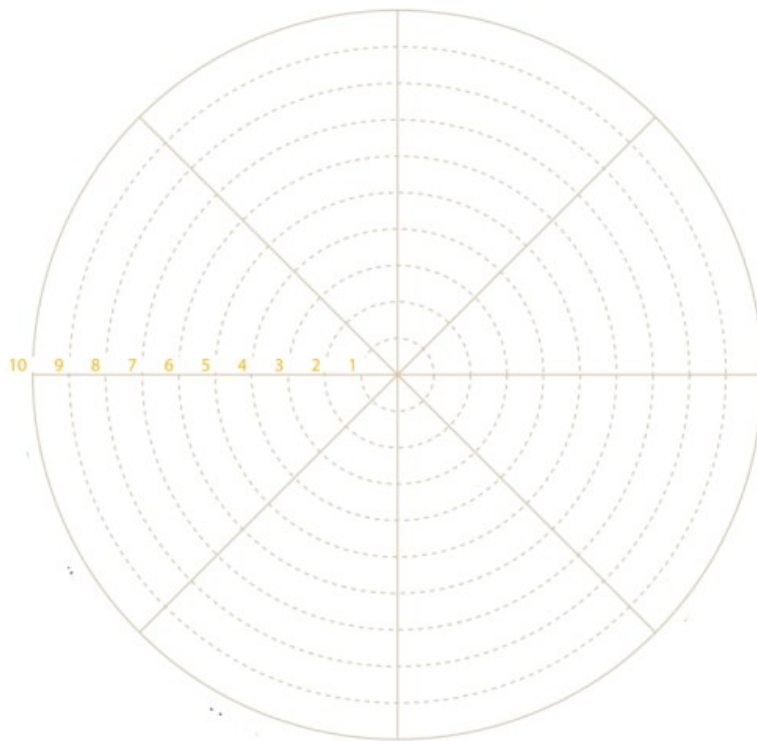
Balance wheel⁸

Is Your life in balance?

The purpose of the Balance Wheel is for the person using it to create a visual representation of how balanced they are in their life at the moment.

Choose eight priority areas that are important to you. Some examples may include, but are not limited to: Family, Friends, Love/Dating/Significant Other, Career, Finances or Money, Health, Recreation, Fun, Leisure or Hobbies, Personal Growth, Personal Development or Learning, Community, Public Service, Spirituality or Religion.

Label each of the eight sections on this wheel with your selected priority areas.



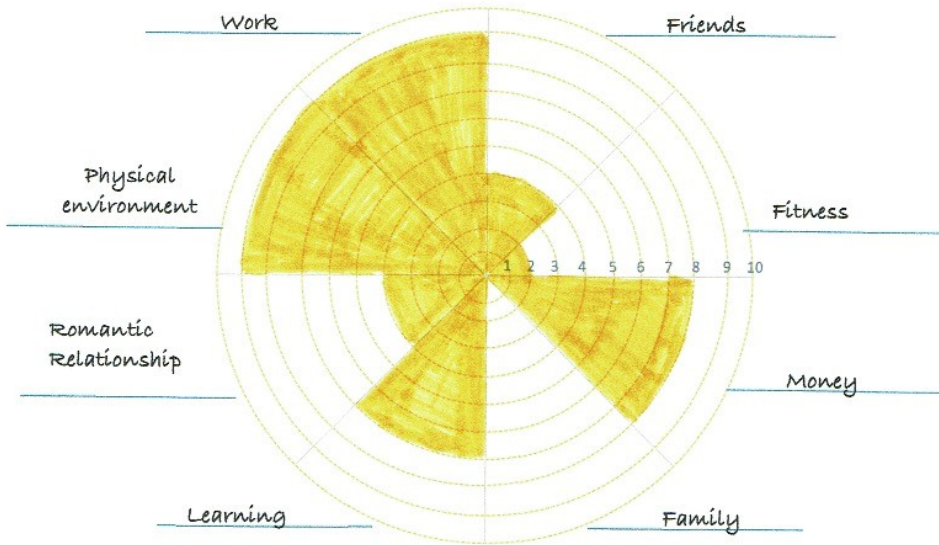
For every section on your wheel, rate the amount of time and energy that you are currently dedicating to this priority. Shade in each area (see example on next page).

Use the rating: 1 (minimal time and energy) - 10 (most time and energy)

⁸ adapted from "Wheel of Life" from Meyer Resource Group

Section 2: Balance

Below is an example of a completed Balance Wheel. This is for demonstration purposes only. Your Balance Wheel will reflect your individual priorities, time and energy.



Looking at your completed Balance Wheel on the previous page, how does it make you feel?

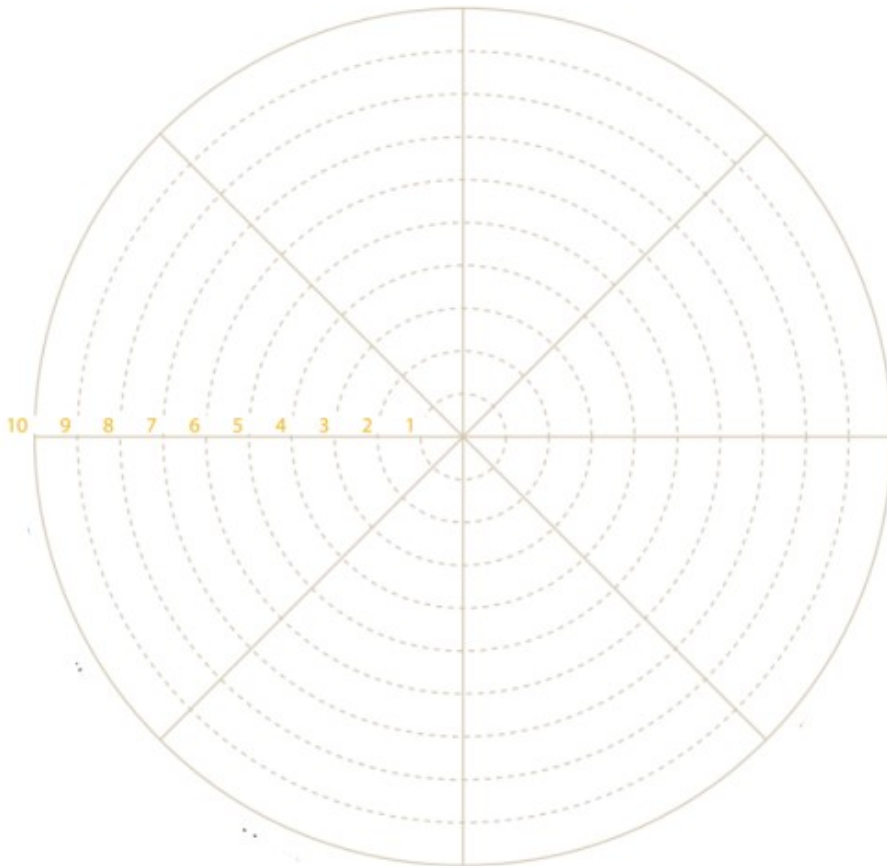
Does your wheel look balanced? If not, what do you need to do to bring your life into better equilibrium?

Section 2: Balance

Are there any areas you forgot and would like to include?

Consider what your aspirational wheel might look like. How would adjust the time and energy that you dedicate to these priority areas?

My Aspirational Balance Wheel:



What might support you in finding the balance you aspire to achieve?

Notes

Empathy and Compassion

This section focuses on the distinction between empathy and compassion, and the importance of compassion in enabling us to work effectively with the distress that can arise from empathy. It also draws from some of the recent research on compassion and lovingkindness to illustrate the benefits of compassion practice.

Common definitions:

EMPATHY	COMPASSION
<p>from Greek <i>em</i> (in) <i>pathos</i> (feeling)</p> <p>Passive attitude, often unconscious - feel with physical reactions that activate feelings, general capacity to resonate with others' emotional states, gives us capacity to experience what others experience, relate to those in our care, and put their experience into perspective.</p> <p>“Understanding a person from his or her frame of reference rather than one’s own, so that one vicariously experiences the person’s feelings, perceptions, and thoughts.”⁹</p> <p>Walking in another person’s shoes (C.Rogers)</p> <p>Empathy is our gut feeling that alerts us to the needs of others and draws us to respond. It can advise us who can be trusted and who should be feared.</p> <p>There is cognitive (mental) empathy “I can understand what you feel because I can imagine it” and emotional empathy “I understand what you feel... because I feel what you are feeling.”</p> <p>When connecting to painful experiences of others, it will lead to empathic distress: aversive response (we take the pain as our own), accompanied by desire to withdraw from the situation (to protect ourselves from excessive negative feeling)</p> <p>Self-preservative motivation and withdrawal/avoidant attitude</p>	<p>from Latin <i>com patere</i> (suffer with)</p> <p>Active attitude - feel for Feeling of concern for another person’s suffering with motivation to help.</p> <p>The ingredients of compassion are empathy (connecting with another person’s feeling), sympathy (recognition and awareness of another’s suffering), kindness (altruistic love), generosity and acceptance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - connecting with our shared humanity - we relate to our own experience of similar emotions and the universal human suffering, that inevitably affects us all, but it does not mean that we share the suffering of others as our own - consists of engagement: active attitude, stimulated important motives for action and desire for ourselves and others to be free of suffering, motivation to improve the other’s well-being - intention for alleviation and prevention of suffering, strong motivation to improve the other’s well-being (screening for the roots of suffering) and anticipated relief and joy for when the source of suffering would be removed - element of altruistic love, feeling of warmth, concern and care for the others (compassion and love: two sides of the same coin). <p>Prosocial motivation and approaching attitude</p>

