Mindful Workplace, Engaged Employees

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Mindfulness, Stress, and Quality of Life

1. Know the health and economic consequences of stress

2. Experience science based mindful interventions; learn how to practice and teach

3. Best practice approaches for measurement, implementation and effectiveness. Toolkit will be shared.
Why Mindfulness In the Workplace?

1. THE driver of health outcomes and benefit costs

STRESS
“The Practice Of Paying Attention To The Present Moment On Purpose Without Judgment.”

Lisa Schmidt
MS, CN, CEBS, CYT, E-RYT
Mindfulness at Work: How might it be useful?
What is Mindfulness?
Experiential learning
Self-Assessment
“Stress is the single, non-specific reaction of the body to a demand made on it.”

Dr. Hans Selye (1974)
60-90% of health care spending is for stress related conditions.

Source: Benson Henry Institute.
The Costs: U.S. and Canada

- Direct and Indirect Costs exceed $317 Billion (U.S.)
- Direct and Indirect Costs exceed $20 Billion (Canada)
- SMI $Life Expectancy up to 32 Years$
- Depression: #1 Cause of Disability
- Negative Affect
  - Anger, fear, guilt, nervousness
Stress at Work

- Most workers in U.S. consider workplace a major source of stress
- 51%: Job negatively impacted stress
- 50% of all lost working days caused by stress
- Unanticipated absenteeism cost: $602 PEPY
- Stress induced healthcare utilization costs U.S. employers $68 billion per year; 10% profit reduction
Nervous System

Central Nervous System (CNS)
- Brain
  Receives and processes sensory information, initiates responses, stores memories, generates thoughts and emotions
- Spinal Cord
  Conducts signals to and from the brain, controls reflex activities

Peripheral Nervous System (PNS)
- Motor Neurons
  CNS to muscles and glands
- Sensory Neurons
  Sensory organs to CNS

  Somatic Nervous System
  Controls voluntary movements
  - Sympathetic Nervous System
    Fight, Flight, or Freeze
  - Parasympathetic Nervous System
    Rest and digest

  Autonomic Nervous System
  Controls involuntary movements
The Stress Response

What happens when the body moves into flight, flight, or freeze mode?
Adrenal Glands and Their Essential Bodily Functions

- **CORTISOL**
  - Carbohydrate Metabolism
    - cell energetics
    - glucose homeostasis

- **DHEA**
  - Detoxification Capacity
    - heavy metal, toxins, hormone detox

- **Inflammation Modulation**
  - immune regulations
  - pro-inflammatory & anti-inflammatory

- **MusculoSkeletal**
  - bone turnover
  - muscle integrity
  - connective tissue

- **Metabolism**
  - weight/fat distribution
  - body composition
  - protein turnover
  - mucosal integrity

- **Neural Tissue Health**
  - memory, learning, sleep & mood

- **Endocrine Function**
  - thyroid, pancreas, insulin, ovarian function
Sleep Hygiene

The amount of sleep you get is instrumental in quality of life issues such as:

• Cell renewal and rejuvenation
• Management of stress hormones
• Gut health
• Weight gain
• Chronic disease development
• Cognitive functioning
• Safety
Why Care About Sleep?
Sleep is Vitally Important . . .

- For all human functioning
- Cognitive and physical performance
- Restorative powers
- Learning and memory consolidation
- Mood enhancement
- Protects the immune system
- New evidence shows a relationship to weight gain and aging
“An Unmet Public Health Problem”

“The cumulative effects of sleep loss and sleep disorders represent an under-recognized public health problem and have been associated with a wide range of health consequences including an increased risk of hypertension, diabetes, obesity, depression, heart attack, and stroke. Almost 20 percent of all serious car crash injuries in the general population are associated with driver sleepiness. Hundreds of billions of dollars a year are spent on direct medical costs related to sleep disorders such as doctor visits, hospital services, prescriptions, and over-the-counter medications.”
Higher Medical Costs

- Undiagnosed or untreated sleep disorders sufferers utilize the healthcare system more frequently.
- Untreated sleep apnea may cause $3.4 billion in additional medical costs.
- People with insomnia use more healthcare resources than those without insomnia.
Sleep Debt

- Each hour of lost sleep is added to your sleep debt.

