

# Introduction to Mindfulness

## Time to Wake Up

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## What's to Learn?

- What is mindfulness?
- Where did this mindfulness originate?
- Mindfulness and the practice of meditation
- Why mindfulness?
- Mindfulness and ID?
- Mindfulness resources

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## What is Mindfulness

- Mindfulness is knowing what you do while you are doing it on purpose. It is paying attention in a particular way on purpose.

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## What is Mindfulness

- “Simply put, mindfulness is moment to moment awareness. It is cultivated by purposefully paying attention to things we ordinarily never give a moment’s thought to. It is a systemic approach to developing new kinds of control and wisdom in our lives, based on our inner capacities for relaxation, paying attention, awareness and insight”.

Jon Kabat-Zinn, Phd

*(Full Catastrophe Living: Using the Wisdom of your Body and Mind to Face Stress, Pain and Illness, p.g.2)*

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## What is Mindfulness

- “Mindfulness is an orientation to our every day experiences that can be cultivated by means of various exercises and a practice....It is important to understand that although mindfulness often involves meditation, it is not all about introspection. It actually has more to do with helping yourself: self awareness is central, but within a context of understanding yourself before you can effectively help others. What we practice while meditating is merely practice for living and acting in the world. Meditation allows us to practice within a more controlled environment outside the hectic pace of living. Mindfulness has the potential to affect [direct] work most profoundly when it is sustained and integrated into our everyday work and actions.”

“I see meditation as practice for my engagement with others and the world, not as some new way to relax (although this may be a by-product) or to disengage from the world.”

Steven F. Hick, PhD

*(Mindfulness and Social Work)*

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## Mindfulness

Hick states we need to use mindfulness ourselves at least two years before beginning to use in practice or with people we support.

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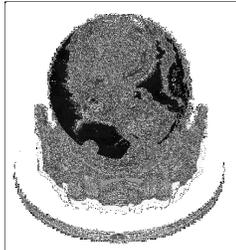
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## Meditation and Mindfulness Origins

- Spans cultures with different variations
- All involve focusing the mind while restricting other conscious mental activity



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## Meditation and Mindfulness Origins

- **1500 BC: Hindu Meditation**
  - Basic Yoga practice involves focusing the mind on a single object and not allowing it to wander



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## Meditation and Mindfulness Origins

- **600 BC: Daoist Mindfulness**
  - Involves breath training exercises to aid in meditation
  - Moving meditation
  - All involve concentration



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## Meditation and Mindfulness Origins

### • 535 BC: Buddhist Mindfulness

- Development of awareness through concentration
- Different traditions of meditation with different ways of attaining awareness
- Zen meditation, Tantric meditation, Vipassana meditation – all try to strip away attachment to our preconceived notions of self and others to enhance awareness of reality as it is
- Vipassana meditation most closely linked to mindfulness practice



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## Meditation and Mindfulness Origins

### • 300-500 CE: Christian Mindfulness

- Contemplative prayer
- Centering prayer



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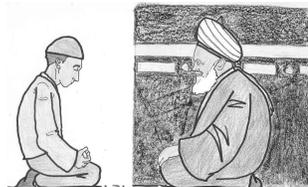
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## Meditation and Mindfulness Origins

### • 9th Century CE: Muslim Mindfulness



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## Meditation and Mindfulness Origins

- **10<sup>th</sup> Century CE: Jewish Mindfulness**

- Implicit in prayer
- Kabbalah



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## Mindfulness in Modern Times

- Paying attention in a particular way, on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally” – JKZ 1994
- The “Third Wave” in the evolution of behaviour and cognitive therapy
- Business, health care, mental health, personal well-being
- “The bloom of the present moment” – Thoreau’s Walden

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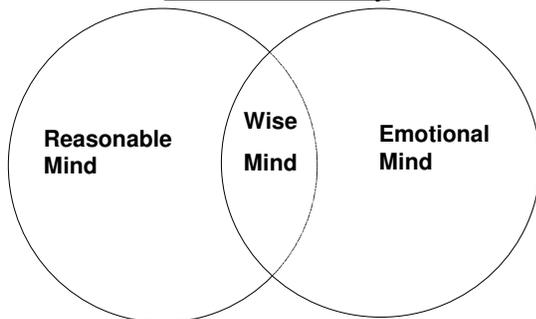
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## Mindfulness and Wise Mind – the Middle Way



From Marsha Linehan (1993) Skills Training Manual for Treating Borderline Personality Disorder <sup>15</sup>

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## Mindfulness and Meditation

- Mindfulness as a component of meditation
- Meditation cultivates the state of mind
- Involves intensive practice of mindfulness
- Types of meditation:
  - Vipassana Meditation (insight meditation): “Clear awareness of what is happening as it happens”
  - Samatha (concentration or tranquility) Meditation: “the mind is brought to rest, focused only on one item and not allowed to wander” leading to a state of tranquility and calm.
- Radical acceptance of suffering and letting go of attachments to one’s own thoughts, sense of self, and material goods.

