

Wisconsin Public Psychiatry Network Teleconference (WPPNT)

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**Mindfulness Meditation  
and the Dance for Wellness**

An Effective Strategy for  
Both Therapists and their Clients

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## Overview and Welcome



- Definitions – Mindfulness, Awareness, Attention, Meditation
- Benefits and effectiveness – for us and our clients
- Holistic view of Mind-Brain Organ system
- You are built to be happy and not to suffer
- Getting to know your inside self
- Small repeated amounts of practice– kind and slow – just **Be** with this moment

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## Mindfulness

- “Knowing what you are experiencing, while you are experiencing it” Guy Armstrong



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## Mindfulness Meditation

- **Moment to moment awareness**
- Paying attention to what we normally do NOT pay attention to
- **Simply reflect** what is happening – like a mirror
- **Unbiased** – not for or against anything
  - I don't know mind
- **Active** process and is also receptive
- **Penetrating**

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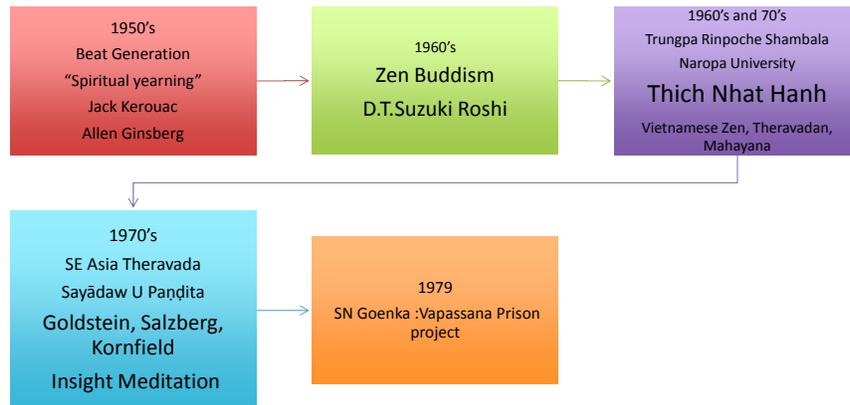
## Mindfulness and Consciousness

Ryan and Brown

- “Mindfulness captures a quality of consciousness that is characterized by clarity and vividness of current experience and functioning and thus stands in contrast to mindless, less awake states of habitual or automatic functioning that may be chronic for many individuals.”
- “Mindfulness may be important in disengaging individuals from automatic thoughts, habits and unhealthy behavior patterns.....”

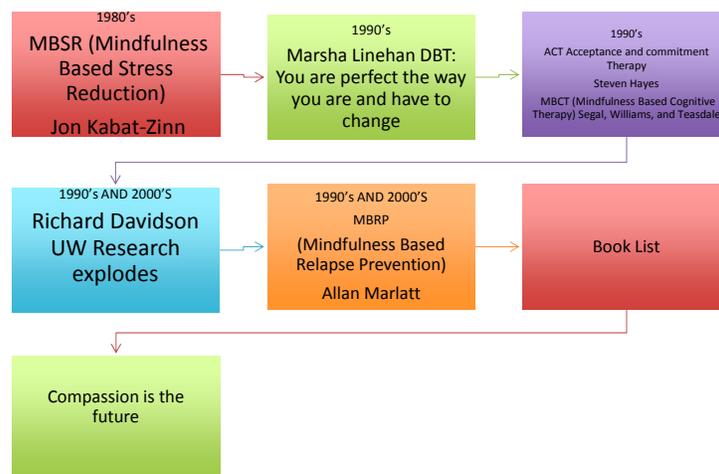
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### Tracking the recent history of Mindfulness and finding it's place in Behavioral Health



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### Tracking the recent history of Mindfulness



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## Mindfulness

- “**Unassuming** character compared to other more colorful mental factors such as imagination, intelligence, reasoning”
- “**Unobtrusive** nature, its virtue shines inward and most of it’s merits are passed on to other mental faculties”
- “In ordinary life we rarely sustain mindfulness, it quickly moves to an emotional reaction, a discrimination, a judgment, a reflection, an action”

Nyanaponika Thera The Heart of Buddhist Meditation

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## Characteristics of Mindfulness

Brown and Ryan

- **Mindfulness is a naturally occurring** characteristic.
- Individuals differ in their propensity or willingness to be aware or sustain mindfulness.
- Mindfulness capacity can be sharpened or dulled by a variety of factors.