- Your sleep debt can only be reduced by getting extra sleep. However, you may not be able to reverse the long-term effects of sleep deprivation.

- The larger your sleep debt, the more likely you will experience microsleeps.
Chronically Sleep Deprived . . .

- The average American sleeps less than 7 hours
- 37% of adults say they are so tired during the day it interferes with daily activities
- 75% of adults experience at least one symptom of a sleep disorder a few nights a week or more
- 55% of adults nap at least once during the week
Effects of Sleepiness on Work

When sleepy, people report having difficulty with:

- Concentration-68%
- Handling stress-65%
- Listening-57%
- Relating to others-38%
- Solving problems-57%
- Decision making-56%

Source: NSF 2000 Sleep In America Poll
Work Problems

• Late to work—14%
• Stay home from work—4%
• Fall asleep at work—7%
• Make errors—19%
• Get injured—2%

Source: NSF 2000 Sleep In America Poll
Mindfulness Based Sleep Intervention
Experiential learning
Research on Mindful Work Interventions
Research Findings

• Evidence based research is limited
• Most research on mindfulness program effectiveness is based on MBSR, designed for chronically ill participants
• Strong research links mindfulness programs with improved health outcomes, even for healthy people
• Significant research in academic settings links mindfulness practice with increased empathy, improved quality of life, reduced anxiety and depression
Research on MBSR at the Workplace

• MBSR components include:
  – Eight week, 2.5 hour sessions, in group support delivery mode
  – Trained facilitators
  – Standardized classroom lessons on mindfulness
  – Assigned homework
  – Body focused relaxation practices (yoga, Tai Chi)
  – One day retreat
  – Not known: Which *individual* components have the known benefits, or is it all of them??
Research on Mindfulness and Increased Empathy

Mindfulness and Increased Emotional IQ

• The more practice, the higher the level of Emotional IQ
• Emotional intelligence helps us with personal relationships
• Emotional intelligence = greater self compassion

Citations

• SCHUTTE, N. and MALOUFF, J. (2011) Emotional intelligence mediates the relationship between mindfulness and subjective well-being Personality and Individual Differences 50:1116-1119
• Baer et al., 2004; Brown & Ryan, 2003, Baer et al., 2008; Brown & Ryan, 2003); Brown et. Al., 2009; Falkenstrom 2010
Return on Investment??

The groundbreaking course developed at Google, as featured in The New York Times.
Research on Mindfulness and Wellbeing

Mindfulness and Increased Mental and Physical Health

- The more practice, the higher the level of self-reported quality of life
- Measurement: Self reported quality of life
- Benefits: Increased emotional self-regulation
- Benefits: Improved quality of relationships

Citations

Evidence Based Survey

- 32 evidence based public domain questions
- Measures across domains, QoL
- Goal: Moving along a continuum of mindful awareness
  - Equates to stress reduction
  - Distress tolerance
  - Skill building
Objective: Measure Employees Level of Mindfulness Pre and Post the Mindfulness Based Wellness Program Intervention

- Goal: Measure change in employee behavior and the development of mindfulness skills by:
  - Benchmarking employees prior to the intervention
  - Delivering the mindfulness based wellness program intervention
  - Measuring the change in mindful awareness following the intervention
Employee Engagement?

- Research based findings indicate mindful interventions at work increase employee engagement.
Research on Mindfulness and Self-Regulation

Mindfulness and Increased Self-Regulation

- Systematic mental training develops self-awareness
- Benefits: increased emotional self-regulation
- Benefits: improved quality of relationships

Citations

Research on Mindfulness and Self-Regulation

Best Practice Application

Week 1 – How to Stress Less: The Science of Mindfulness
Introduction to Mindfulness & The Stress Response

Week 1 Live Session Video

If you missed the live session for week 1 not to worry, we recorded it for you! Please find below the video of the recorded live session that you can watch at any time. We look forward to seeing you at the next session and if you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact us in the interim!

Mind Being Connection Week 1
from Lisa Schmidt
Next Steps
Take the Pre Survey
Spread your enthusiasm
Prepare for the first live session:
Mind-Being Connection on
November 9th 12-1pm
1. At work, it is easy for me to concentrate on what I am doing.

