

Practical Solutions to Address a Path to Well-Being in the Practice of Law



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How many of us live this life:



- The Dalai Lama was asked what surprises him the most; he offered this insightful response:
- Man. Because he sacrifices his health in order to make money. Then he sacrifices money to recuperate his health.
- And then he is so anxious about the future that he does not enjoy the present; the result being that he does not live in the present or the future; he lives as if he is never going to die, and then dies having never really lived.”

What is it that attracted you to
this CLE program?



**ARE YOU LOOKING FOR A NEW
APPROACH TO THE PRACTICE OF LAW?**

**ARE YOU LOOKING FOR A WAY TO
BRING BALANCE TO YOUR PERSONAL
AND PROFESSIONAL LIFE?**

Is Mindfulness a Solution?



BEING MINDFUL IS SIMPLY A DIFFERENT STATE OF MIND.

IT'S MORE OF A PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH THAN HAVING ANYTHING TO DO WITH RELIGION.

MINDFULNESS CAN SIMPLY BE THOUGHT AS THE OPPOSITE OF MINDLESSNESS – WHICH IS A STATE OF MIND THAT CAN CAUSE A TREMENDOUS AMOUNT OF SUFFERING.

What is Mindfulness?



MINDFULNESS IS AWARENESS THAT ARISES THROUGH:

- PAYING ATTENTION,*
- ON PURPOSE,*
- IN THE PRESENT MOMENT,*
- NON-JUDGMENTALLY.*

IT'S ABOUT KNOWING WHAT IS ON YOUR MIND.

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[HTTP://WWW.MINDFUL.ORG/JON-KABAT-ZINN-DEFINING-MINDFULNESS/](http://www.mindful.org/jon-kabat-zinn-defining-mindfulness/)

Why is Mindfulness Relevant to a Lawyer? The Practice of Law is Stressful . . .



WE ARGUE FOR A LIVING.

**IT IS NOT EXACTLY RELAXING. EVERY DAY, WE DIVE
INTO CONFLICT AND COMPETITION.**

**WE WORK LONG HOURS AND WITH OUR MOBILE PHONES
WE ARE EXPECTED TO BE ON CALL 24/7.**

**OUR CLIENTS EXPECT OUTSTANDING RESULTS, WITH
ALMOST NO MARGIN FOR ERROR.**

.. and can lead to issues balancing
our work and home life.



**STRESS, ANXIETY, AND BURNOUT
ARE ENORMOUS PROBLEMS IN THE
PROFESSION.**

**MANY LAWYERS STRUGGLE TO STAY
ENGAGED WITH THEIR JOBS AND
SATISFIED WITH THEIR LIVES.**

In other words, Mindfulness means maintaining:



- **“... A MOMENT-BY-MOMENT AWARENESS OF OUR THOUGHTS, FEELINGS, BODILY SENSATIONS, AND SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT.**
-
- ***MINDFULNESS ALSO INVOLVES ACCEPTANCE, MEANING THAT WE PAY ATTENTION TO OUR THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS WITHOUT JUDGING THEM—WITHOUT BELIEVING, FOR INSTANCE, THAT THERE’S A “RIGHT” OR “WRONG” WAY TO THINK OR FEEL IN A GIVEN MOMENT.***
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- **WE PRACTICE MINDFULNESS, OUR THOUGHTS TUNE INTO WHAT WE’RE SENSING IN THE PRESENT MOMENT RATHER THAN REHASHING THE PAST OR IMAGINING THE FUTURE.”**

How can Mindfulness Help?



- **MINDFULNESS OFFERS SOLUTION TO OUR HABITUAL PATTERNS OF WORRY, ANXIETY, AND FRUSTRATION.**
- **DERIVED FROM ANCIENT MEDITATION METHODS AND HAS A FOUNDATION IN NEUROSCIENCE.**
- **IT IS A SIMPLE MENTAL PRACTICE THAT INTRODUCES A CALMER, MORE SATISFYING WAY OF BEING.**

Why is Mindfulness important to lawyers?