⁹ after APA College Dictionary of Psychology. 2009. American Psychological Association

IMPORTANT PSYCHOLOGICAL AND NEUROLOGICAL DIFFERENCES

The most recent neuroscientific research demonstrates that empathy and compassion differ both on a **psychological** and a **neurological** level¹⁰. In participants exposed to images of suffering, empathy and compassion activate different, **non-overlapping areas of the brain** and create very contrasting emotional responses:

- **EMPATHY:** activation increased in brain areas stimulated when vicariously experiencing pain¹¹, as well as reported **increase in negative feelings**. The fMRI scans showed that empathizing with another person's feelings leads to the activation of neural networks that also support the **first-person experience of these feelings** (positive and negative ones).
- **COMPASSION:** Activation increased in brain regions responsible for experiencing pleasant sensations and social rewards.¹² Subjects reported a decrease of negative feelings and an increase of positive ones. Reactions are based on positive, other-oriented feelings and the activation of prosocial motivation and behavior.

The results show clearly that despite frequent confusion of the two terms they mean two distinct mental states.

In empathy we feel the pain or the negative feelings as our own. That explains why empathizing with suffering others for longer period of time causes withdrawal and rejection and when experienced chronically, it can give rise to negative health outcomes (fatigue, burnout, secondary or vicarious trauma).

Compassion strengthens resilience and eliminates the negative impact of the interactions with the suffering of others.

¹⁰T. Singer, O.Klimecki research study on empathy and compassion, Current Biology, Volume 24, Issue 18, pR875–R878, 22 September 2014 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.cub.2014.06.054>

¹¹Insula and anterior middle cingulate cortex

¹²Spanning medial orbitofrontal cortex and ventral striatum

WHY WE TEACH COMPASSION IN THE CBR TRAINING

Compassion is one of the key ways to facilitate connection.

Neuroscience has brought new, powerful insights about the distinction between empathy and compassion. It shows that the brain has neuroplasticity.

Contemplative practices emphasize that compassion can be learned, and neuroscience supports this approach. Techniques such as compassion meditation and loving-kindness are ways to train ourselves to be more compassionate.

Compassion is also a powerful tool to strengthen resilience. The growing volume of research demonstrates that even **short-term compassion training** can:

- Reverse the negative effect of empathic distress due to exposure to the suffering of others
- Increase positive feelings and resilience (activations in a neural network usually related to positive emotions)
- Promote prosocial behavior and a sense of connection with others
- Strengthen better coping behaviors in stressful situations

Compassion is an intention, which can be sustained and repeated indefinitely. In this way, compassion cannot be worn out. It also gives strong sense of agency to the practitioner, that at least through compassion they can do something.

Compassion helps strengthen the “right muscles in our brain,” those responsible for **positive feelings** and a **sense of connection**. It helps cultivate positive mental states that strengthen relevant neural networks that prove effective when we face adversities and witness suffering. “neurons that fire together, wire together”

See page 77 for the Lovingkindness Meditation or page 75 for Self Compassion Meditation.

Section 3: Connection

Self-Compassion

Compassion starts with self-compassion. It will not be possible to develop deeper levels of compassion without attention to compassion first towards ourselves.

We may use it as another area for practicing awareness and mindful attitude. Trying to observe first: How do we relate to ourselves? How do we talk to ourselves? How supportive or harsh do we tend to be?

As in previous exercises, the first step is to help ourselves gain awareness - of our tone, attitude, of what is - without a judging or self-accusatory tone. Then reflecting, how we could bring it to a more balanced point, which could be more helpful and supportive. We can let go and see what would be constructive, helpful and friendly.

Awareness of your self-compassion and learning to become your own ally¹³

How easy is it for you to ignore your own needs and focus on the needs of others?

What type of things do you typically judge or criticize yourself for – appearance, career, relationships, parenting and so on?

What type of language do you use with yourself when you notice some flaw or make a mistake – do you insult yourself or talk with a more kind and understanding tone? Are you highly self-critical?

What are the consequences of being so hard on yourself? Does it make you more motivated, or does it tend to make you discouraged?

Do you truly accept yourself exactly as you are? If so, how does it feel? If not, how might that feel?

¹³ From: Kristin Neff. *Self-Compassion*. 2011. Hodder & Stoughton

Section 3: Connection

How do you treat yourself when you run into challenges in your life? Do you ignore yourself and focus exclusively on the problem? Do you stop to give yourself care and comfort as you work on the problem?

Self-compassion, according to Dr. Kristin Neff, requires the following three key elements¹⁴:

Self-kindness is being gentle and understanding with ourselves instead of being harsh and judgmental. It is not only stopping judgment or harshness towards oneself, but also actively seeking ways to soothe and comfort, just as we would respond to a dear friend in need.

Recognition of our common humanity prevents isolation and alienation when we are in pain. It's important to stay connected to others, even when we are suffering. In fact, it's important to stay connected to others *especially* when we are suffering.

Mindfulness holds our experience in balanced awareness, rather than ignoring or fueling our pain. Non-judgment towards ourselves is essential to an effective mindful practice. Let go, begin again. I fall, I rise—again and again.

Learning these skills is a process. It requires practice. Think about how you can apply these ideas. What are some small changes that could soften the grip of the inner critic?

For example, can you try to change your self-talk to be kinder? How is your tone of voice? Is it possible to talk to yourself in a way that is more friendly and supportive?

¹⁴ From: Kristin Neff. *Self-Compassion*. 2011. Hodder & Stoughton

Notes

Social Support

- **Social support is essential for well-being. Feeling socially safe and connected is a powerful predictor of mental well-being. It also has a direct impact on stress.**
- **Compassion practices enhance our perception of our social support and change the quality of our relationships.**

Part of resilience is how we perceive and appreciate the social support that we actually have. It's common to focus on lack, on what we don't yet have or don't have anymore. But it's important not to overlook small details, such as everyday kindness.

Scientists have measured things which induce connection. They have a physiological reaction; they release of oxytocin in the brain. (Oxytocin is the bonding hormone, the prosocial molecules. These things all induce connection:

- Touch: including handshakes, hugs (especially long ones), massage
- Social contacts: talking and interacting with other people
- Team sports
- Kindness and friendliness
- Laughter
- Practices of self-compassion and self-kindness
- Practices of loving-kindness and compassion

See page 77 for Lovingkindness Meditation.

Notes

Notes



MEDITATION

Introduction to Meditation

By Sharon Salzberg

People have been transforming their minds through meditations for thousands of years, across cultures. Depending on the type, meditation may be done in silence and stillness, or by using voice and sound, or by engaging the body in movement. All forms emphasize the training of attention. Three basic skills of meditation practice are concentration, mindfulness and loving-kindness or compassion.

1. Concentration

We can be somewhat scattered or distracted, fragmented, with our attention jumping to the past, and jumping to the future so that we lose energy, we lose stability. As we practice concentration, we gather all of that attention and energy back to this moment so that it becomes available to us and made powerful by that.

2. Mindfulness

Mindfulness means developing a quality of awareness of attention so that we can see more clearly what is actually happening in the moment, instead of being so swayed by different habits that may arise, projecting into the future, comparing, judging, holding onto certain assumptions, and not realizing that they are guiding us. With mindfulness, as we cultivate that quality of attention, we find that we can be more honestly, more cleanly, more directly *with* our experience as it is. Instead of being lost in a world of interpretation and judgment, we can actually connect to what is happening. This gives us the power of perspective, of understanding of seeing things differently.

3. Loving-kindness or compassion

The skill of loving-kindness or compassion is to realize that the best way forward for ourselves and then for others is to have a sense of compassion. Rather than being lost in such harsh judgments, unfair standards, perfectionism, we recognize that the rhythm of life itself is one where we are having to continually begin again. We move forward, we get stopped, we have to start over. We have a big plan, a big vision, we forget it. We have to be reminded. In this way, because of the compassionate element, because it helps us begin again and find renewal, meditation can be seen as a kind of resilience training.

• • •

These three skills – concentration, mindfulness and loving kindness or compassion – are considered trainable. These are not seen as gifts that some people have and others don't, but by training our attention to be more centered, more open, more flexible, more connected, we find that this is the result. What we are aiming for in meditation practice is a state of balance. We are deepening relaxation, letting go, finding tranquility and peace. We are also deepening interest, connection, investigation, energy. We want both. It's a state of relaxed alertness.

