Mindfulness Meditation
Self Care and Patient Care

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Objectives

- Define mindfulness
- Discuss benefits of mindfulness
- Describe ways to include mindfulness in daily activities
- Describe ways to include mindfulness in a clinical setting
- Practice mindfulness exercises
  - Mindfulness for simply the practice of mindfulness
  - Mindfulness as a means of managing various situations
What is Mindfulness?

- Mindfulness involves paying attention intentionally with:
  - Acceptance
  - Openness
  - Curiosity
  - Kindness
  - Patience
  - Trust
What is Mindfulness

Mindfulness brings the mind and body together in the same place at the same time.

- Mindfulness is the practice of being-rather than doing.
- Checking in rather than checking out.
Mindfulness is NOT

- Judging
- Reacting
- Doing
- Striving or competitive
- Always easy
- Suppressing or rejecting thoughts and/or feelings
- Passive
- Equal to Relaxation
Mindfulness Is Experienced in Several Ways

- How we move – walking, exercise, dance, stretching
- Posture – sitting, standing, lying
- Senses – eating, drinking, textures, smell
- Thoughts
- Feelings
- Interactions
History of Mindfulness

- Used by Monks for centuries to relieve suffering with meditation.
- Yoga utilizes mindfulness practices.
- Over past 40 plus years Mindfulness has taken root in Western Society
- Practiced individually, in groups and at retreats.
- Research has demonstrated empirical evidence.
Mindfulness in Practice

- H. Benson (Harvard University) began to teach the Relaxation Response in the 1970's.

- Jon Kabat-Zinn studied mindfulness at U. Mass beginning in 1979 – He developed Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR).

- Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) incorporates mindfulness strategies. (Hayes)

- Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) is a cognitive based program which uses mindfulness as one of 4 primary components. (Linehan)

- Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) is designed to help people who suffer repeated bouts of depression and chronic unhappiness. CBT + meditative practice. (Segal, Williams, Teasdale)

- Andrew Weil, M.D. - founder, professor, and director of the Arizona Center for Integrative Medicine at the University of Arizona utilizes mindfulness based practices.
Benefits of Mindfulness

- Reduces:
  - Anxiety
  - Blood pressure
  - Sleep problems
  - Perceptions of stress
  - Pain
  - Skin disorders
  - GI problems
  - Rumination
  - Hot flashes
  - Cravings/addictions
Benefits of Mindfulness

- Enhances:
  - Feelings of well being
  - Focus and attention
  - Healing
  - Immune response
  - Meta-cognitive processes
  - Memory
  - Energy
  - Emotional regulation
  - Mood
The Mind has Some Natural Tendencies

- Inner busyness
- Wandering and day dreaming
- Worry
- Planning & contingencies
- Regret/guilt
- Shifting focus
- Alert to threat
Variations of Mindfulness

- Meditation
- Walking meditation
- Sensory meditation
- Expressive meditation
- Mindful eating
- Yoga/Tai Chi
- Martial Arts
- Mindful moments
- Silent meditation
Beginner’s Mind

- Willingness to see everything as if for the first time
- Take a child’s view of the world
- Frees us of expectations
- Allows us to explore and discover
- Light hearted, fun and playful
Non-judging

- Impartial witness to your own experience.
- Many things are labeled by our mind as good/bad, happy/sad.
- Pulling back from judging can free us.
Non-striving

- The act of being - not doing.
- Watching and observing the self.
- Focus on process not progress.
- Oddly, when we back off striving, we often see movement. (Not trying too hard).
- Not competing.
- Not controlling.
- Not easy to do!!!
Acceptance

- Seeing things as they actually are in the present.
- Avoiding denying and resisting what “is”.
- Reducing the desire to “force” situations to be the way we want them to be.
- Letting go of “should have, would have, could have and if only”.
- “In life there will be pain – suffering is more of a choice”.
Principles of Mindfulness Practice

- Start with short activities.
- Incorporate into lifestyle.
- Make the practice fit the person and situation.
- As with most things practice adds to experience.
- Get an App
  - Consider a community for practice.
    - Begin with yoga class.
    - Join a mindfulness group.
    - There are online communities, if no local community is available.
      - Chopra
      - Mindfulness retreats
## Practice

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**Rock Exercise**

- Identify a rock, coin or charm and observe the item for 1-2 minutes.
- You may repeat the observations you have previously made.
- Try to maintain focus on the item.
- Avoid judging or nullify judgments when possible.

*you may substitute any item for the rock.*

(plant, piece of jewelry, picture on wall, etc)
Walking Meditation

- Wear comfortable clothing and shoes.

- Begin walking at a comfortable pace. Focus on the sensations that you feel in your body as you walk.

- Feel the weight of your body on the bottom of your feet.

- Feel your arms swinging with each step.

- If thoughts come to mind, gently let them go and redirect your focus to the sensations as you are walking.

- You can also focus on breathing as you walk. Try breathing in for 2 steps and out for 2 steps.

- If your thoughts turn to work, money, stress give yourself credit for recognizing and redirect your attention to your observations of walking.

- Try for 20-30 minutes several times per week. If you only have 5 or 10 minutes take that as even in small amounts walking meditation is beneficial.

