Finding Focus in a stressed-out, multitasking culture

Let us take a walk together now
Nature of Stress

- 25% Americans high levels of stress (8 of 10)
- 50% Americans moderate stress (4 of 10)
- Effect on body – FIGHT OR FLIGHT
- Survival (caveman)
- Now can cause high BP, artery clogging, anxiety, depression, addiction
- Stress is inevitable, suffering is optional.
- Build resilience with Mindfulness tools.

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

Jon Kabat-Zinn
Mindfulness Training Benefits for you.

- Increases one's ability to concentrate/focus
- Cultivate calm compassionate presence
- Lessen negative effects of stress
- Share tools with patients and others

Informal Practice #1
Relaxing Sighs

- Elevators
- Traffic
- Before and during exam-taking
- Answering a phone call (especially from THAT ONE!)
- Walking from car to office, work, class
- Before a difficult conversation/communication
- Right before entering home after work or school
- Before making a decision

Relaxing Sighs at the checkout line

The positive impact of taking a time-out is just as relevant to a consumer on a shopping trip as it is to a C-level executive. Taking a few minutes before going through the checkout line can pay dividends.

Sigal Barasde, *Debiasing the Mind through Meditation*

Take a time-out to breathe, to refocus, and to use your “reset button.”

Google Employees taking a few minutes to meditate
Informal Practice #2 - Stretching
- Begin with mindful standing
- Feel sensations in your body
- Move your arms up and down
- Move your arms up and out, in and down
- Stretch your arms
- Rotate your shoulders
- Gently rotate your head from side to side
- Shake your arms and legs

Brain Changes with Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)
Participation in an MBSR program results in increases in regional brain gray matter density regions associated with learning, memory, emotion regulation, perspective taking. (Holzel, Lazar et al. 2011)

MBSR and Cognitive Function
- Recently, researchers have reported improvement in sustained attention and working memory measures in novice meditators who underwent MBSR training relative to a comparison group who did not undergo the training. (Amishi Jha, 2014)
Stress reduction correlates with structural changes in the amygdala.


Past Student Workshops . . .

- Body scan, imagery, mindful stretching
- Relaxing Sighs most popular and helpful
- Helps filter out distraction
- "This week I tried to revisit my intention of 'Letting go.' I try to pay attention to thoughts and feelings the mind wants to hold on to and how that affects me."
- "I noticed that the present feels like the most productive and healthy place to focus my energy."
- Stabler-Haas, S. & Abdalla, P. Focusing the minds of nursing students to increase their attention, Advance for Nurses, Posted May 4, 2016

Body Scan Meditation- Formal Practice #1
Body Scan, Sitting, Expanding Awareness, and Loving Kindness

- Your students will be able stream using their computer, apple or mobile device, download the files to listen locally, copy them to any smartphone and burn them to a CD. In addition to instant distribution, students have the ability to subscribe to this feed and get any updates and additions if you make them in the future.

One recent senior nursing student . . .

- After doing the body scans and deep breathing, I can say I'm still glad I took the course. I actually spent a lot of time doing deep sighs this week just to calm myself. The body scan had its hands full as I had many unexpected stressful issues arise. I was surprised by how drastic a difference my body felt after completion of these scans. And although I knew I still had issues to deal with, it didn't feel as if they were consuming my thoughts or emotions at the moments I completed the scans. I find that even though I feel some emotions connected to the stressors, they feel less heavy once I've done a body scan. I'm not really sure how to describe how my body feels but it's far more relaxed after doing the scan.

And another says . . .

- I have been practicing mindfulness body scan several times a week and it is really helping to keep me focused and feeling clear and calm- so thank you once again!
When walking to your car, a meeting, or patient’s room...