Presence and balance

It's very important to remember that in meditation practice, we are not so concerned with what comes up. We are more concerned with how we *are* with what comes up. So you actually cannot fail at this. The question isn't "what's arising" but how present are we with it? How balanced are we with it? How much compassion can we have with it? That's the place where we mark progress in meditation. It's in the way we relate to what comes up. So please don't feel discouraged if you find a lot of thinking or a different kind of experience than what you had imagined. That what you had imagined. The most important thing is in developing that balance so that no matter what happens, joyous or difficult, or anywhere in between, we can practice these skills of concentration, mindfulness and loving-kindness and compassion in relation to it.

Finding a Structure

The spirit of the meditation practice is one of really making it your own. Do it for the amount of time, the frequency that feels right for you. There's no impossible standard you are trying to meet. You can find your own pace. And more than anything consider this an experiment just like an exploration. Try it out and if you're going to assess if it's making any difference, if it's bringing you any benefit, I would urge you first of all not to evaluate it constantly, because then you won't really be doing it, you'll just be thinking about it. But set some structure. Some amount of time that seems reasonable to you. Something like: I will try this out for 5-10 minutes per day for a month, and then we'll see. Whatever seems right to you. And when you are going to look for the benefits, I would really urge you to look at your life. Don't look at that formal period of practice that you are experimenting with. Look at how you feel about yourself, how you talk to yourself, how you meet a stranger, how you deal with disappointment, how open you are to joy. Those are the things we look at to see if meditation practice has been of benefit to us.

The Attitudinal Foundations of Mindfulness Practice

(Adapted from Full Catastrophe Living by Jon Kabat-Zinn)

1. Non-Judging

- Taking the position of an impartial witness to your own experience
- Noticing the stream of judging mind ... good/bad/neutral ... not trying to stop it but just being aware of it.

2. Patience

- Letting things unfold in their own time
- A child may try to help a butterfly emerge by breaking open a chrysalis but chances are the butterfly will not benefit from this help.
- Practicing patience with ourselves. “Why rush through some moments in order to get to other ‘better’ ones? Each one is your life in that moment.”
- Being completely open to each moment, accepting its fullness, knowing that, like the butterfly, things will emerge in their own time.

3. Beginner’s Mind

- Too often we let our thinking and our beliefs about what we ‘know’ stop us from seeing things as they really are.
- Cultivating a mind that is willing to see everything as if for the first time.
- Being receptive to new possibilities...not getting stuck in a rut of our expertise.
- Each moment is unique and contains unique possibilities.
- Try it with someone you know – next time, ask yourself if you are seeing this person with fresh eyes, as he/she/they really are? Try it with problems...with the sky...with the dog...with the man in the corner shop.

4. Trust

- Developing a basic trust in yourself and your feelings.
- Trusting in your own authority and intuition even if you make some ‘mistakes’ along the way.
- Honor your feelings. Taking responsibility for yourself and your own well-being.

5. Non-striving

- Meditation has no goal other than for you to be yourself. The irony is you already are.
- Paying attention to how you are right now – however that is. Just watch.
- The best way to achieve your own goals is to back off from striving and instead start to really focus on carefully seeing and accepting things as they are, moment by moment. With patience and regular practice, movement towards your goals will take place by itself.

6. Acceptance

- Seeing things as they actually are in the present. If you have a headache, accept that you have a headache.
- We often waste a lot of time and energy denying what is fact. We are trying to force situations to how we would like them to be. This creates more tension and prevents positive change occurring.
- Now is the only time we have for anything. You have to accept yourself as you are before you can really change.
- Acceptance is not passive; it does not mean you have to like everything and abandon your principles and values. It does not mean you have to be resigned to tolerating things. It does not mean that you should stop trying to break free of your own self-destructive habits or give up your desire to change and grow.
- Acceptance is a willingness to see things as they are. You are much more likely to know what to do and have an inner conviction to act when you have a clear picture of what is actually happening.

7. Letting Go

- Letting go is a way of letting things be, of accepting things as they are.
- We let things go and we just watch...
- If we find it particularly difficult to let go of something because it has such a strong hold on our mind, we can direct our attention to what “holding” feels like. Holding on is the opposite of letting go. Being willing to look at the ways we hold on shows a lot about its opposite.
- You already know how to let go... Every night when we go to sleep we let go.

Notes

PRACTICES

Breath meditation ¹⁵

To begin with, you can sit comfortably or lie down. If you are sitting, it helps if your back can be straight, without being strained or overstretched. You can close your eyes or not, however you feel most at ease.

Notice where you feel your breath most strongly. Is it at the nostrils, at the chest or at the abdomen? Where you find that place, bring your attention there and rest. See if you can feel just one breath from the beginning, through the middle, to the end.

You don't have to be concerned with what's already gone by. You don't have to mentally lean forward for even the very next breath. Just this one.

If you like, you can use a quiet mental notation of "in... out" or "rising... falling" to help support the awareness of the breath, but very quiet so your attention is really going to feeling the breath. If you're with the breath be feeling tingling, vibration, warmth, coolness, if at the abdomen or chest, there may be movement, pressure, stretching, release. You don't have to name these things, but feel them. This is what we pay attention to, the actual sensations of the breath.

And if images or sounds, emotions or sensations arise, but they are not strong enough to take you away from feeling your breath, just let them flow on by. You don't have to follow after them, you don't have to attack them, it's just one breath.

But if something arises – a sensation, an emotion, memory, plan, whatever it might be – that is strong enough to take your attention away from the feeling on the breath, or you fall asleep or if you get in lost in some incredible fantasy, don't worry about it.

We say the most important moment in the whole process is the next moment, when you realize you've been distracted. That's the moment that we practice letting go, and we practice not judging ourselves, not condemning ourselves, but being kind to ourselves and beginning again.

So we let go, we begin again. We bring our attention back to the feeling of the breath. It can be the normal natural breath, however it's arising, however it's changing. You don't have to make it into something special. It is the place where we rest, we come back. If you have to let go of a distraction and begin again thousands of times, it's fine.

That's actually the mental training. It's like training a muscle. We let go, without judgement and we begin again. We bring our attention back to the feeling of the breath. If you see your attention jumping to the past, jumping to the future, judgement, speculation, it's all right. Our practice is to gently let go and simply return.

Remember that in letting go of distraction, the important word is gentle. We can gently let go, we can forgive ourselves for having wandered, and with great kindness to ourselves we can begin again. It's just one breath.

And when you feel ready, you can open your eyes and end the session.

¹⁵ © Mindfulness Training Institute of Washington, www.mindfulnesstraining.org Used by permission

Practices

Letting go of thought¹⁶

In this meditation, you can sit comfortably or lie down. Close your eyes. Or if you're keeping them open, just find a spot in front of you to rest your gaze. Center your attention on the feeling of the in- and out-breath. At the nostrils, at the chest, or at the abdomen. Just the normal, natural breath. And as you feel the sensations of the breath, you can make a very quiet, mental notation of "breath". With the in-breath, with the out-breath.

And then when a thought arises that's strong enough to take your attention away from the breath, simply note it as "not breath", and you can recognize it in just this way. It doesn't matter if it's the most beautiful thought in the world, or the most terrible thought in the world, the one you would never disclose to anybody else. It's simply not the breath.

You don't have to judge yourself. You don't have to get lost in a thought or elaborate on it. You recognize it's not the breath. Very gently let go and bring your attention back to the feeling of the breath. It's "breath" and "not breath".

Some of your thoughts may be tender, caring. Some may be cruel, hurtful. But they're not the breath. See them, recognize them, let them go. Bring your attention back to the feeling of the breath. The thoughts are like clouds moving through the sky. Some are very light and fluffy looking, very inviting. Some are quite ominous and threatening. But they are not the breath. Just let them go.

Our habit is to grab onto a thought. Build an entire world around it or push it away, struggle against it. Here we stay even, balanced, calm. We simply recognize, "it's not the breath". Very gently let it go. Bring your attention back, one breath at a time. And when you feel ready, you can open your eyes and end the session.

¹⁶ © Mindfulness Training Institute of Washington, www.mindfulnesstraining.org Used by permission

Practices

Hearing meditation¹⁷

To begin with, you can take a comfortable posture. Close your eyes or not. If your eyes are open, you can find a spot in front of you to rest your gaze.

Recognize that sound is continually coming and going outside of our control. Even as we like certain sounds and we don't like others, we don't have to chase after them to hold on or push away, trying to seize control over that which we will never have control over. Some beautiful, wonderful sounds arise, Others are quite unpleasant.

Unless you're responsible for responding to the sound, this is a time when you can actually practice simply being present. Notice the sound for what it is. Try not to elaborate. For example, the tendency is to think, "Oh, that's the bus. I wonder what the bus route is. Maybe they should change it". Instead, simply hear. You can hear the sounds that arise and pass away, as though they are washing through you. There's nothing you need to do about them. You don't need to respond, you don't need to try to stop them. Whether it is the sound of my voice or other sounds. Some near, some far. Some welcome, some not so welcome. Simply sound, arising and passing away.