AN ABA/HAZELDEN-BETTY FORD FOUNDATION COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH PROJECT REPORTS THAT:

- **21 PERCENT OF LICENSED, EMPLOYED ATTORNEYS QUALIFY AS PROBLEM DRINKERS;**
-
- **28 PERCENT STRUGGLE WITH SOME LEVEL OF DEPRESSION; AND**
- **19 PERCENT DEMONSTRATE SYMPTOMS OF ANXIETY.**
- **THE STUDY FOUND THAT YOUNGER ATTORNEYS IN THE FIRST 10 YEARS OF PRACTICE EXHIBIT THE HIGHEST INCIDENCE OF THESE PROBLEMS.**

THE PREVALENCE OF SUBSTANCE USE AND OTHER MENTAL HEALTH CONCERNS AMONG AMERICAN ATTORNEYS, JOURNAL OF ADDICTION MEDICINE:
[FEBRUARY 2016 - VOLUME 10 - ISSUE 1 - P 46-52](http://journals.lww.com/journaladdictionmedicine/fulltext/2016/02000/the_prevalence_of_substance_use_and_others_mental.8.aspx)
[HTTP://JOURNALS.LWW.COM/JOURNALADDICTIONMEDICINE/FULLTEXT/2016/02000/THE_PREVALENCE_OF_SUBSTANCE_USE_AND_O
THER_MENTAL.8.ASPX](http://journals.lww.com/journaladdictionmedicine/fulltext/2016/02000/the_prevalence_of_substance_use_and_others_mental.8.aspx)

Again, Why is this Important to Lawyers?



- **DENIAL MORE ENTRENCHED AND BETTER DEFENDED THROUGH USE OF PROFESSIONAL SKILLS (ADVOCACY; INTELLIGENCE; ADVICE GIVER, NOT TAKER)**
- **RESOURCES ALLOW FOR LONGER PERIOD OF PROGRESSION (FINANCIAL, SUPPORT STAFF, SOLE PRACTICE, HESITANCY OF COLLEAGUES, JUDGES, OFFICE STAFF TO CONFRONT)**
- **HARM CAUSED MAY BE GREATER (MONEY, LIBERTY, LEGAL RIGHTS)**

“The very nature of the lawyer-client relationship requires that clients place their money and their causes in the hands of their lawyers with a degree of blind trust that is paralleled in very few other economic relationships.” *Florida Bar v. Dancu*, 490 So.2d 40 (1986)

As a profession we need to . . .



WE AS A PROFESSION MUST START VALUING:

- **SELF-CARE,**
- **WELLNESS, AND**
- **TAKING CARE OF OUR EMOTIONAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH.**

Applying Mindfulness in the Practice of Law



- **AS LAWYERS WE TAKE ON MANY ROLES: ADVOCATE, NEGOTIATOR, COUNSELOR, EMPLOYER, PUBLIC SERVANT, LEGAL ANALYST, TRANSACTION STRUCTURER, AND OTHERS.**
- **MINDFUL LAWYERING IS A MATTER OF WAKING OURSELVES UP TO THE SITUATIONS WE ENCOUNTER.**

Mindfulness

1. Letting go of unproductive, unhelpful thoughts



- **MINDFULNESS PRACTICE ALLOWS YOU TO RECOGNIZE THAT YOUR BRAIN'S PURPOSE IS TO CONSTANTLY PRODUCE THOUGHTS AND BUT YOU DO NOT HAVE TO GET SO CAUGHT UP IN YOUR THOUGHTS.**
- **THOUGHTS WILL COME AND GO. YOU LEARN TO WATCH YOUR THOUGHTS WITHOUT GETTING EMOTIONALLY TRIGGERED.**
- **YOU CAN SLOW DOWN SO THAT YOU CAN GAIN CLARITY AND FOCUS.**
- **MINDFULNESS AFFORDS YOU AN OFF BUTTON – THE ABILITY TO RECOGNIZE THE UNPRODUCTIVE, UNHELPFUL THOUGHTS AS THEY ARISE AND TO TEMPER YOUR RESPONSE.**