**Simple Tips for Mindful “Moments”**

1. “Two feet - one breath” just before entering room
2. 10 minutes outside at lunch or a break or before driving home in traffic
3. Walking meditation down the corridor

*Walk slowly, feel contact with the ground.*

---

Mindfulness Research at Thomas Jefferson University

MBSR for Nurses: An Exemplary Study

- "The Effects of Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction on Nurse Stress and Burnout (Parts 1, 2, 3)"
- MBSR for nurses in a hospital setting
  - n=25, randomized to MBSR vs. WLC
- Qualitative and quantitative study

---

Mindfulness-based stress reduction and health-related quality of life in a heterogeneous patient population

Diane K. Reibel, Ph.D.**, Jeffrey M. Greenhouse, M.D., George C. Brainard, Ph.D., Steven Rosenzweig, M.D.

*Center for Integrative Medicine, Thomas Jefferson University, Philadelphia, PA, USA*

**Abstract**

This study examined the effects of mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) on health-related quality of life and physical and psychological functioning in a heterogeneous patient population. Participants (n=25) participated in a 6-day MBSR program and were followed for up to 30 min of meditation daily. Physical and psychological data were collected by using the SF-36 on both initial and follow-up assessments. At follow-up, patients who received MBSR had a 33% reduction in the PCS and a 28% reduction in the MCS (p<0.01). MBSR did not significantly impact psychological functioning, but led to a significant reduction in physical symptoms (p<0.01). Qualitative data revealed that patients who received MBSR had a greater sense of well-being and reduced physical symptoms and psychological distress in a heterogeneous patient population and that the intervention may have long-term beneficial effects.

*Key words: Stress, Meditation, Health-related quality of life.*
MBSR for Nurses: An Exemplary Study

- Qualitative findings: Impact on relationships
  - Feeling more connected to others
  - Communication (listen more, talk less)
  - Less reactive (defensive)
  - Increased self-confidence
  - Teaching MBSR techniques to others
  - Increased empathy

Improved Personal Well-Being and Mood

- Improved Empathy (for yourself and others)
- Antidote to Burnout (Compassion Fatigue)
- Improved Attending to Patient Experience of Illness
- Annals of Family Medicine – 45 nurses, doctors, nurse practitioners, and PA's record clinicians' interactions with more than 400 patients.
- Patients more satisfied and open with more mindful clinicians. Ann Fam Med September/October 2013 vol. 11 no. 5 421-428

Association of an Educational Program in Mindful Communication With Burnout, Empathy, and Attitudes Among Primary Care Physicians

70 PCPs
8 week intensive intervention 2.5 hours/week + 7 hour day
10 month follow up (2.5 hours/month)
MBSR for Physicians: An Exemplary Study

Outcomes
- Increase in mindfulness was positively correlated with significant improvements in a range of measures, for example:
  - Maslach Burnout Inventory: emotional exhaustion and perceived personal accomplishment
  - Jefferson Scale of Physician Empathy: perspective taking
  - Profile of Mood States: total mood disturbance
- Improvements were maintained at 12- and 15-month follow up

Patient Safety
- Physician Burnout linked to:
  - Patient Disatisfaction
    - "I'm here, Doc, to make sure I don't have anything serious. I'm not sure my regular doctor was listening to everything I was trying to tell him."
  - Increased Medical Errors
    - "We clinicians are not always fully present for patients because our minds are always working. If we don't listen, we end up giving explanations that are too long and complicated and responses that they don't need or want."

Clinician Mindfulness & Pt. Safety
(Sibinga & Wu, 2010)

Beginner’s Mind
Non-judging, Patience

Case Study:
Pediatrician & boy
Diagnostic error

- Lack of awareness and responsiveness
- Confirmation bias – pursue data supports diagnosis over data refutes it
- 17% preventable errors hospitalized (Harvard Medical Practice Study)
- 2015 national Academy of Medicine - blind spot

Individual clinician level, examples:
- Crushing chest pain incorrectly treated as heart attack – aortic dissection
- A heroin-addicted pt. with abdominal pain treated for opiate withdrawal – bowel obstruction

"To begin to meditate is to look into our lives with interest and kindness and discover how to be wakeful and free."

- Jack Kornfield

Beginner’s Mind!
Beginner’s Mind

https://youtu.be/OSfKSrDOxNg