You can notice changes in intensity and volume as the sound washes through you , without interference, without judgement. You don't have to send your ears out to listen. Relax deep inside. Create a sense of space in which sound is arising and falling.

If you find yourself getting tense in reaction to a sound, take a deep breath, just relax. If you find yourself craving more of a sound, here too, you can take a deep breath and simply relax. Because the sound will arise and pass away, without regard to our clinging or condemning. Simply notice that the sound arises. We have certain response to it. And stay open for the appearance of the next sound.

And when you feel ready, you can open your eyes.

¹⁷ © Mindfulness Training Institute of Washington, www.mindfulnesstraining.org Used by permission

Practices

Meditation: working with emotions

Generally, during meditation keep yourself centered on the breath. If there are emotions in the background, leave them there, keeping the breath in the foreground of awareness as if it is the fulcrum for your experience. When an emotion becomes compelling enough to make it difficult to stay with the breath, then switch your attention to the emotion, making it the center of your attention.

There are four aspects to mindfulness of emotions. You don't have to practice all four each time you focus on an emotion. At different times, each is appropriate. Experiment to see how each can help in developing a non-reactive attention to emotions. The four are:

Recognition: A basic principle of mindfulness is that you cannot experience freedom and spaciousness unless you recognize what is happening. The more you learn to recognize the range of emotion, including the most subtle, the more you will become familiar and comfortable with them and the less you will be in their thrall.

Noting or Naming: A steady and relaxed labeling of the emotion of the moment, e.g. "joy", "anger", "frustration", "happiness", "boredom", "contentment", "desire", and the like, encourages us to stay present with what is central in our experience. Naming can also help us become calm and less entangled with emotion, less identified with it or reactive to its presence.

Acceptance: This does not mean condoning or justifying certain feelings. It means simply allowing emotions to be present, whatever they may be. Many people frequently judge and censure their feelings. Formal meditation practice offers us the extraordinary opportunity to practice unconditional acceptance of our emotions. This does not mean expressing emotion, but letting emotions move through you without any inhibitions, resistance or encouragement.

Investigation: Notice the bodily sensations of the emotion, letting the body be the container for the emotion. Investigation is not analysis, but more a sensory awareness exercise of feeling our way into present moment experience of the emotions. In a sense, the body is a bigger container than the thinking mind which is easily exhausted, and which tends to spin off into stories, analysis, and attempts to fix the situation – away from acceptance of the present moment experience. This entails dropping any fixed ideas we have about an emotion and looking at it afresh. Emotions are composite events made up of bodily sensations, thoughts, feelings, motivations, and attitudes.

Practices

Body scan meditation¹⁸

In a comfortable place where you're not likely to be disturbed, lie down on your back on a mat or pad on the floor, or on a bed. (Use an alternative position if lying on your back is not comfortable).

Use a pillow underneath your knees, a thin pillow underneath your head to help align your neck and spine, and cover yourself with a blanket to keep warm if you like.

Gently allow your eyes to close.

With kind and caring attention, take a few moments to feel your body as a whole, from head to toes – feeling the envelope of your skin – noticing the sensations associated with touching their places that are in contact with the surface beneath you.

Feeling your whole body breathing, bring awareness to the love that you have for yourself or to the intention to love yourself – breathe with this love and caring – let it gently and slowly expand, filling your entire body.

Let love and caring fill your entire being. Breathe in and out with this feeling for a few minutes.

With this sense of love and caring, bring a kind, gentle attention to each region of your body in progression, focusing on each area in turn, releasing any tension or holding as you breathe freely:

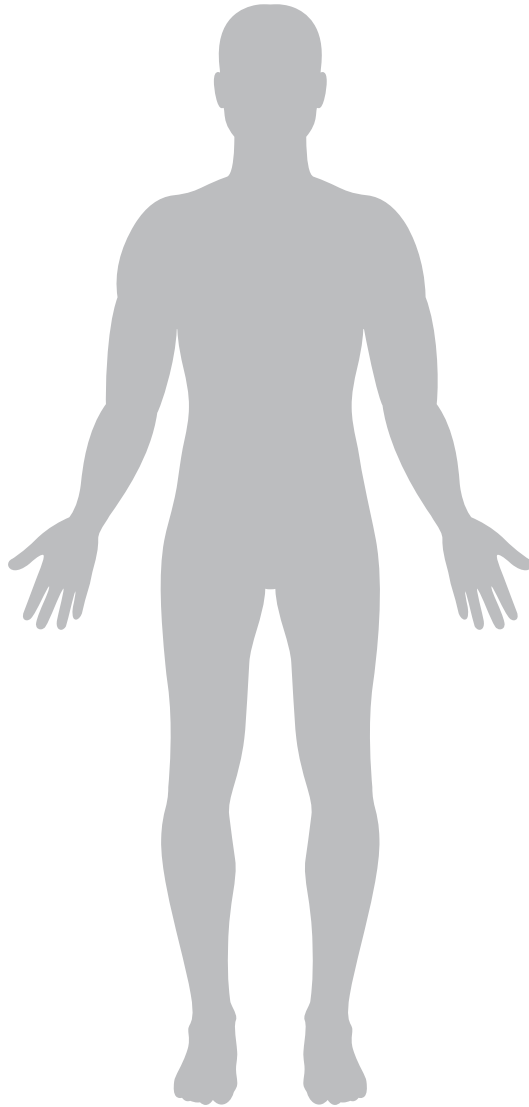
- beginning with the toes, feet, ankles, knees, and legs
- moving up to the pelvis, buttocks and hips
- moving along to the lower back and belly
- to the middle torso, diaphragm, and the front and back ribs
- to the chest, upper torso back and front
- up through the shoulders and down to arms, wrists, hands and fingers
- through the neck, back of the head, scalp, and the top of the head
- to the jaw, chin, mouth, cheeks, nose, eyes, and forehead

Bring your awareness back to your breath rising and falling in your belly

When you are ready, slowly open your eyes, aware of any thoughts.

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Practices



Walking meditation¹⁹

Walking meditation is an example of bringing mindfulness into activities of day-to-day life. If walking is a problem for you because of injury, then it's the kind of meditation you can do without literally walking. You can move your attention to your arm, going up and down. You can bring your attention to wheeling, if you are in a wheelchair. You can find your own form of movement meditation. The essence of walking meditation is bringing mindfulness to something that we normally do without paying much attention to it. Very often, if we are walking or going from place to place, our attention is just consumed by what we will say when we get there. And then what the other person will say. And how we will respond. And then we miss the whole transition point, going from here to there. So in this exercise, we try to bring our attention into the body, to bring awareness to the activity of movement. In walking meditation, first of all, we need to know we do this with our eyes open and the awareness we bring to our body is a very light awareness so that we are not trying for a tight, exclusive focus, neglecting everything that's going on around us.

We can be in touch with the sensations in our bodies, even as we are also aware of what we're seeing, what we are hearing. Feeling the breeze, feeling the sun. But we have this touchstone, this center, for our awareness.

If you're outside, walk at a normal pace. And what you feel is just the sensations of your feet touching the ground. Touch, touch, touch, touch. Or your body moving through space. This is not an anatomical exercise, like knowing this muscle group is doing this, and that muscle group is doing that. But pay attention to the actual sensations. Hardness. Softness. Tightness. Relaxation. Whatever it might be. Again, you don't have to name all these things. But feel them. And simply walk. Feel your feet against the ground. Touch, touch, touch, touch.

If your mind wanders, if you become lost in thought, simply recognize that and begin again. Bring your attention back to the sensations of moment. After some time, if you are indoors or you're in a protected area, where you don't feel people will be staring at you, slow down somewhat. Feel the sensations of your leg going up, coming down. Heaviness. Lightness. Pressure. Hardness. Softness. That naming them, you can feel them. If you wish, you can use a quiet mental notation right at the beginning of each part of the movement. Lifting. Placing. Lifting. Placing. But let your quiet attention simply feel, even as you are aware of everything going on around you. This is like a secret refuge, a place of attention, an oasis of connection, one step at a time.

And again, after some time, if you're indoors or in protected place, you can slow down even more, as an experiment. Not so much that you lose your balance, but enough so that you can really feel the tremendous array of sensations in the movement. Lift your leg. Moving it forward. Placing it down. Shifting your weight. And then the next leg. Lifting. Moving. Placing, Shifting.

If you notice your attention wandering, it is perfectly alright. You recognize you've become distracted. You let it go. You bring your attention back. This very light attention, light awareness, to experience the very next step.

Then when you finish the walking meditation, see if you can bring this level of attention to sensations, this kind of awareness, into your day.

¹⁹ from Jon Kabat-Zinn, used with permission

Practices

SOBER technique²⁰

This is a mindfulness practice you can do almost anywhere. You can think of it as the mindfulness version of first aid. It can be particularly helpful in challenging or difficult situations. It can help you move from being triggered by a person or situation with the urge to respond in reactive way or to comfort yourself in ways that are not helpful (for example, using food, drink, drugs, cigarettes, or other unhealthy habits to comfort yourself when you are anxious or stressed).