2. Learn to understand and manage our energy.



- **WHEN WE'RE BEING MINDFUL, WE BEGIN TO UNDERSTAND THE LIMITATIONS ON WHAT WE CAN AND CAN'T DO.**
- **THIS MEANS RECOGNIZING THAT WE ALL HAVE FINITE AMOUNTS OF ENERGY AND TIME. WE BEGIN TO RESPECT OUR OWN ENERGY AND TIME. IN THIS WAY, WE CAN BE MINDFUL OF OUR OWN BOUNDARIES.**
- **WHEN WE START RESPECTING OUR LIMITATIONS AND BOUNDARIES ACHIEVING WORK-LIFE BALANCE BECOMES POSSIBLE.**

3. Mindfulness as a place to retreat.



- WE ALL HAVE DAYS WHERE IT FEELS AS THOUGH THE GROUND BENEATH US IS ABOUT TO GIVE AND WE'RE SPIRALING OUT OF CONTROL. WHAT COPING MECHANISM DO YOU USE TO FEEL GROUNDED AGAIN? PRACTICING MINDFULNESS ALLOWS US TO PAUSE, REFLECT, AND *RESPOND* FROM A PLACE OF CALM RATHER THAN *REACTING*.
- MINDFULNESS PRACTICE ALLOWS YOU TO REDUCE THE ACTIVITIES IN THE PART OF THE BRAIN RESPONSIBLE FOR *FIGHT, FLIGHT, FREEZE* RESPONSE AND ACTIVATE THE PARTS OF OUR BRAIN RESPONSIBLE FOR EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING SO THAT WE CAN *RESPOND* IN A CALM MINDFUL WAY IN DIFFICULT SITUATIONS.

4. Use mindfulness as means to modify your habitual patterns.



- **WORK-LIFE BALANCE IS ALL ABOUT ALLOCATING YOUR LIMITED TIME. HOW DO YOU START YOUR DAY? DO YOU START BY CHECKING YOUR EMAIL? OR DO YOU ALIGN YOUR DAY WITH WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO YOU – EATING RIGHT, EXERCISE, CONNECTING WITH PEOPLE YOU LOVE, PRACTICING SELF-CARE? ARE YOU CLEAR ABOUT WHAT REALLY MATTERS TO YOU AND ARE YOU CONSISTENTLY ORIENTING YOUR LIFE TOWARDS THOSE VALUES?**
- **BEING *MINDFUL* IS ALL ABOUT BEING *PRESENT* TO EACH MOMENT OF YOUR DAY, BEING AWARE OF WHAT YOU ARE DOING.**

5. Mindfulness can Combat Stress, Burnout, Compassion Fatigue . . .



- **RARELY DO CLIENTS COME INTO OUR OFFICE WITH HAPPY NEWS. OUR RESPONSIBILITY AS ATTORNEYS IS TO “FIX” OUR CLIENTS’ PROBLEMS.**
- **WE CAN GET LOST IN OTHER PEOPLE’S PROBLEMS OR PAIN AND LOSE SIGHT OF SELF-CARE. LAWYERS CAN USE MINDFULNESS TO NOTICE WHEN THEY ARE GIVING TOO MUCH OF OURSELVES AND BRING THEMSELVES BACK INTO BALANCE.**
- **WE CAN NOTICE WHEN WE ARE FEELING OUT OF BALANCE FROM WORKING TOO MUCH, NOT TAKING THE NECESSARY TIME TO CARE FOR OURSELVES, OR NOT SPENDING ENOUGH TIME CULTIVATING PERSONAL INTERESTS, AND CORRECT THE IMBALANCE.**

Applying Mindfulness in Law Practice

Develop Dynamic Equanimity



- **CULTIVATING DETACHMENT FROM ONE'S HABITUAL MENTAL PATTERNS NOT ONLY HELPS TO DEAL WITH STRESS, BUT ALSO TO MAINTAIN A BALANCED DISPOSITION OR TEMPERAMENT.**
- **NOT BEING UNDERMINED BY BUFFETING THOUGHTS AND EMOTIONAL PATTERNS PRODUCES A MORE CONFIDENT LEGAL PRACTITIONER.**

Applying Mindfulness in Law Practice

Legal Analysis



PRACTITIONERS OF MINDFULNESS OFTEN DEVELOP A FEEL FOR NOTICING WHEN MENTAL PATTERNS HAVE TAKEN ON A MOMENTUM OF THEIR OWN. WHEN THAT HAPPENS, THE LAWYER HAS RECEIVED A CLUE TO PAUSE, SLOW DOWN, AND TAKE ANOTHER LOOK.