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## Mindfulness Meditation: What it is NOT

- Is Not spacing out
- Is not having a cup of coffee alone in the morning
- It is not about having NO thoughts
- It is not about thinking or contemplating or problem solving
- It is not passive
- It is not devoid of feeling or emotion

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## Awareness and Attention

Brown and Ryan

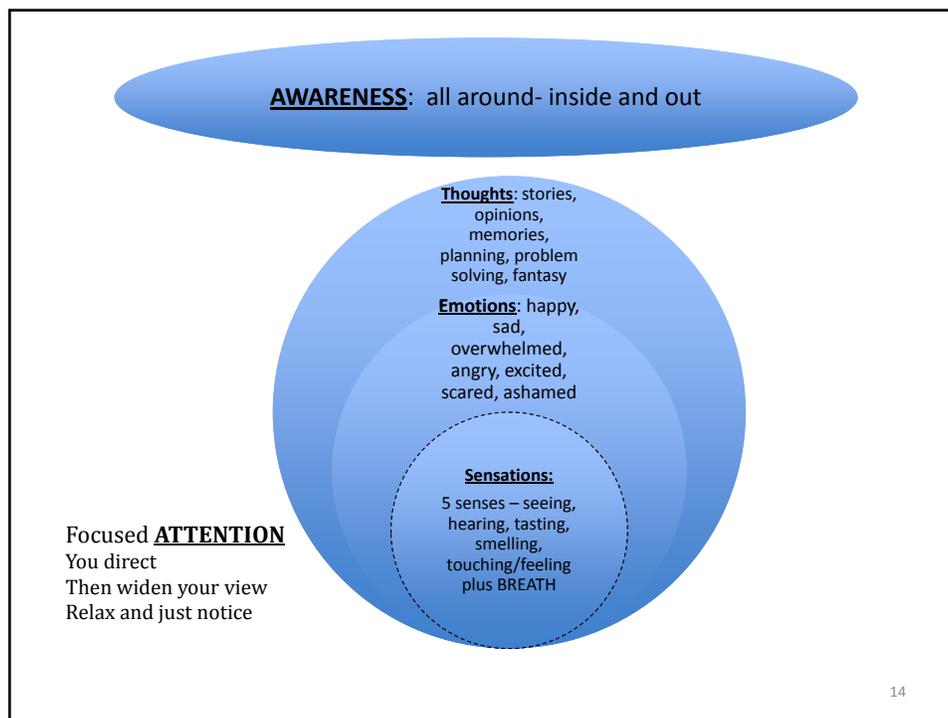
- Awareness is the background radar of consciousness, continually monitoring the inner and outer environment. One may be aware of stimuli without them being at the center of attention.
- Attention is a process of focusing conscious awareness, providing heightened sensitivity to a limited range of experience. In actuality, awareness and attention are intertwined.
- Attention and awareness are part of normal functioning. Mindfulness can be considered an enhanced attention to and awareness of current experience or present reality

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## Awareness

- “The ever present knowing quality of mind”
- It is natural and innate
- Always present – but not always recognized
- Meditation teaches us to recognize awareness
- In everyday life we often don’t recognize awareness because we are preoccupied with everyday worries, thoughts, plans, ideas
- When put our attention on a task (and are not distracted) we can be relaxed and focused - but we can still not be aware of awareness

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## From MedicineNet.com

- Meditation: A typically self-directed *practice for relaxing the body and calming the mind*. Most meditative techniques have come to the West from Eastern religious practices, particularly India, China, and Japan, but can be found in many cultures of the world. Until recently, the primary purpose of meditation has been religious, although its health benefits have long been recognized.
- Common view - not so helpful – sets up expectations; increases frustration

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## Meditation

- Taking time to know/explore your natural mind
- In Tibetan: **to become familiar with**
- Getting to know yourself *inside* self – Interoception or internal compass ( Daniel Siegel)
- “It took me a long time to recognize how easy meditation really is, mainly because it seemed so completely ordinary. I thought that the natural mind had to be different from what I was already experiencing.” Yougey Mingyur Rinpoche