The acronym is SOBER and is taken from Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT). It can be a very helpful practice to step out of automatic pilot and respond to a person or situation more mindfully.

If you feel pulled towards responding to a situation or person in a reactive way or towards acting out an unhealthy habit, you can take these steps:

Stop, slow down, and bring awareness to this moment. Check in with what you are experiencing.

Observe what is happening in your body, emotions, and thoughts with acceptance and without judgement.

Breathe – take a few deeper breaths and then focus simply on the sensations of breathing .

Expand your awareness - to include your whole body and the overall situation and context with a kind and accepting attention.

Respond mindfully – make a choice to respond in a way that supports your deepest intentions. Whatever is happening in your mind and body, you have a choice in how you respond.

²⁰ adapted from Segal, Williams, and Teasdale, Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy for Depression, 2002
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Practices

RAIN technique²¹

This is an acronym, **R-A-I-N**, that represents four steps you can take to skillfully work with your emotions and thoughts. These are:

Recognize what you are feeling. you can't figure out how to deal with this emotion until you know what's happening. You recognize "this is what's happening right now".

Acceptance which can be also called acknowledging. People tend to resist or deny certain feelings, especially if they are unpleasant. But in meditation practice, you open to whatever emotion arises. If you're experiencing anger, that's what you use as a vehicle for mindfulness. If you're experiencing boredom, use that. Don't blame yourself if a troubling emotion comes up. We accept, we acknowledge.

Investigate the emotion. Instead of running away from it, move closer, observing it with an unbiased interest. In order to do that, you need to take a moment. Not only to refrain from your usual reaction, but also to unhook from the object of the feeling. The usual pattern when you are caught up in a strong emotion, is to fixate on its trigger or target, rather than examining the emotion itself.

Non-identifying with the emotion. The embarrassment or disappointment you are feeling today isn't your whole resume, the final word on who you are and who you are going to be. Instead of confusing a temporary state with your total self, you come to see that your emotions arise, last a while, then disappear. You feel some fear, and then you don't. You're resentful and then you aren't.

These four steps—recognition, acceptance, investigation and non-identification—can be applied to your thoughts and emotions.

The point of mindfulness is to get in touch with the witnessing capacity we all have. You are not trying to eliminate thinking, but rather to know what you are thinking as you're thinking it, not later, after you've taken action. Just as you want to know what you're feeling as you're feeling it.

Mindfulness of our thinking, using something like RAIN, allows us to watch our thoughts, see how one thought leads to the next, decide if we are heading down an unhealthy path. And if so, let go and change directions. It allows you to see that, who you are is much more than a fearful or envious or angry thought. You can rest in the awareness of the thought, rather than be bound up or caught in the thought itself.

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Practices

Self-compassion meditation²²

This meditation follows a similar format to the loving-kindness meditation, but with the emphasis on cultivating compassion towards oneself.

Begin by sitting in a relaxed and comfortable posture—or you can practice this meditation walking in a quiet place. Take some moments to relax and let go of any tension in the body and mind by taking some full breaths, relaxing any area of tension in the body, and inviting a smile to the corners of your eyes and mouth.

Bring a kind attention to any suffering you may be experiencing—sadness, loneliness, fear, hurt, or worry—and meet your feelings with kindness and care. Allow yourself to let go of any story or narrative about why you are feeling sad, lonely, etc, and open to the feelings you are experiencing.

Open to the bodily feelings that are present with kindness and acceptance. You can place a hand on your heart and hold the painful feelings that are present with kindness. Set the intention to meet the painful feelings with care, compassion and understanding.

Know that you are not alone, that others too are experiencing difficulties, pain, and loss; that this is a shared human experience. Now repeat these phrases to yourself with kindness:

May I be safe
May I be happy
May I be kind to myself
May I accept myself as I am

Repeat the phrases to yourself, opening to whatever bodily feelings may arise, meeting whatever you experience with kindness and acceptance. When the mind wanders, gently bring your attention back to repeating the phrases, or to the bodily feelings that are present.

If the practice evokes intense feelings or emotions, you can come back to awareness of your breathing, and when you feel ready, return to the phrases of self-compassion.

Finally, sit quietly for a few minutes, opening to whatever feelings or sensations are present. Allow yourself to take in any feelings of kindness towards yourself that arise, and if no feelings come up, or if you experience negative or difficult emotions, meet this with kindness and acceptance, appreciating the efforts and intentions you have brought to this practice of cultivating kindness towards yourself.

²² © Mindfulness Training Institute of Washington, www.mindfulnesstraining.org, used with permission

Practices

Loving-kindness meditation²³

To practice loving-kindness meditation, sit in a comfortable and relaxed manner. Take two or three deep breaths with slow, long and complete exhalations. Let go of any concerns or preoccupations. For a few minutes, feel or imagine the breath moving through the center of your chest – in the area of your heart.

Loving-kindness is usually practiced first towards oneself. Since we often have difficulty loving others without first loving ourselves. Sitting quietly, mentally repeat, slowly and steadily, the following or similar phrases:

May I be happy. May I be safe. May I be healthy and well. May I live with ease.

While you say these phrases, allow yourself to sink into the intentions they express. Loving-kindness meditation consists primarily of connecting to the intention of wishing ourselves or others happiness. However, if feelings of warmth, friendliness, or love arise in the body or mind, connect to them. Allowing them to grow as you repeat the phrases. As an aid to the meditation, you may hold an image of yourself in your mind's eye. This helps to reinforce the intentions expressed in the phrases.

After a period of directing loving-kindness towards yourself, bring to mind a friend or someone in your life who has deeply cared for you. Then slowly repeat phrases of loving-kindness toward them.

May you be happy. May you be safe. May you be healthy and well. May you live with ease.

As you say these phrases, again sink into their intention or heartfelt meaning. And, if any feelings of loving-kindness arise, connect the feelings with the phrases so that the feelings may become stronger as you repeat the words.

As you continue the meditation, you can bring to mind other friends, neighbors, acquaintances, strangers, animals, and finally people with whom you have difficulty. You can use the same phrases, repeating them, or make up phrases that better represent the loving-kindness you feel towards these beings.

Sometimes during loving-kindness meditation, seemingly opposite feelings such as anger, grief, or sadness may arise. Take these to be signs that your heart is softening, revealing what is held there. You can either shift to mindfulness practice – with whatever patience, acceptance, and kindness, you can muster for such feelings – direct loving-kindness toward them. Above all, remember that there is no need to judge yourself for having these feelings. You might begin by practicing loving-kindness meditation for 15 minutes daily or as often as you are able and gradually extend to 20, 30 minutes or longer depending on your situation and inclination.

²³ adapted from Gil Fronsdal, "The issue at Hand" 2001

Practices

Ordinary moments

Finding a structure for practice without distractions is important. Additionally, you can access the forces of mindfulness at any moment, without anyone knowing you're doing it. Daily life provides many opportunities to practice awareness, balance, and connection. You can practice them in less obvious ways. Doing so will help you be more aware of, and sensitive to, all that is happening to you.

Throughout the day, take a moment to stop rushing and simply be. You don't have to walk very, very slowly down the streets of a major city. Rest your attention on your breath. Or feel your feet against the ground. In a meeting, during a phone conversation, taking a walk, eating a meal, feeding a baby. At any moment, you can observe the flow of sounds and activities around you.

Even in a more complex or loud situation, you can take a moment. Return to yourself, return to what's happening. This pause, this moment can bring a sense of connection. It can return you to your sense of priorities. It can help provide relief from obsessing about all that that you need to do. Or what might happen next.

You can repeat these simple acts many times throughout the day. You can imagine the goal of your meditation practice becoming short moments many times. Short moments of awareness many times a day. Short moments of stopping many times a day.

There are many benefits to reflecting and noticing your body, your thoughts, and your emotions when you practice. Equally, noticing yourself throughout the day brings many benefits. Whatever situation you are in, these mindful moments give us tremendous perspective and a sense of spaciousness that is born out of genuine connection.

Practices

The sacred pause

Practices for enhancing awareness in daily life

The “sacred pause” helps us reconnect with the present moment. Especially when we are caught up in striving and obsessing and leaning into the future, pausing enables us to re-enter the vitality only found in the here and now. Experiment with adding these practices into the flow of your daily activities. Feel free to explore creating your own version of the “sacred pause” as well.

Mini-pause: the three-breath break

When you become aware that you’ve been focusing on an activity for an extended period, or are transitioning between activities, take a three breath break. Pause – closing your eyes if possible – and take three deep breaths while intentionally breathing into the belly. Allow the abdomen to expand. Relax and release any places of tightness or tension in the body with each exhalation.

Telephone ring as a meditation bell

When the telephone rings, take a few seconds to use the sound to bring you fully into your body. You can feel your feet squarely on the floor as you reach or walk over to the phone. Relax any muscles that may be contracted, especially in the face, mouth and jaw. Inhale and exhale more deeply for a breath or two, then answer the call.

Red stoplight as a pause

When driving (or walking in an area with pedestrian signals), use the occasion of each red stoplight as an opportunity for pausing. Depending on the situation, you can use the moment to breathe more deeply and release any places of tension or contraction in the body.