[HTTP://WWW.SUPREMECOURT.OHIO.GOV/BOARDS/OJFN/RESOURCES/MEDITATION.ASP](http://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/boards/ojfn/resources/meditation.asp); THE MINDFUL LAWYER: MINDFULNESS MEDITATION AND LAW PRACTICE, THE VERMONT BAR JOURNAL - SUMMER 2007.

Applying Mindfulness in Law Practice

Factfinder



-THE MINDFULNESS PRACTITIONER, KNOWING HOW TO SEE THROUGH HIS OR HER OWN HABITUAL PATTERNS, HOPES AND FEARS—AND THE DISTORTIONS THEY INTRODUCE—HAS A MORE SOPHISTICATED VIEW OF HOW TO RELATE WITH INFORMATION PROVIDED BY A CLIENT OR OTHERS.

[HTTP://WWW.SUPREMECOURT.OHIO.GOV/BOARDS/OJFN/RESOURCES/MEDITATION.ASP](http://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/boards/ojfn/resources/meditation.asp); THE MINDFUL LAWYER: MINDFULNESS MEDITATION AND LAW PRACTICE, THE VERMONT BAR JOURNAL - SUMMER 2007.

Applying Mindfulness in Law Practice

Counselor



COUNSELING USUALLY OCCURS IN A SITUATION OF UNCERTAINTY (OTHERWISE IT WOULD HARDLY BE NEEDED), AND UNCERTAINTY MAKES MOST PEOPLE UNEASY. UNEASINESS OR ANXIETY ABOUT A SITUATION CAN UNLEASH A STORM OF HABITUAL MENTAL PATTERNS (SOMETIMES CALLED PANIC), BUT THE MINDFULNESS PRACTITIONER HAS, AT LEAST, THE TOOLS TO SEE—AND THEN CUT THROUGH—THOSE THOUGHTS AND EMOTIONS, AND SIMPLY BE PRESENT.

IN THIS SITUATION, PRESENCE IS SYNONYMOUS WITH DETACHMENT, DISINTERESTEDNESS.

Applying Mindfulness in Law Practice

Negotiator



- **A VALUABLE NEGOTIATING SKILL THAT MINDFULNESS PRACTICE FACILITATES IS AVOIDING UNNECESSARY RESISTANCE. BECAUSE THE PRACTITIONER KNOWS HOW HE OR SHE HAS RESPONDED TO STIMULI (SUCH AS AGGRESSIVE STATEMENTS BY OPPOSING COUNSEL)**
- **BY BECOMING LESS RIGID AND INFLEXIBLE, THE MINDFUL LAWYER HAS A BETTER SENSE OF HOW NOT TO PRODUCE THAT REACTION IN THE OPPOSITE COUNSEL OR CLIENT. WHEN THIS COMPETENCY IS PARTICULARLY REFINED, IT CAN BE SUCCESSFULLY DEPLOYED, EVEN IN SITUATIONS WHERE STAKES ARE HIGH AND EMOTIONS INTENSE.**

Applying Mindfulness in Law Practice

Advocate



- **MINDFULNESS TEACHES A SPECIFIC APPROACH TO WORKING WITH NERVOUSNESS AND FEAR, RECOGNIZING THEM BEFORE THE “STORY” OR OTHER HABITUAL RESPONSE KICKS IN.**
- **THE PRACTITIONER CAN ALSO LEARN HOW NOT TO SHY AWAY FROM THE FEAR, BUT RATHER TO APPRECIATE THE EXPERIENCE, TURNING IT INTO A SOURCE OF ENERGY AND ALERTNESS INSTEAD OF AN OBSTACLE.**

[HTTP://WWW.SUPREMECOURT.OHIO.GOV/BOARDS/OJFN/RESOURCES/MEDITATION.ASP](http://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/boards/ojfn/resources/meditation.asp); THE MINDFUL LAWYER: MINDFULNESS MEDITATION AND LAW PRACTICE, THE VERMONT BAR JOURNAL - SUMMER 2007.