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## Daniel Seigel MD

### Defining Mind

- Our subjective experience and the process of being aware of our feelings and mental activities (Wonderful and terrifying feelings), moods, states of mind, thoughts, images, memories, hopes, attitudes, intentions, perceptions, reasoning, intuition, beliefs, dreams
- Both an implicit and explicit knowing of the facts
- A process that regulates the flow of energy and information within our bodies, and with our relationships
- Embodied and relational process that regulates the flow of energy and information
- Includes Consciousness (experience of being aware) and also Unconscious (automatic; habit loops)

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## Basic Instructions for how to do Mindfulness Meditation ?

- First *Relax* – no hurry, no where to go, nothing to achieve
- Check your posture: spine straight, relax your body
- Take a few deep breaths; Let them out slowly; gently pause/relax at the end of the out breath
- Gently attend to what simply arises within your awareness
- For 5-10 minutes continue to Meditate or work with your mind directly
  - Use an Anchor ( 5 senses plus breath, emotions or thoughts) for support
- End by relaxing and simply be with whatever arises in your awareness

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## Spirit of Mindfulness

- Non- judging attitude
- Kindness; gentleness
- Curiosity
- Acceptance
- Unbiased – not for or against

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## Heart of Mindfulness

- “The heart of skillful mediation is the ability to let go and begin over and over again”

Sharon Salzberg



- It is this **constant return** to one’s anchor, one’s focus **-without judgment/without bias** -that becomes one of meditations biggest teachers

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## Automatic Pilot/Habit Mind

- We need to learn repetitive tasks
  - functional, practical
- Automatic Pilot – just happens; thoughtless
- Can be compulsive in nature
- NOT a black out
- On a continuum with disassociation
- Mindlessness

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## Nature of mindlessness

Brown and Ryan

- Mindlessness is the absence of mindfulness.
- Consciousness that is blunted, restricted, divided pulled from the present.
  - Rumination or preoccupation with concerns.
  - absorption in the past, fantasies, anxieties about the future.
  - occupied with multiple tasks.
- Compulsive or automatic
- Dissociation
- Defensively motivated

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## Benefits of Mindfulness Meditation

- Lowers BP, heart rate, respiration
- Boosts the Immune system, reduces stress
- Increases ability to manage pain and mood
- Reduces insomnia, depression and anxiety
- Increases self awareness and clarity
- Increases emotional regulation –Decreases reactivity, impulsivity, defensiveness, compulsiveness, rumination.
- Increases one's ability to prevent relapse
- Increases resilience
- Strengthens mental constructs of: trust, patience, acceptance, delaying gratification and issues of control
- Increases being more in tune with inner experience and with emotions
- Increases sense of well being, a sense of calm

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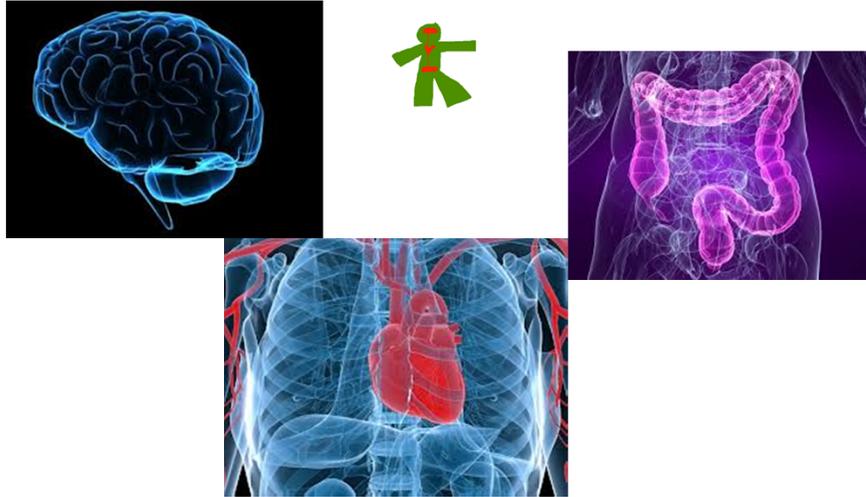
## Continuum of Therapeutic Styles