The sacred pause

When you are involved in a goal-oriented activity – reading, working on the computer, cleaning, eating – begin by pausing. Sit comfortably and allow your eyes to close. Take a few deep breaths and with each exhalation let go of any worries or thoughts about what you are going to do next. Soften, and invite a releasing of any tightness in the body.

Now notice what you are experiencing, as you inhabit the pause. What sensations are you aware of in your body? Do you feel anxious or restless as you step out of your mental stories? Do you feel pulled to resume your activity? Can you allow - for this moment - whatever is happening inside?

Whenever you find your feeling stuck or disconnected, you can begin your life afresh in the moment, by pausing, relaxing, and paying attention to your immediate experience.

Practices

Practices

Notes



MINDFUL MOVEMENT

Introduction to Mindful Movement

By Gayla Marie Stiles

CBR emphasizes that changing both behaviors and environment can have a profound effect on the brain and nervous system. Changing behavior with regards to mindful movement is vital to the process of changing how we approach and process stress in our lives. Mindful movement is underscored by the awareness, balance, and connection (ABC) taught in the training. Equally, mindful movement strengthens the efforts towards awareness, balance, and connection.

Moving mindfully is a reflective process. It is a call to consciousness, offering the opportunity to bring awareness, balance, and connection to the physical, emotional, and mental aspects of ourselves. The movement practices in CBR ask two simple questions:

- Are you aware of your body and how you move?
- Is there a connection between your posture, how you move, or how you experience limitations in movement and how you feel?

Identifying the manifestations of stress can help us to make healthy supportive changes that improve the quality of daily life.

Mindful movement is also empowering. When the ABC tools are implemented in a safe and supportive environment, we have the opportunity to experience and explore mindful movement practices as tools for auto-regulation and cultivation of vital energy. The sequences taught in CBR are designed to bring balance to our body and mind. They are designed to help lengthen what feels short and tight, brighten and energize what feels dull, strengthen what feels weak, find ways to rest when tired, and slow down what feels too fast. When aware and armed with practical tools, we are more able to adapt, to change and meet the demands in front of us. Mindful movement practices not only build resilience, but transform physical, emotional, and mental stress into vitality.

Our curriculum is rooted in anatomy and physiology and guided by eastern philosophies including chi gong and yoga. An important principle in our pedagogy is that though we are all different, there are common manifestations of distress for the spirit, body, and mind. During the retreat, modifications will be offered to meet participants needs and instructors are available to address any concerns that may arise. There is no pressure to copy movements exactly rather an expectation to move in a healthful way with a sense of curiosity and discernment. The pages in this section of the handbook are for you to document the movements that are most relevant to you. Please take notes, illustrate, or journal freely.

Autonomic Nervous System = the body's autopilot

Taking care of the nervous system is an important part of ensuring wellness and building resilience. Preventing adverse effects of stress, avoiding toxic build-up of stress, and remembering basic needs (food, hydration, rest, sleep) are all essential. We can also support the nervous system with practices that build awareness, as well as activation of the calming reactions of the nervous system.

The Autonomic Nervous System (ANS) is responsible for regulating body's unconscious functions, such as reactions to danger and the control of critical body functions.

The ANS has 2 branches: the Sympathetic Nervous System and the Parasympathetic Nervous system.

The Sympathetic Nervous System branch of the ANS activates . It is responsible for the stress reactions and the body's emergency mode .	The Parasympathetic Nervous System branch of the ANS returns the body to normal . It restores balance, recuperation, and key body functions .
"fight, flight or freeze"	"rest and digest"

The Sympathetic Nervous System works like a smoke detector. When stress starts to become too high, the SNS can go off from a single small stressor, like a smoke alarm goes off from a small indication of a fire.

Stress is generally a reaction from the animal brain. The animal brain acts on impulses or follows previously rehearsed plans. Therefore it's important to have a plan, prepared in advance, so that we don't follow patterns that aren't healthy.

The Sympathetic and Parasympathetic Nervous Systems function automatically. They can work without any conscious effort. However, we can support them to work more quickly and effectively. In order to do so, we must be familiar with our personal experiences and reactions to stress.

Parasympathetic nerves and easy ways to activate them

Easy ways to activate parasympathetic nervous system

Eye nerves - eye exercises

Facial and jaw muscles - face massage

Sensorial nerves (taste, hear, sight, smell) - awareness and mindful practices (paying attention to the sensations) that help bringing the attention inwards our body

Auditory vestibular nerve - responsible for sense of equilibrium - balance exercises

Spinal accessory nerve - exercises involving coordinated movements of head and shoulders

Hypoglossal nerve - talking, singing, gargling, yawning

Vagus Nerve - breathing exercises

Vagus nerve - the most important nerve in parasympathetic nervous system.

The vagus nerve is what helps us to face stress with grace. It is the longest nerve in human body, responsible for lowering the heart rate and blood pressure, controls vital internal organs.

Heart rate variability (HRV)⁴ – is the variation in the time interval between heartbeats.

A typical heartbeat is not constant, the heartbeat keeps on changing, slightly increasing the heart rate when inhaling and decreasing when exhaling. We can also consciously slow down our heart rate by extending duration of the exhalation compared to inhalation.

High HRV reflects healthy vagal tonality and **we can improve it through mindful practices**⁵

Additional ways to activate vagus nerve:

Mindful movement (such as tai chi, yoga, walking meditation) and regular physical activity

Breathing exercises, especially deep breathing involving diaphragm, or resonant breathing exercises (equalizing in- and out-breath)

Massage, especially neck, shoulders and foot massage (including self-massage)

Singing including steady repetition of a prayer, mantra, calming word or phrase, sound⁶

Gargling, humming, laughing, washing face with cold water

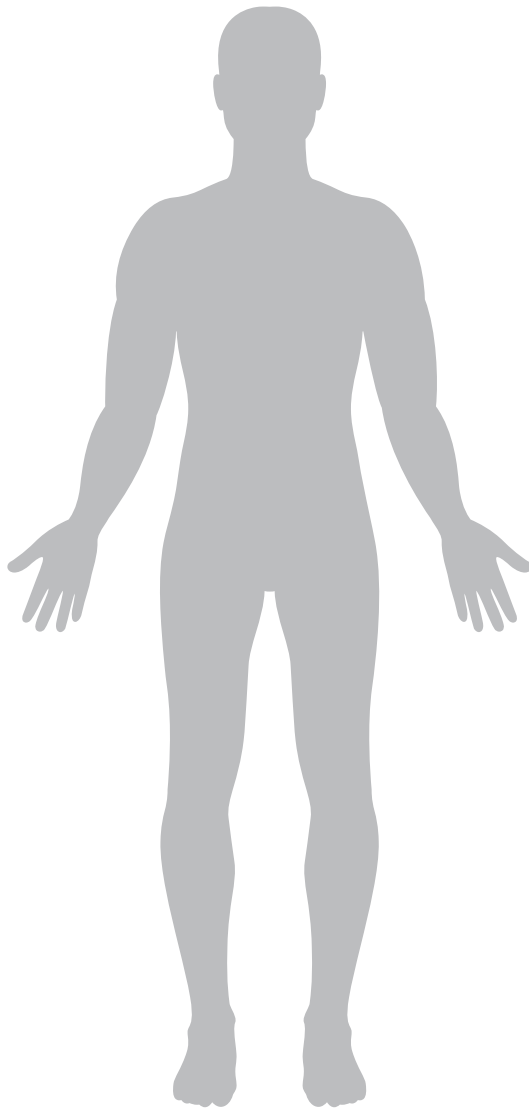
Turn to the Mindful Movement section on page 86 for more techniques for activating the Parasympathetic nerves.

⁴ The Clinical Handbook of Biofeedback: A Step-by-Step Guide for Training and Practice with Mindfulness, Wiley-Blackwell; 1 edition (April 22, 2013)

⁵ Use of loving kindness meditation proving effective in improved vagal tone: "How positive emotions build physical health: perceived positive social connections account for the upward spiral between positive emotions and vagal tone" Kok et al. Psychol Sci., 2013 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23649562>, retrieved on 5 April 2017

⁶ Research findings confirming positive clinical results: "Effect of rosary prayer and yoga mantras on autonomic cardiovascular rhythms: comparative study" Luciano Bernardi, BMJ. 2001, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC61046/>, retrieved on 5 March 2017