How do you practice mindfulness”



YOU DON'T NEED TO MEDITATE TO DO IT. THE ULTIMATE KEY TO MINDFULNESS IS JUST TO PRACTICE FOCUSING YOUR ATTENTION ONTO A DIRECT SENSE, AND TO DO IT OFTEN. YOU CAN PRACTICE MINDFULNESS WHILE YOU'RE EATING, WALKING, TALKING, DOING JUST ABOUT ANYTHING. IT DOESN'T MEAN YOU HAVE TO SIT STILL FOR 15 MINUTES A DAY AND FOCUS ON YOUR BREATH. INSTEAD, EVERY NOW AND THEN, EVEN FOR 10 SECONDS, JUST FOCUS ON A SENSORY EXPERIENCE AND YOU WILL ACTIVATE YOUR DIRECT EXPERIENCE NETWORK.

... how do you practice mindfulness?



- **MINDFULNESS MEANS MAINTAINING A MOMENT-BY-MOMENT AWARENESS OF OUR THOUGHTS, FEELINGS, BODILY SENSATIONS, AND SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT.**
- **MINDFULNESS ALSO INVOLVES ACCEPTANCE, MEANING THAT WE PAY ATTENTION TO OUR THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS WITHOUT JUDGING THEM—WITHOUT BELIEVING, FOR INSTANCE, THAT THERE’S A “RIGHT” OR “WRONG” WAY TO THINK OR FEEL IN A GIVEN MOMENT.**
- **WHEN WE PRACTICE MINDFULNESS, OUR THOUGHTS TUNE INTO WHAT WE’RE SENSING IN THE PRESENT MOMENT RATHER THAN REHASHING THE PAST OR IMAGINING THE FUTURE.”**

What is meditation?



- **MEDITATION HAS BEEN PRACTICED FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS. MEDITATION ORIGINALLY WAS MEANT TO HELP DEEPEN UNDERSTANDING OF THE SACRED AND MYSTICAL FORCES OF LIFE. THESE DAYS, MEDITATION IS COMMONLY USED FOR RELAXATION AND STRESS REDUCTION.**

[HTTP://WWW.MAYOCLINIC.ORG/TESTS-PROCEDURES/MEDITATION/IN-DEPTH/MEDITATION/ART-20045858](http://www.mayoclinic.org/tests-procedures/meditation/in-depth/meditation/art-20045858)

- **ALTHOUGH RELIGIOUS CONTEMPLATIVES, OFTEN IN MONASTIC SETTINGS, HAVE LONG PRACTICED MEDITATION, ⁴ MINDFULNESS MEDITATION IS ESSENTIALLY A NON-RELIGIOUS (OR RELIGION-NEUTRAL) PRACTICE, IN THAT IT IS A WAY OF CULTIVATING INNATE HUMAN QUALITIES. AND EVEN WHEN WE LIMIT ITS MEANING TO MIND TRAINING, THE TERM STILL COVERS A LOT OF DIFFERENT APPROACHES.**

[HTTP://WWW.SUPREMECOURT.OHIO.GOV/BOARDS/OJEN/RESOURCES/MEDITATION.ASP](http://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/boards/ojen/resources/meditation.asp)

Types of Meditation



**MINDFULNESS MEDITATION
BODY SCAN
AFFIRMATION MEDITATION
GUIDED MEDITATION
SELF-HYPNOSIS
LOVING-KINDNESS**

**THERE ARE MANY OTHER TYPES – NO ONE TYPE IS
BETTER THAN THE OTHER**

[HTTP://NOETIC.ORG/SITES/DEFAULT/FILES/UPLOADS/FILES/MEDITATION_INTRO.PDF](http://noetic.org/sites/default/files/uploads/files/meditation_intro.pdf)

[HTTP://MENTALHEALTHDAILY.COM/2015/03/24/TYPES-OF-MEDITATION-EXTENSIVE-LIST-OF-TECHNIQUES/](http://mentalhealthdaily.com/2015/03/24/types-of-meditation-extensive-list-of-techniques/)

I've learned to use meditation and relaxation to handle stress...

