

Meditation, OLLI, Fall Term 2014
Session III

Agenda:

1. Mindfulness
2. Psychological Effects
3. Research with Links
4. Guided Meditation

Linda Bender

Phone: 703-451-0253

please do not call after 9 pm, especially if you want an intelligent response!
lindabender@starpower.net

Notes

Meditation can have positive psychological effects
get into details later
want to address Mindfulness first
being used a tool to help with psychological issues

Mindfulness, (current buzz word)

“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 does 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

What mindfulness is NOT:

CNN: Jeff Wilson, teaches religious studies at Renison University College,
University of Waterloo, Ontario

Link:

<http://religion.blogs.cnn.com/2014/09/14/4-myths-about-mindfulness-meditation/?iref=allsearch>

Myths:

1. All Buddhists practice mindfulness meditation:
not really, only in the monasteries
2. Mindfulness is always good for you -----note that he did *not* say Meditation
if there is an underlying problem, individual can need assistance
3. Mindfulness has always been used for self-improvement
no, for Buddhists, used it to create detachment in search for Nirvana
4. All Mindfulness practitioners are Buddhist
no, used by many in many faiths

rest of this is in my words

based on understanding from class research and my experiences

Mindfulness is:

Meditation is the process of slowing the activity in the mind; and once you have slowed it down, then mindfulness (as I understand it) is watching what does come into the mind and assessing it—major difference.

using meditation (count breaths), slow the high speed patterns of thinking
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 you 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 work and was careful of deadlines
now as retired 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

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
if doing anger management, ask for prompt 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

if intuitive begins to develop, can start 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

IMPORTANT:

in meditation 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 or move hands or feet

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

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 page 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

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

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 Meditation

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 use only these phrases

say 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

Feel free to contact me with questions

Will repeat the class in Reston in the Winter Term 2015

OK to attend, just come as "auditor"