

Meditation, OLLI, Spring Term 2014  
Session III

Mindfulness, buzz word right now so use it as an example

“Live in the present,” “Pay attention to the now,” “Live Moment to Moment.”  
huh??

if I’m cooking at the stove, pay attention so food not burn

if I’m driving, pay attention to traffic, speed, etc

is that living in the present?????

yes, but not what they meant, really confused

took class at the Smithsonian billed as Meditation, Hugh Byrne

actually about Mindfulness, comes out of the Buddhist tradition

rest of this is my words based on understanding from class and my experiences

Mindfulness is:

slowing the high speed patterns of thinking (using meditation, count breaths)

then you can watch what you are doing or thinking now

in part is based on what doing now

and consider whether you are happy with the thoughts/processes you are using

so “Live in the present” means be aware of thoughts about what doing now

if not like what thinking or way of thinking, can change it

like changing a habit, takes work, can be done

if catch self in negatives, can see how you respond, how you handle that

living in the present does not mean worrying about yesterday's errors  
if necessary, go apologize to someone  
hard at first, easier as do it more  
feels so much better  
try to see if you can figure out how to avoid making that error again

living in the present does not mean worrying about tomorrow's needs  
can create and use tools to help with that  
I was always worried about forgetting to do something I needed to do  
I manage that by being a list maker  
used to use DayTimer and was careful  
now on WordPerfect  
can copy and paste  
can move things around  
if think of something, just add it to the list  
means that I have a solution to something that was a burden  
no longer worry about forgetting something  
no longer have to worry about when get done, grocery list, etc  
not things I have to store in my brain, can do with list

everyone grabbed onto this idea of Mindfulness  
including psychiatry  
way to teach people to assess and then monitor themselves  
then can then manage their thoughts, can change what they want to change  
get the patient to be more a part of the process of healing  
and in the process each leader/teacher added their own verbiage and names  
one comment called meditation Lucid Dreaming (free form meditation)

get back to watching vocabulary and words that are used  
How do you define that? or What do you mean when you say that?

part of what you are doing is developing honesty with yourself about yourself  
scary---but you don't have to share  
can figure out how you would like to act differently  
setting about implementing it  
can ask someone at home to help you watch  
back to PT comparison  
I have asked friends to tell me if my posture is not good  
for this if doing anger management, ask if start to get angry

can get into an altered state of reality:

e.g., what is the sound of one hand clapping

e.g., if a tree falls in the forest and no one is there, is a sound produced?

it's "way out of the box" thinking

can begin to see a border line: physical world vs. other world

LeShan in *Medium, Mystic and Scientist*

there is an odd pause between logical mind/space and something else

Tieran and break-o-phobia

can go back to own reality any time

even in altered state, you are still in control

never heard of anyone having a "bad trip"

if you feel a sense of "I don't like it here," think about something else

mentioned that I was worried about my sanity for awhile

out of college worked for Cornell Program in Social Psychiatry

concept that emotional wellness tied to how effectively deal with daily life

I was managing my daily life without difficulty so stopped worrying about it

Research  
Other Psychological Effects

*Harvard Gazette*, from *Frontiers of Human Neuroscience*

Harvard Medical School, Massachusetts General Hospital and Boston University study showed changes to the brain even when the subject was not meditating in area of brain that processes emotional state

Link: <http://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2012/11/meditations-positive-residual-effects/>

Hugh Byrne, taught Smithsonian class on Mindfulness

Mindfulness Training Institute/MBSR (Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction)  
IMCW (Insight Meditation Community of Washington) certificate expired

Links: <http://www.hugh-byrne.com/>  
<http://www.mindfulnesstraining.org/>

Mayo Clinic, “Stress Management”

covers how to do meditation  
covers physical benefits  
also some on psychological effects  
clear away information overload  
stress management  
self awareness  
reduce negative emotions

Link: <http://www.cnn.com/HEALTH/library/meditation/HQ01070.html>  
actually from Mayo Clinic even though link is through CNN

Johns Hopkins Medicine, “Meditation for Anxiety and Depression?”

research concludes that meditation reduces symptoms  
results of study by Madhav Goyal, M.D, M.P.H