Just kidding,
I'm on my
third glass
of wine.



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How do you meditate?



- **BY SITTING AND OBSERVING MENTAL EVENTS ARISING—WHETHER AS THOUGHTS, EMOTIONS, BODILY SENSATIONS, SENSE PERCEPTIONS, OR DAYDREAMS—YOU BECOME FAMILIAR WITH THE CONTENTS OF MIND AND ITS PATTERNS.**
- **TRY NOT TO JUDGE, EVALUATE, CHANGE, OR REJECT THE THOUGHTS AS THEY ARISE, LEARN TO SEE THEM MERELY AS PHENOMENA THAT ARISE, DWELL, AND THEN PASS AWAY, MUCH LIKE SCENERY PASSING BY.**

[HTTP://WWW.SUPREMECOURT.OHIO.GOV/BOARDS/OJFN/RESOURCES/MEDITATION.A
SP](http://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/boards/ojfn/resources/meditation.asp)

What is Mindfulness meditation?



- **MINDFULNESS MEDITATION HAS BEEN DESCRIBED AS “A FRIENDLY GESTURE TOWARD OURSELVES IN WHICH WE TAKE TIME SIMPLY TO BE.”**
- **IT IS A WAY OF LEARNING HOW TO BE PRESENT AS A PERSON, FINDING A GROUND OF “BEING” FROM WHICH “DOING” MAY ARISE MORE CLEARLY AND EFFECTIVELY.**
- **THE POINT IS NOT TO CULTIVATE A PARTICULAR STATE OF MIND BELIEVED TO BE DESIRABLE, SUCH AS HAPPINESS OR CONTENTMENT, ALTHOUGH THEY MAY BE BYPRODUCTS; RATHER, YOU SIMPLY SIT WITH WHATEVER ARISES IN YOUR MIND**
- **[HTTP://WWW.SUPREMECOURT.OHIO.GOV/BOARDS/OJFN/RESOURCES/MEDITATION.ASP](http://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/boards/ojfn/resources/meditation.asp)**

Why Practice Mindfulness Meditation?



- **BY ENGAGING IN MINDFULNESS MEDITATION THE LAWYER CAN BRING EQUANIMITY INTO THE CHALLENGES OF LEGAL PRACTICE.**
- **WITH DETACHMENT FROM MENTAL PATTERNING, THE LAWYER CAN RIDE THE ENERGIES OF A SITUATION, WHETHER IN NEGOTIATING A SETTLEMENT, DEALING WITH THE PRESSURE OF DEADLINES, OR RESPONDING TO THE ARGUMENTS OF ADVERSARIES.**

What are the benefits of Mindfulness Meditation?



- **MORE FOCUSED ATTENTION**
- **RELAXATION**
- **POSITIVE SHIFTS IN MOOD**
- **ENHANCED SELF-AWARENESS**
- **IMPROVED HEALTH AND WELL-BEING**

Meditation Instruction :

Find a comfortable location



- **THE MOST COMMON AND ACCESSIBLE POSITION FOR MEDITATION IS SITTING. SIT ON THE FLOOR, IN A CHAIR OR ON A STOOL. IF YOU ARE SEATED ON THE FLOOR IT IS OFTEN MOST COMFORTABLE TO SIT CROSS-LEGGED ON A CUSHION.**
- **COMFORT IS KEY.**
- **NOW IMAGINE A THREAD EXTENDING FROM THE TOP OF YOUR HEAD, PULLING YOUR BACK, NECK AND HEAD STRAIGHT UP TOWARDS THE CEILING IN A STRAIGHT LINE.**
- **SIT TALL.**

Meditation Instruction: Working with your thoughts



- **AS YOU SIT PRACTICING, YOU WILL NOTICE THAT THOUGHTS ARISE. SOMETIMES THERE ARE A GREAT MANY THOUGHTS, OVERLAPPING ONE OVER THE NEXT: MEMORIES, PLANS FOR THE FUTURE, FANTASIES, JINGLES FROM TV COMMERCIALS, WHAT DIDN'T I FINISH TODAY, WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO TOMORROW, REGRETS, DESIRES . . .**
- **-THERE MAY SEEM TO BE NO GAPS AT ALL IN WHICH YOU CAN CATCH A GLIMPSE OF YOUR BREATH. THAT'S NOT UNCOMMON, ESPECIALLY IF YOU'RE NEW TO MEDITATION. JUST NOTICE WHAT HAPPENS**