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<th>Sometimes true</th>
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2. In my work environment, I can accept things I cannot change.

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3. At work, I often find myself thinking about things at home.

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4. I am able to accept the thoughts and feelings that I have.

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5. At work, I am able to pay close attention to one thing for a long time.

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6. At work, I am easily distracted.

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Introduction to Mindfulness & The Stress Response

Mindfulness is about being fully aware of whatever is happening in the present moment, without filters or the lens of judgment. It can be brought to any situation. Put simply, mindfulness consists of building awareness of the mind and body and living in the here and now. This universal practice can be thought of as "mental training" where we learn how to notice and pay attention to our thoughts and feelings before they move into habit patterns that may cause stress and impact our relationships at work, home, or with family members.

Mindfulness is observing, watching, examining. You are not a judge, but a scientist of your own mind. This practice can profoundly impact your stress levels, with positive results.

**Week One Objective:**
- You will be able to identify, and access, the parasympathetic nervous system through mindful breathing practice.

- **Definition of Mindfulness**

- **Introduction Exercise**
Mind-Being Connection Program

11/9/16: How to Stress Less: The Science of Mindfulness
11/16/16: Increasing Awareness to Promote Relaxation
11/23/16: Positive = Positive
11/30/16: Are You Tense? Your Body is Calling
12/7/16: Mindful Eating
12/14/16: How to Make - And Sustain Behavior Changes
12/21/16: Stop Counting Sheep! Insomnia Be Gone!
12/28/16: Congratulations!
Best Practice: Largest “Gold Standard” Study of Mindfulness in the Workplace

- 239 enrolled employees
- Intervention group and a control group with randomization (a RCT)
- MBI was compared to yoga and to control group
- On line versus in person versions were compared
- Results were significant
Even brief telehealth interventions are effective in increasing self-reported mindfulness.
Welcome to the Mind-Body Skills Training for Resilience, Effectiveness, and Mindfulness (STREAM) program, an innovative on-line education program for health professionals. The purpose of this program is to help you learn and practice skills that will help you personally and professionally to become more resilient in the face of stress, more clinically effective in helping patients, and more mindful in your daily life as you learn the latest scientific research about mind-body skills, engage in reflective practices, and use our free online recordings of evidence-based mind-body practices. Whether you are a seasoned professional or still in training, you will find helpful information and practices to address the needs of the patients and clients for whom you care.

Register Now!

There are twelve 1-hour modules arranged in four clusters:

- *Relaxation Response* (stabilizing attention while decreasing stress)
- *Mindfulness* (cultivating non-judgmental, curious attention)
- *Heart-centered practices* (cultivating positive cognitive-emotional states)
- *Guided Imagery and Hypnosis* (using focused attention and imagination to achieve goals)
Research About This Course

Sit back and relax!
A guided version is available for you.

The Mindful Breath
Considerations: A Tool Kit For Implementation

What should you consider if you are interested in offering, promoting, or creating a MBI for the workplace?
Implementation Tool Kit

- Culture matters. Conduct a strategic conversation with key decision makers, offering ideas, best practice suggestions, and cost estimates.
- Integrate your offering in order to provide measurable benefits.
- Conduct a needs assessment.
- Design and deliver a measurable intervention.
- Use publically available surveys to measure quality of life - use on line programs
- Remember: Increases in “quality of life” translate into lower anxiety and depression.
  - Increases in mindfulness translate into improvements in quality of life.
- PRACTICE YOURSELF. If you think that mindfulness at work is a good idea, try yourself.
Implementation Tools

- Practice tools: [www.headspace.com](http://www.headspace.com)
- Online tools: [Mind-Body Stream](http://mind-body-stream.com) (12 one hour learning modules)
- Podcasts: [UCLA](http://marc.ucla.edu/meditation-at-the-hammer)
- Curriculum: Twelve Weeks to Mindfulness (online or workbook format)
  - Contact me for more information and availability
- Needs Assessment template
- Curriculum sample
- Survey sample
NSF Educational Materials
How to Stress Less:
The Science of Mindfulness

WEEK I

THEME | Introduction to Mindfulness & The Stress Response

Mindfulness is about being fully aware of whatever is happening in the present moment, without filters or the lens of judgment. It can be brought to any situation. Put simply, mindfulness consists of building awareness of the mind and body and living in the here and now. This universal practice can be thought of as “mental training” where we learn how to notice and pay attention to our thoughts and feelings before they move into habit patterns that may cause stress and impact our relationships at work, home, or with family members.