Directing ↔ Guiding ↔ Following

<b>Cognitive Therapy (REBT)</b>	Motivational Interviewing	Psychodynamic Psychotherapy
<b>Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT, TF-CBT, DBT)</b>	Mindfulness Based Therapy Neuropsychological Based	Rogerian – Client Centered Therapy
<b>Exposure / Desensitization Therapy</b>	Solution Focused Therapy	Jungian Therapy
<b>Contingency Management</b>		
<b>Systematic</b>		
<b>Diabetes Education Program</b>		

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## Brain-Mind Organ system Brain – Heart -Gut



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## The brain

- Brain has 100 billion neurons and 2 hundred trillion connections
- Brain weighs about 3 lbs and is about 2% of our body weight - uses 20-25% of the bodies glucose (Lammert 2008)
- Communicates –using a few neurological hubs to dictate dictate much of the action (Like plane hubs)
- Uses non linear systems (most systems in nature like weather, climate) and oscillations( i.e. Gamma waves 40 cycles per second) for communication (small change – big results)

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## Understanding the brain In 3 Simple Parts



- 1) Reptilian
- 2) Midbrain/Sub cortical or  
Limbic region (Emotional Brain)
- 3) Neo Cortex

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## The Old Reptile Brain

- Reptilian – most ancient – survival orientation
  - ANS Autonomic Nervous System controls and regulates
    - PNS rest-digest or freeze-faint
    - SNS fight-flight
- Vagus Nerve – Cranial nerve X
- The vagus nerve is actually two cranial nerves that extend from the brain stem and connect down to the viscera. Sometimes this nerve is referred to as cranial nerve X, the 10<sup>th</sup> cranial nerve or the wandering nerve. These nerves are used to send a variety of signals throughout the body, but will also transfer signals back to the brain. The vagus nerve is also known for wandering through the body, weaving through the abdomen and branching into other nerves that extend through the limbs and organs. The vagus nerve is used to regulate a variety of body functions including the heartbeat and the muscle movement necessary to keep you breathing. This nerve also regulates the chemical levels in the digestive system so that the intestines can process food and keep track of what types of nutrients are being gained from the food that is taken in. MD Health .net

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## Negativity Bias Rick Hanson

- Negative stimuli get more attention and processing
- We generally learn faster from pain than pleasure
- People work harder to avoid a loss
- Easy to create learned helplessness; hard to undo
- Negative interactions: more powerful than positive

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## Mind Brain Organ System

- Only organ system that can be trained
- It is shaped by experience
- Hebe's Law – Neuron's that fire together wire together
- Neuroplasticity allows the brain to reassign or create new connections
- Characteristics of the brain, of personality, our positive outlook and sense of happiness are not fixed
- it is not just about genetics
- Epigenetic's comes into play
- Change and experiences just keep happening
- Small changes over time add up