Meditation Instruction: Working with your thoughts



- **MINDFULNESS MEDITATION IS ABOUT PRACTICING BEING MINDFUL OF WHATEVER HAPPENS. IT IS NOT ABOUT GETTING OURSELVES TO STOP THINKING. IF YOU FIND YOU ARE THINKING (AND YOU WILL), INCLUDE IT IN WHAT YOU NOTICE**
- **DON'T TRY TO GET RID OF YOUR THOUGHTS. THE THOUGHTS WILL COME AND GO**
- **-\TRY NOT TO JUDGE YOUR THOUGHTS. JUST LABEL THEM AS THOUGHTS AND GO BACK TO YOUR BREATH**



What are some benefits of meditation?



- **FOR MUCH OF THE LAST CENTURY, SCIENTISTS BELIEVED THAT THE BRAIN ESSENTIALLY STOPPED CHANGING AFTER ADULTHOOD.**
- **MEDITATION CAN RESULT IN POSITIVE CHANGES IN YOUR BRAIN**
- **QUITE LITERALLY, SUSTAINED MEDITATION LEADS TO SOMETHING CALLED NEUROPLASTICITY, WHICH IS DEFINED AS THE BRAIN'S ABILITY TO CHANGE, STRUCTURALLY AND FUNCTIONALLY, ON THE BASIS OF ENVIRONMENTAL INPUT.**

[HTTP://WWW.HUFFINGTONPOST.COM/2013/04/30/MEDITATION-HEALTH-BENEFITS_N_3178731.HTML](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/04/30/meditation-health-benefits_n_3178731.html)

What are some of the health benefits of meditation?



- **DECREASED BLOOD PRESSURE.** THE AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION HAS RELEASED A STATEMENT THAT MEDITATION MAY BE CONSIDERED IN CLINICAL PRACTICE TO LOWER BLOOD PRESSURE.
- **BETTER SLEEP.** IN A STUDY PUBLISHED IN JAMA INTERNAL MEDICINE, PARTICIPANTS WHO UNDERWENT A SIX-WEEK PROGRAM ON MINDFULNESS MEDITATION HAD GREATER IMPROVEMENTS IN SLEEP QUALITY AND FEWER SYMPTOMS OF INSOMNIA COMPARED TO THOSE WHO WERE TAUGHT STANDARD WAYS TO IMPROVE THEIR SLEEP HYGIENE.

What are some of the health benefits of meditation?



- **DECREASED DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY.** IN 2014, RESEARCHERS FROM JOHNS HOPKINS FOUND THAT 30 MINUTES OF MEDITATION A DAY CAN IMPROVE SOME SYMPTOMS OF ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION IN PATIENTS WITH MILD DISEASE TO THE SAME EXTENT AS ANTIDEPRESSANT MEDICATIONS. THIS EFFECT LIKELY STEMS FROM MEDITATION'S EFFECTS ON OUR BRAIN WAVES, BRAIN CELL CONNECTIONS, ACTUAL STRUCTURES (THICKENING SOME AREAS WHILE MAKING OTHERS LESS DENSE), AND EVEN MOLECULES THAT SEND SIGNALS.
- **DEALING WITH CHRONIC PAIN.** WHILE IT IS NOT CLEAR HOW MEDITATION DECREASES THE SUFFERING OF PEOPLE WHO EXPERIENCE CHRONIC PAIN, IT IS BELIEVED THAT IT ALTERS PAIN PERCEPTION.

What are some of the health benefits of meditation?