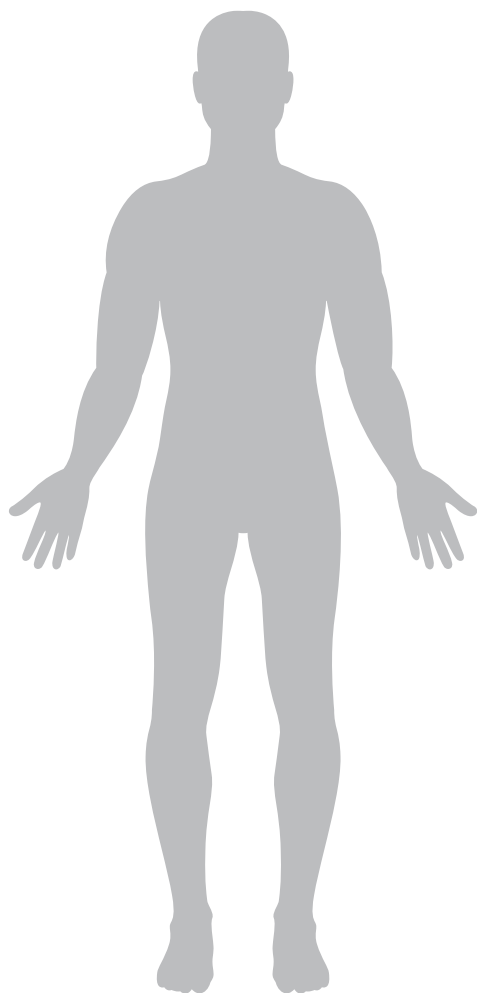
Your body and relaxation



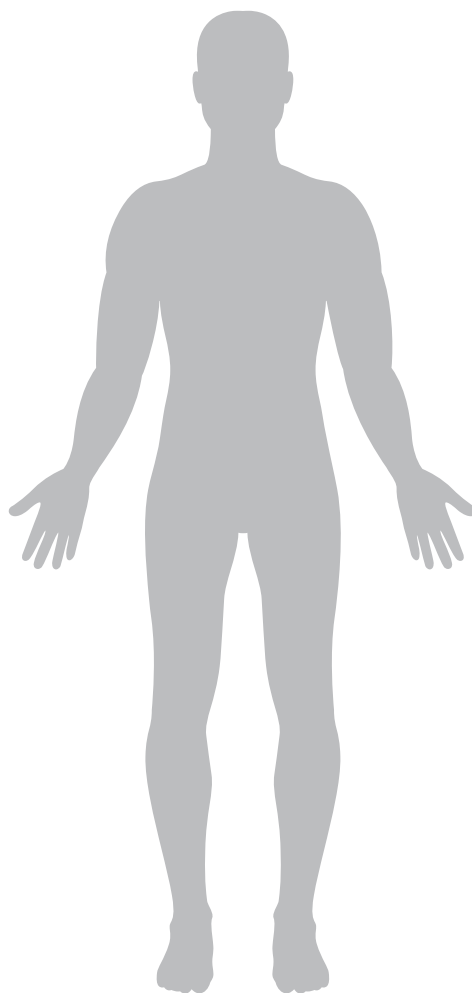
Facial Relaxation

Silhouettes

BEFORE

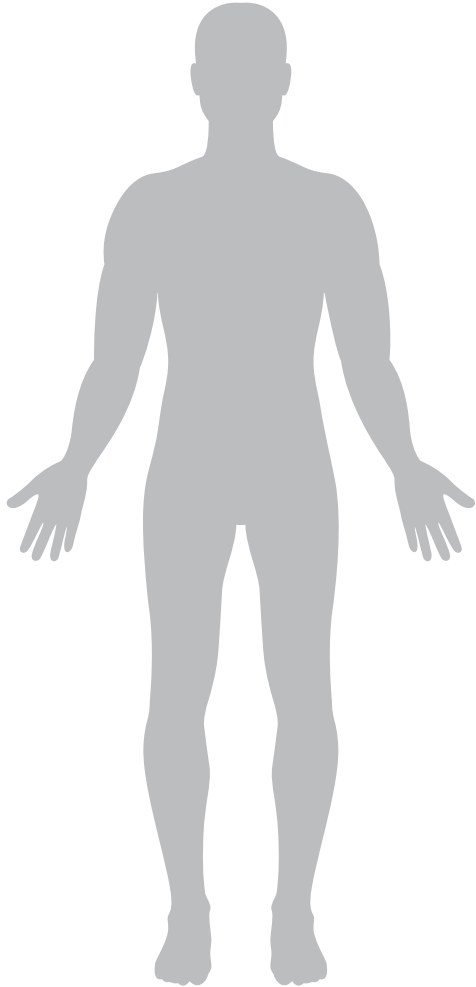


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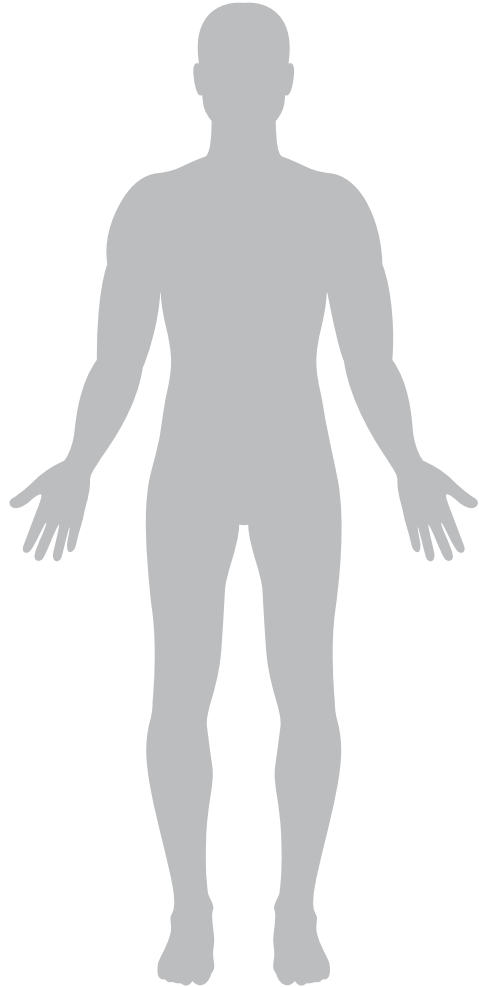


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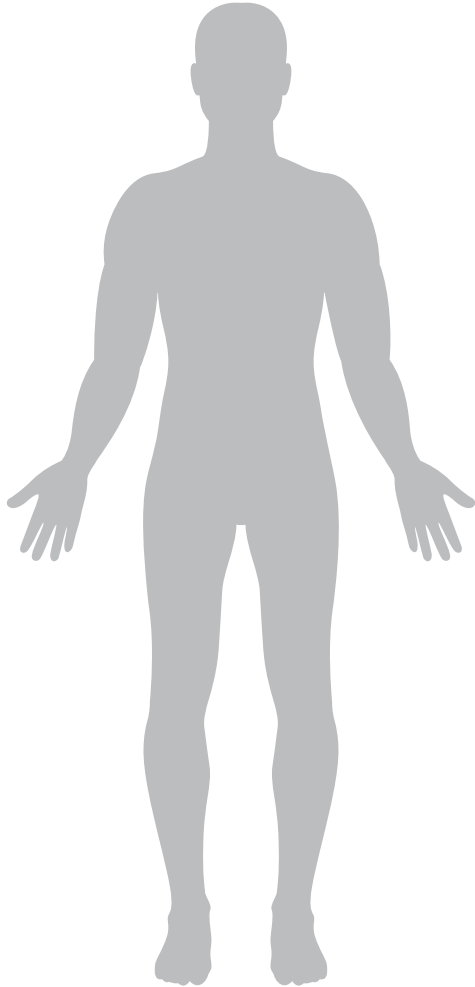


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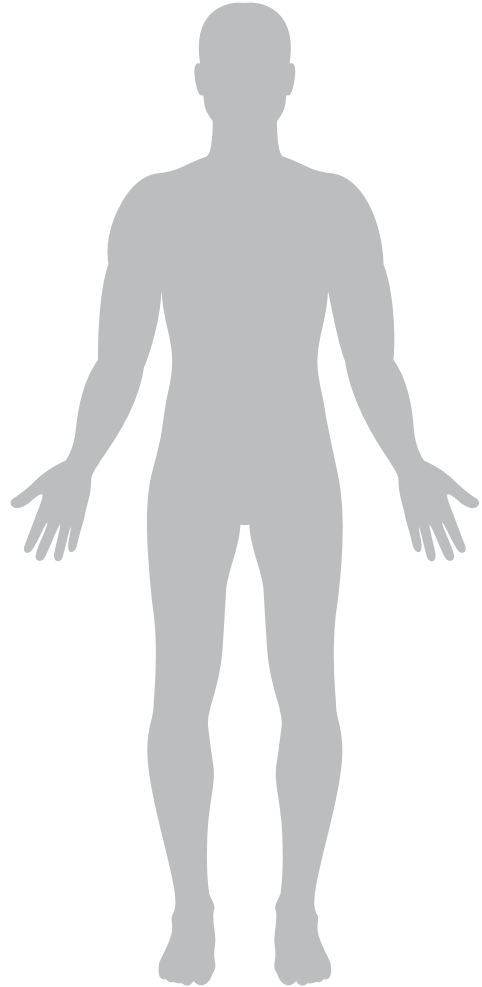