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## Benefits of Mindfulness - Practical

- Acceptance of reality as it is – more effective dealing with problems – you don’t put off dealing with things based on not wanting it to be so
- Addressing life’s challenges requires accurately perceiving reality, accepting, then changing (if change is possible)
- Cultivates compassion and a non-judgmental stance towards self and others
- Decrease stress
- Increase well-being
- Self-exploration, understanding, enlightenment

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## Benefits of Mindfulness – Health Promotion

- Mind-body connection
- Stress relief
- Enhanced immune functioning
- Enhanced awareness
- Greater emotional regulation
- Behavioural regulation improved

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## Benefits of Mindfulness – Managing Chronic Illness

- MBSR – chronic physical and emotional pain (over 30 years) – JKZ
  - Formal meditation
  - Meaningful pauses
  - Yoga/Stretching
- Management of chronic pain conditions
- Management of chronic illness – gastrointestinal, cardiovascular problems, skin disorders, disorders of the immune system, cancer
- Improvement in quality of life and enhanced functioning

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## Benefits of Mindfulness – In Mental Health

- Borderline Personality Disorder
- Anxiety Disorders
- Depression (particularly relapse prevention)
- Substance abuse
- Disorders of impulse control
- Anger management

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## Mindfulness Research

- “Research indicates that both staff, caregivers and individuals with intellectual disabilities benefit from a mindful approach.”

(Nirbhay Singh et al.)

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## Mindfulness Research

- Staff/caregivers function “better as a team, become more family friendly are able to effectively integrate treatments.”

(Nirbhay Singh et al.)

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## Mindfulness Research

- Research also indicates that “mindful staff increase learning and reduce aggression in adults with developmental disabilities”.

(Nirbhay Singh et al.)

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## Mindfulness Research

- “Mindful care giving increases happiness among individuals with developmental disabilities.”

(Nirbhay Singh et al.)

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## Our Experience with Mindfulness Training

- Background
- Structure of the session: duration
- Target audiences: staff, people supported
- Tools and Data: pre and post self-assessments
- Mindfulness and social work
- Participant's evaluation of training
- Where we go from here?

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## Mindfulness Resources

### **Jon Kabat-Zinn**

- *Coming to Our Senses: Healing Ourselves and the World Through Mindfulness* (Hyperion, 2005)
- *Calming Your Anxious Mind: How Mindfulness and Compassion Can Free You from Anxiety, Fear, and Panic* by Jeffrey Brantley, Jon Kabat-Zinn (Foreword) (New Harbinger Publications, 2003)
- *Wherever You Go, There You Are: Mindfulness Meditation in Everyday Life* (Hyperion, 1995)
- *Full Catastrophe Living: Using the Wisdom of Your Body and Mind to Face Stress, Pain and Illness* (Delta, 1990)

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## Mindfulness Resources

- **Henebola Gunaratana:** Mindfulness in Plain English  
[http://www.urbandharma.org/pdf/mindfulness\\_in\\_plain\\_english.pdf](http://www.urbandharma.org/pdf/mindfulness_in_plain_english.pdf)
- Singh, N. N., Lancioni, G. E., Winton, A. S., Wahler, R. G., Singh, J., Sage, M., *Mindful care giving increase happiness among individuals with profound multiple disabilities: Research in Developmental Disabilities*, May 1, 2003
- Singh, N. N., Lancioni, G. E., Winton, Curtis, W.J, Wahler, R. G., Sabaawi, M., Singh, J., McAleavey, K., "Mindful staff increase learning and reduce aggression in adults with developmental disabilities": Science Direct, July 2005
- Singh, N. N., Lancioni, G. E., Winton, Singh, J., Curtis, W.J, Wahler, R. G., McAleavey, K., *Mindful parenting decreases aggression and increases social behaviour in children with developmental disabilities: Behaviour Modification*, November 2007

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## Mindfulness Resources

- Hick, S. F., *“Mindfulness and Social Work”*, 2009, Lyceum Books, Inc., Chicago, Illinois.

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## **DUAL DIAGNOSIS – learn online**

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

- first four chapters of NADD Ontario text *Dual Diagnosis: An introduction to the mental health needs of persons with developmental disabilities*.
  - basic introduction to developmental disabilities
  - recognizing and understanding the mental health needs of persons with developmental disabilities within a biopsychosocial model, and implications and strategies for optimizing supports
  - criteria used by health care professionals to recognize and differentiate various psychiatric conditions.

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# Questions?

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