- **IMPROVED IMMUNE FUNCTION.** WHEN YOUR BODY IS RELAXED, YOUR IMMUNE SYSTEM IS ABLE TO PREPARE FOR BATTLE AGAINST GERMS, FOREIGN INVADERS, AND CANCER.
- **MORE FOCUS, IMPROVED MEMORY.** *STUDIES HAVE FOUND THAT MEDITATION TRAINING HELPED WORKERS CONCENTRATE BETTER, REMEMBER MORE OF THEIR WORK DETAILS, AND STAY ENERGIZED AND EXPERIENCE LESS NEGATIVE MOODS.*
- [HTTP://WWW.WASHINGTONTIMES.COM/NEWS/2017/JAN/6/HEALTH-BENEFITS-MEDITATION/](http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2017/jan/6/health-benefits-meditation/)

What are some of benefits of meditation?



- **IT INCREASES GRAY MATTER IN THE BRAIN**
- **A 2005 STUDY ON AMERICAN MEN AND WOMEN WHO MEDITATED A MERE 40 MINUTES A DAY SHOWED THAT THEY HAD THICKER CORTICAL WALLS THAN NON-MEDITATORS.**
- **WHAT THIS MEANT IS THAT THEIR BRAINS WERE AGING AT A SLOWER RATE.**
- **CORTICAL THICKNESS IS ALSO ASSOCIATED WITH DECISION MAKING, ATTENTION AND MEMORY.**

What are some of benefits of meditation?



- **IT'S BETTER THAN BLOOD PRESSURE MEDICATION**
- **IN 2008, DR. RANDY ZUSMAN, A DOCTOR AT THE MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL HOSPITAL, ASKED PATIENTS SUFFERING FROM HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE TO TRY A MEDITATION-BASED RELAXATION PROGRAM FOR THREE MONTHS. THESE WERE PATIENTS WHOSE BLOOD PRESSURE HAD NOT BEEN CONTROLLED WITH MEDICATION. AFTER MEDITATING REGULARLY FOR THREE MONTHS, 40 OF THE 60 PATIENTS SHOWED SIGNIFICANT DROPS IN BLOOD PRESSURE LEVELS AND WERE ABLE TO REDUCE SOME OF THEIR MEDICATION. THE REASON?**
- **RELAXATION RESULTS IN THE FORMATION OF NITRIC OXIDE WHICH OPENS UP YOUR BLOOD VESSELS.**

[HTTP://WWW.HUFFINGTONPOST.COM/2013/04/30/MEDITATION-HEALTH-BENEFITS_N_3178731.HTML](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/04/30/meditation-health-benefits_n_3178731.html)

What are some of benefits of meditation?



- **IT CAN PROTECT YOUR TELOMERES**
- **TELOMERES -- THE PROTECTIVE CAPS AT THE END OF OUR CHROMOSOMES -- ARE THE NEW FRONTIER OF ANTI-AGING SCIENCE. LONGER TELOMERES MEAN THAT YOU'RE ALSO LIKELY TO LIVE LONGER.**
- **RESEARCH DONE BY THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, DAVIS' SAMATHA PROJECT HAS SHOWN THAT MEDITATORS HAVE SIGNIFICANTLY HIGHER TELOMERASE ACTIVITY**

What are some of benefits of meditation?



- **ITS PAIN RELIEVING PROPERTIES COMPARABLE TO MORPHINE**
- **A STUDY CONDUCTED BY WAKE FOREST BAPTIST UNIVERSITY FOUND THAT MEDITATION COULD REDUCE PAIN INTENSITY BY 40 PERCENT AND PAIN UNPLEASANTNESS BY 57 PERCENT. MORPHINE AND OTHER PAIN-RELIEVING DRUGS TYPICALLY SHOW A PAIN REDUCTION OF 25 PERCENT.**
- **MEDITATION WORKS BY REDUCING ACTIVITY IN THE SOMATOSENSORY CORTEX AND INCREASING ACTIVITY IN OTHER AREAS OF THE BRAIN. -THIS STUDY ALSO HAD A SMALL SAMPLE SIZE, MAKING IT HARDER TO DRAW DEFINITE CONCLUSIONS.**

Parting thoughts



MINDFULNESS IS AN ONGOING PRACTICE.

**MINDFULNESS MEDITATION WILL WORK IF
YOU PRACTICE.**

TRY NOT TO JUDGE YOUR MEDITATION.

EVERY TIME YOU MEDITATE IS DIFFERENT.

**YOU MAY BRING MINDFULNESS TO EVERY
ASPECT OF YOUR LIFE.**