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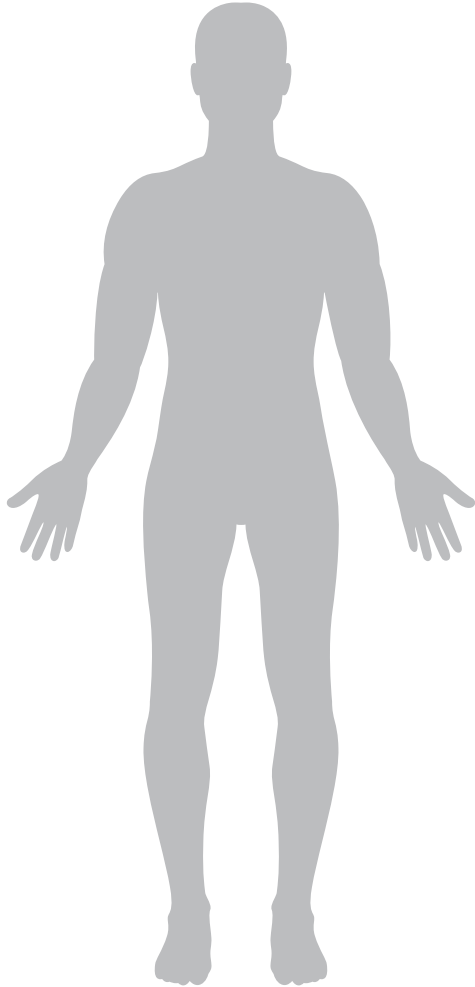


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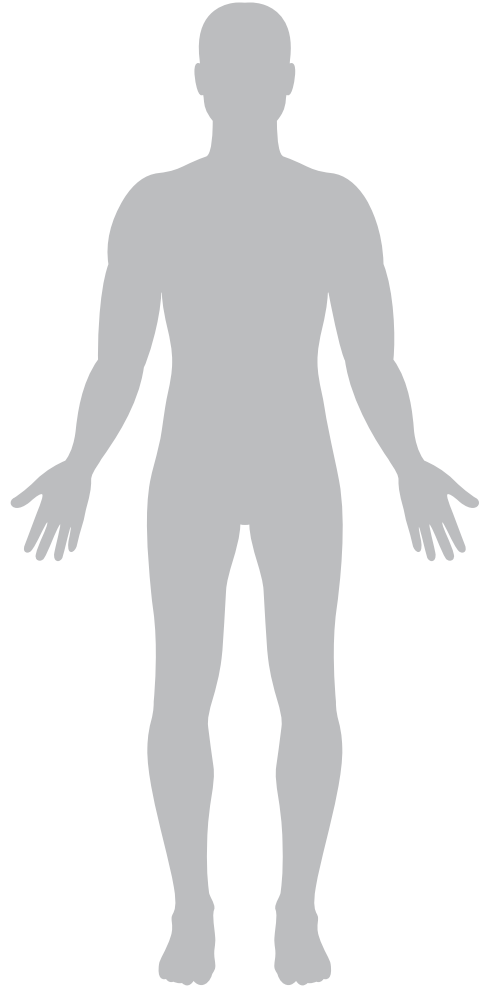


Silhouettes

BEFORE



AFTER



MINDFUL MOVEMENT PRACTICES THAT WORK FOR ME
RELAXING & RESTING

MINDFUL MOVEMENT PRACTICES THAT WORK FOR ME
ENERGIZING

MINDFUL MOVEMENT PRACTICES THAT WORK FOR ME
GROUNDING

MINDFUL MOVEMENT PRACTICES THAT WORK FOR ME
RELIEVING PAIN & DISCOMFORT

Notes

Notes



KEY LEARNING POINTS

Characteristics of Resilience & Contemplation

A W A R E N E S S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better recognition of our emotional states; awareness of our body reactions, thoughts, self-talk; good understanding of the needs for self-care • Understanding of the natural physiological reactions of stress and relaxation and their impacts on us • Recognition of our own capacity to influence our physiological stress reactions (intentionally activation of “rest and digest”) • Increase our belief and trust in our own capacity to cope (there is something we can do - about our emotions, our response) • Ability to identify our current coping reactions and habits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > helpful > unhelpful 	<p>SELF-AWARENESS</p> <p>STRENGTHENING YOUR INTERNAL LOCUS OF CONTROL</p>
B A L A N C E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application of acquired self-care practices that help regulate nervous system and restore balance, having better EMOTIONAL SELF-REGULATION • Consequently, better clarity, better stress mitigation, less impulsivity in deciding ways to address the situation; responding - not reacting • Ability to map existing resources, practice curious exploration (potential for identifying more effective, coping or sources of support) • Search for new techniques and practices helping restore balance, then replacing less helpful/less healthy habits with the new ones that are more beneficial • HEALTHY HABITS 	<p>ABILITY TO SELF-REGULATE EMOTIONS</p> <p>EFFECTIVE PROBLEM SOLVING</p> <p>ABILITY TO COPE WITH STRESS IN A HEALTHY MANNER</p>
C O N N E C T I O N	<p>With Ourselves</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better recognition of our own limits and having SELF-COMPASSION • Less self-criticism, self-blame, guilt (not helpful emotions) <p>With Others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conscious shift from empathy to COMPASSION, which leads to more altruism and more connection • Better management when facing other people’s suffering; healthy attitude • More recognition of other people’s good intentions toward us - GRATITUDE • More recognition of our interconnectedness and interdependence - spirituality • Increased expectation of the positive things also happening - healthy optimism <p>With Our Values</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice of continuously reflecting upon and updating our long term goals • Search for balanced ways to dedicate adequate time to our life priorities, feeling more connected to the things that matter to us and that we want to represent • PERSONAL GROWTH: Acknowledgement of difficulties more as challenges, rather than obstacles 	<p>SEEKING HELP</p> <p>HELPING OTHERS</p> <p>SOCIAL SUPPORT AND CONNECTION WITH OTHERS</p> <p>SENSE OF MEANING AND PURPOSE</p>

Making a plan - Applying new ideas, coping strategies, and commitments for better health and well-being

Ideas for helpful self-care	
at home	on the job

What are your personal goals?

What are your professional goals?

Notes



RESOURCES

RESOURCES

Meditation

Wherever You Go, There You Are - Jon Kabat-Zinn

The Places That Scare You - Pema Chodron

The Art of Happiness: A Handbook for Living - His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama

The Age of Empathy: Nature's Lessons for a Kinder Society - Frans de Waal

The Miracle of Mindfulness - Thich Nhat Hanh

Loving-kindness: The Revolutionary Art of Happiness - Sharon Salzberg

Real Happiness at Work: Meditations for Accomplishment, Achievement, and Peace
- Sharon Salzberg

The Attention Revolution: Unlocking the Power of the Focused Mind - B. Alan Wallace

Changing Habits

The Here and Now Habit - How Mindfulness Can Help You Break Unhealthy Habits Once and for All - Hugh G. Byrne

Mindful Movement

The Yoga of Breath: A Step by Step Practical Guide to Pranayama - Richard Rosen

Science of Breath: A Practical Guide - Swami Rama; Rudolph Ballentine, MD;
Alan Hymes, MD

Ba Gua Nei Gong Volume 1: Yin Yang Patting & Dao Yin Exercises - Tom Bisio

Relax & Renew: Restful Yoga for Stressful Times - Judith Lasater

Yoga Body, Buddha Mind: A Complete Manual for Physical & Spiritual Well-Being from the Founder of the Om Yoga Center - Cyndi Lee

Psychology of stress and self-care

Help for the Helper: The Psychophysiology of Compassion Fatigue and Vicarious Trauma
- Babette Rothschild

The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, & Body in the Healing of Trauma - Bessel van der Kolk, MD

Flourish by Martin Seligman

The Upside of Stress by Dr. Kelly McGonigal

Trauma Stewardship by Laura Van Dernoot Lipsky with Connie Burk

Overcoming Trauma through Yoga by David Emerson and Elizabeth Hopper, PhD

Emotions Revealed by Paul Ekman

Emotional Intelligence by Daniel Goleman

Permission to Feel by Mark Brackett, PhD

The Gaslight Effect by Dr. Robin Stern

Resilience

Talking of Love at the Edge of Precipice: How to Overcome Trauma and Remake Your Life Story - Boris Cyrulnik

Mindsight: The New Science of Personal Transformation - Daniel J. Siegel

The Mindful Brain: Reflection & Attunement in the Cultivation of Well-Being - Daniel J. Siegel

Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ - Daniel Goleman

Destructive Emotions: A Scientific Dialogue with the Dalai Lama - Daniel Goleman

The Human Dimensions of Resilience: A Theory of Contemplative Practices & Resilience
(white paper from the Garrison Institute)

Found at www.garrisoninstitute.org/CBR-humandimensions

Compassion

Self-Compassion: The Proven Power of Being Kind to Yourself - Dr. Kristin Neff

Gratitude

Thanks! How Practicing Gratitude Can Make you Happier - Robert A. Emmons

Apps

Care for Caregivers Mobile App

Insight Timer - including meditations from Hugh Byrne

Imagine Clarity (Matthieu Ricard app)

Websites

garrisoninstitute.org

garrisoninstitute-int.org

CBRproject.world



NOTES