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## Doors to Awareness

### Sense Doors

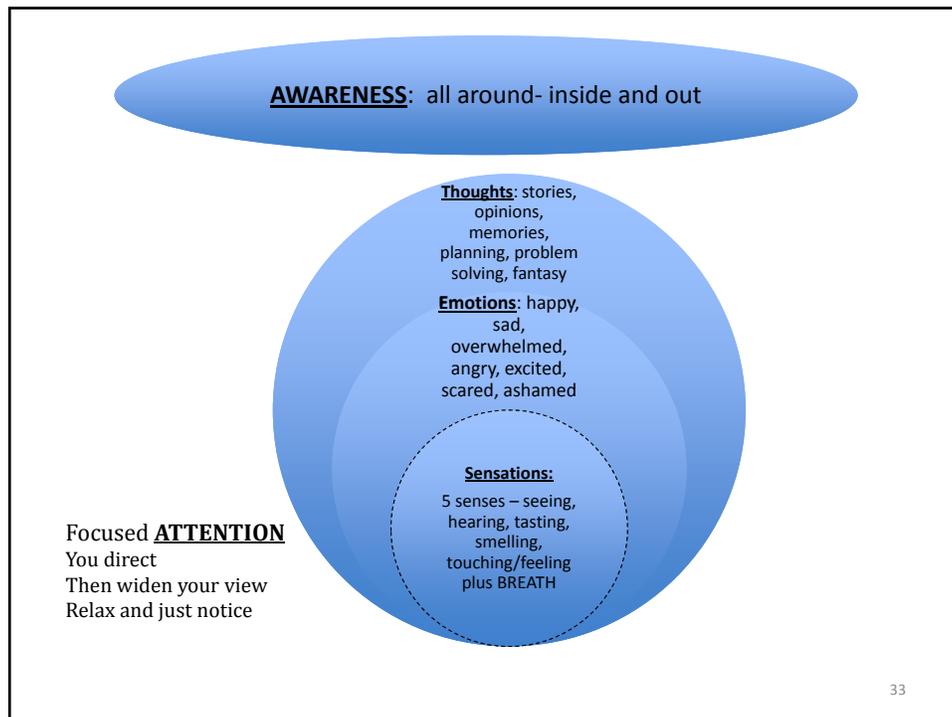


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## 5 senses or perceptions + 1

- Sight/Seeing
- Taste/Tasting
- Touch/body sensations (Breath)
- Smell/Smelling
- Sound/Hearing
- Mental
  - Thoughts
  - Emotions (like/dislike)
  - “The capacity of the mind to know or discern what we see, smell, hear, taste or touch”  
Mingyur Rinpoche

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## Use this for both Group and Individual check ins

- Basic Awareness – or Circles of Awareness
- Use Brief basic awareness during group or at the beginning of an individual session
- Circle through the 5 senses – exercise during the day
- Stay with the Breath( 5 senses) – as a Pause times
- Basic Body Scan (UW Family Medicine ) – use MP3 in group or for clients to take home

## Brief Basic Awareness

Stop and Simply Note what you..

(Be gentle, Reduce opinions and judgments)

- SEE:  
...Yellow; cup; tree; leaves, light
- HEAR:  
...A bird; hum; music; talking, loud; thumping
- FEEL:  
... Arm on the chair; coolness; warmth;  
Itch; tingling; tightness on waist; heartbeat
- Taste:  
...Dryness; metallic; sticky; sweet
- Smell:  
...Sweetness; onions; grass; air
- Then simply BREATH:  
...Shallow; deep; tight; smooth
- **Then Let go of Noticing and Attention  
Widen your Awareness and Just Be...**

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## Meditation Realizations

that support health

- Affects mental constructs of: trust, patience, acceptance, increased compassion for self and others
- Increased relaxation and sense of peace or ease/ less overwhelmed
- Increased self awareness/ increased Clarity/insight/ increased focus and attention/ able to use values for increased motivation
- Increased mental/physical functioning

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## Meditation Realizations

that support health

- Able to Stop and Start / Less reactive, impulsive / emotional regulation/ delayed gratification /increased ability to be still, to let go, increased comfort with I don't know mind
- Less controlling / more open / increased tolerance/ decreased defensiveness/ healthier boundaries
- Recognition of interdependence and being connected; our behavior affects others
- Awareness of their inside self – more subtle states of mind

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## Clinical Considerations

- Can you reduce mindfulness to a skill set?
- Does the person teaching the skill need to have a sustainable meditation or mindfulness practice?
- The process of isolating the most salient or studied pieces of mindfulness practice may mean we are losing something.
- Compassion Meditation is at the front of Research – keep watching the reasearch

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## Books and Authors:

- Mindfulness in Plain English Bhante Henepola Gunaratna
- Start Where You Are Pema Chodron
- Meditation for Beginners Jack Kornfield
- The Joy of Living Yonge Mingyur Ribooche
- Emotional Life of the Brain Richard Davidson
- Buddha's Brain Hardwiring Happiness Rick Hanson
- Mindful way through Depression Mark Williams; John Teasdale; Zindel Segal and Jon Kabat-Zin
- Brainstorm Mindsight Daniel Siegel MD
- Emotional Intelligence Focus Daniel Goleman
- The Power of Habit Charles Duhigg
- Self Compassion Kristen Neff Ph. D
- Willpower Instinct Kelly McGonigal Ph.D.

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*Mindful Strategies for Health*



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**Will create a Training for any Group  
or Organization**

**You set the Goals**



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