Link:

[http://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/news/media/releases/meditation\\_for\\_anxiety\\_and\\_depression](http://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/news/media/releases/meditation_for_anxiety_and_depression)

Dan Harris, *10% Happier: How I Tamed the Voice in My Head, Reduced Stress Without Losing My Edge, and Found Self-Help That Actually Works--A True Story*

*HealthDay*, “Meditation and Health” (2013)

if relax mind, the body will make fewer of the stress hormones, so less stress helps a wide variety of stress-related problems:

chronic pain

anxiety

insomnia

depression

with chronic illnesses (e.g., cancer, heart disease) helps to manage symptoms

Link: <http://consumer.healthday.com/encyclopedia/holistic-medicine-25/holistic-medicine-news-383/meditation-and-health-645347.html>

Esther M. Sternberg, M.D., *Arthritis Today*, January/February 2013, “Guided Imagery Brings Real Relief”

ease pain and stress, uses guided imagery

Link: <http://www.arthritistoday.org/arthritis-treatment/natural-and-alternative-treatments/meditation-and-relaxation/guided-imagery.php>

WTOP, 4/12/14, “Want to Live Longer? Chill Out”

message: cutting yourself some slack can help you live longer

based on: *Moving Forward: Six Steps to Forgiving Yourself and Breaking Free from the Past* by Dr. Evertt Worthington, Virginia Commonwealth Univ

Link: <http://www.wtop.com/41/3599803/Want-to-live-longer-Chill-out>

*Baltimore Sun*, “Getting into the Groove of Meditation” (3/19/2014)

report on work by Madhav Goyal, M.D., Johns Hopkins assistant professor

info from JAMA of Internal Medicine

he has done a lot of work on the meditation

review of 47 clinical trials over past 50 years:

meditation as effective as medications for anxiety and depression

effective for pain relief

effective for stress relief

Link: [http://articles.baltimoresun.com/2014-03-19/health/bs-hs-meditation-baltimore-20140319\\_1\\_insight-meditation-community-chris-kreeger-baltimore-shambhala-meditation-center](http://articles.baltimoresun.com/2014-03-19/health/bs-hs-meditation-baltimore-20140319_1_insight-meditation-community-chris-kreeger-baltimore-shambhala-meditation-center)

Alice Boyes, Ph. D., from *Psychology Today*, “5 Meditation Tips for Beginners”

Tips 2 and 3 are especially useful (most of the class beyond the other tips)

Tip 2: know how meditation can help you

Tip 3: understand principles of meditation

Link: <http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/in-practice/201303/5-meditation-tips-beginners>

Mary-Lou Stephens, *Huffington Post*, “Meditation and Mindfulness,” 2/20/14

covers some of the perspectives associated with meditation and how it can help

Link: [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/marylou-stephens/how-to-be-a-better-drug-d\\_b\\_4811094.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/marylou-stephens/how-to-be-a-better-drug-d_b_4811094.html)

Rosenzweig, Steven et al, “Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction for Chronic Pain Conditions: Variation in treatment outcomes and role of home meditation practice studied changes in pain, health related quality of life and psychological symptoms”

when using Mindfulness meditation

Link: [http://www.jpsychores.com/article/S0022-3999\(09\)00094-4/abstract](http://www.jpsychores.com/article/S0022-3999(09)00094-4/abstract)

## Guided Med

a thing, a piece of nature  
in this case eyes open  
just look at the item  
can turn it any way you wish  
can take it apart if it comes apart  
crystals, OK to use if wish  
crystals pick up energy that happens in area where they are  
purchased via mail order  
not want that to infringe on class (packers, manufacturers, etc.)  
have been cleaned, any energy in them is natural to the crystal

observe piece, not verbalize  
if have to verbalize say only these phrases to yourself  
(don't want to disturb others)  
Oh  
Hmm  
Look at that  
Wow  
no other words

key is to observe, not comment  
if working to find on the right word to describe what you see  
that's mental exercise which is a distraction  
need to just observe

remember mind will wander, that's OK, just come back to your piece

## Discussion

meditation changes over time