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**Week One Objective:**
- You will be able to identify and access the parasympathetic nervous system through mindful breathing practices.

DEFINITION OF MINDFULNESS AND INTRODUCTION TO THE PHYSIOLOGICAL STRESS RESPONSE

Living with stress and anxiety is much more prevalent than you might imagine. Millions of people are burdened by life’s challenges every single day— from difficult life events and balancing professional and personal responsibilities to acute pain, illness, and chronic health conditions. For most, stress is caused by a combination of all or some of these factors. Most of us don’t want to talk about our stress and anxiety nor do we wish to face its causes. Actor and director Woody Allen once said, “I don’t mind dying as long as I don’t have to be there.” Although spoken in jest, this attitude is typical of our culture and our tendency to minimize, avoid, or altogether deny our fears and feelings.
The SNS slows down when it is interrupted by the PNS. Through the PNS, we can intentionally develop the ability to shift our body from the fight or flight response into the rest and digest response, releasing us from a habitual pattern of stress response. The ability to intentionally create a more relaxed state comes from the practice of mindfulness. As we learn more about our own bodies, their responses to stress, and the triggers that move us into the fight or flight mode, we can begin to practice skillful responses that promote relaxation instead of stress.

**INTRODUCTION: FIVE-MINUTE, MINDFUL BREATH EXERCISE**

As we begin to pay attention to sensations in our bodies, we can learn how to return our distracted minds to the present and achieve greater awareness, compassion, and peace. Focusing on breathing is one way to anchor the mind; another
is working to accept things the way they are. This might mean simply noticing and acknowledging stress or anxiety rather than repeating old patterns of running away from it. You may discover that by embracing your fear you heal your heart. This is called the practice of mindfulness.

All the “practices” that we will do during the (insert #) – week course are simply that: practices, not perfects. Through practice, we become more skilled at noticing sensations in the body, thoughts in the brain, and habits of the mind. This gives us the chance to move away from “automatic pilot” and respond to stress with more skill. Learn to “feel” what you are hearing by trying the following breath exercise.

**FORMAL PRACTICE:**
**FIVE-MINUTE MINDFUL BREATHING**

*Make yourself comfortable in your chair. When you do this exercise at home, you can sit in a chair, lie down, or sit on the floor in any comfortable position.*

*Take a few moments to settle in and become still. Congratulate yourself for taking time to practice self-care and mindful awareness.*

*Focus on your breathing wherever you feel it most prominently in your body. It may be at the nose, neck, chest, belly, or somewhere else. As you breathe in, normally and naturally, be aware of breathing in, and as you breathe out, be aware of breathing out. Simply maintain this awareness of the breath, breathing in and breathing out.*

*There is no need to visualize or count your breaths; just notice your breathing in and out. Without judgment, watch the breath ebb and flow, like waves in the ocean. There is no place to go and nothing else to do; just be in the present, noticing the breath, existing simply one inhalation and one exhalation at a time. As you breathe in and out, be mindful of the breath rising on the inhalation and falling on the exhalation. Ride the waves of the breath, moment-by-moment, breathing in and breathing out.*

*From time to time your attention may wander from your breathing. This is normal. When you notice this, simply acknowledge where you went and then gently bring your attention back to the breath. Breathe normally, naturally, and without changing the breath in any way. As you breathe in think “I am breathing in” and as you breathe out think “I am breathing out.” Again, notice where you feel the breath in your body. Think only about where you feel it; just breathe; just be.*
Mindfulness, Employee Engagement, and Quality of Life

1. Describe the health consequences of stress
2. Experience science based interventions
3. Review research re: Mindful interventions
4. Best practice (toolkit) approaches for implementation
Mindful Workplace, Engaged Employees

Questions?