- Experiment with different paces and observations of the environment where you are walking such as colors, smells and air temperature.
Sensory Exercise

- You will need a piece of chocolate, raisin, or mint. Bite size or slightly larger is best.

- Relax, take a few breaths.

- Be aware of the sight of the object and the feel even before you place in your mouth.

- Place the item in your mouth or take a bite and be aware of feel, smell and taste.

- Bite, chew or allow the item to dissolve, listen for sound of it as you bite or chew and be aware of feeling in your mouth.

- As you swallow, feel how it tastes and feels.

- If thoughts or judgments invade try to dismiss and return to your observations of the experience.

- Continue to observe the fading of the sensation.
Expressive Meditation

- Typically we think of meditation as something done either sitting or resting quietly, using breathing and focusing on something such as our breath or a focal object or point.

- Some people who like to be active, engage in meditation using walking meditation.

- Some also engage in laughter yoga or laughter meditation that combines breathing and simulated laughter.

- Rhythm associated with drumming or other forms of music helps the brain to free itself.

- Music or drumming combined with movement = expressive meditation.
Expressive Meditation

- Select music of your choice and play as you engage in moving to the music.

- Begin to gently move your body to the music. Let your body guide you. Dismiss intrusive thoughts.

- Avoid movements that cause any sort of discomfort.

- When the music stops, allow yourself to sit, stand, or rest and just breathe until you are ready to go about the rest of your day.
5 Minute Meditation

- Set a timer for 5 minutes.
- Close your eyes and relax. Take a few breaths to release tension.
- Clear your mind of thoughts.
- As thoughts enter the mind, gently acknowledge and let them go returning your focus to the present and being in the present.
- Continue for 5 minutes and try not to become too focused on “doing it right”.
- Music or aromatherapy though not necessary, might enhance the experience.
Breath Counting

- Sit comfortably with spine straight.
- If comfortable close eyes and take a few breaths.
- As you exhale count “one” to yourself.
- The next time you exhale count “two” and so on up to 5.
- Begin a new cycle. Only count to 5 and only when you exhale.
Music Meditation

- Select a few songs. Try those without lyrics as words sometimes engage the conscious mind.
- Find a comfortable position and begin the music.
- Close your eyes (if comfortable) and listen to the music, if you find yourself thinking of other things, redirect your mind to the music.
- Focus on the music, the sound and the feeling associated with the music. Be with the music.
- Start out with a few songs and increase over time.
- Alternately, move to the music as you listen.
Mantra Meditation

- Set aside a few minutes and assume a comfortable position.

- Choose a mantra or a word or phrase that you repeat to yourself. It can be a sound like 'Om,' or it can be a word or phrase like, 'Calm,' or 'I'm at peace.' (Breath in—breath out)

- Close your eyes and repeat your mantra to yourself trying to focus only on the sound and feel of your mantra.

- Continue for several minutes. Just continue to repeat your mantra and focus on the sound and the way it feels to make the sound.

- Redirect your attention away from distractions, and back to your mantra.
Cleaning and Gardening Meditation

- Bring mindfulness to cleaning or gardening and see it as an opportunity for stress relief, rather than simply as a chore.

- Then, as you clean or garden, focus on what you are doing as you are doing it — and nothing else.

- Feel the warm, soapy water on your hands as you wash dishes; experience the vibrations of the vacuum cleaner or lawn mower; enjoy the warmth or smell of the laundry as you fold it; feel the freedom of letting go of unneeded objects as you remove them or of weeds as you pull them.

- Approach cleaning or gardening as an exercise in mindfulness and it can become just that.
Incorporating Mindfulness into Daily Life

- Take a few minutes in the morning and/or evening to engage in an awareness exercise.
- Practice mindfulness when waiting, cleaning or walking.
- Pray
- Consider joining a mindfulness group.
- Get a mindfulness App.
- Rent or purchase a CD or DVD.
- Engage in mindful eating at least one time per day or week.
- When talking to someone make every effort to be fully present.
Mindfulness in clinical settings

- Benefits:
  - Pain reduction
  - Anxiety reduction
  - Positive changes in biological indicators
Simple Clinical Examples

- Breathing
- Music
- Use of recordings or Apps
- Body scan
Results with Breast Cancer Patients

- Identified newly diagnosed breast cancer patients
- Using group and individual sessions taught mindfulness and coping strategies
- Tracked hand temperature, distress ratings and pulse rate after use of a strategy during stressful time
- Results: statistically significant difference in all biomarkers
  - Increase in hand temperature
  - Decrease in pulse rate
  - Decrease in distress score
Loving Kindness Meditation
2,500 Years Old

- Begin by exhaling completely and then inhaling. Exhale and repeat for 5 breaths.

- Direct the following loving kindness meditation to yourself: May I be filled with loving kindness, may I be well, may I be peaceful, may I be happy.

- Direct the following meditation to someone you care for: May you be filled with loving kindness, may you be well, may you be peaceful, may you be happy.

- Direct the following loving kindness meditation to someone or something causing you distress: May you be filled with loving kindness, may you be well, may you be peaceful, may you be happy.

- Conclude with 5 more deep breaths.
Questions