R 902 Meditation

OLLI, Winter Term 2015

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, need to pay attention so food does not burn

 if I’m driving, need to 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 is going on 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 rudeness/negatives, can see your responses

 can see how you handle that and start the change process if you wish

 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

 they can then understand their thoughts, can change what they want to

 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 none 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

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

Mindfulness:

Dr. Jon Kabat-Zinn, PhD

Bio: <http://www.eomega.org/workshops/teachers/jon-kabat-zinn>

What is Mindfulness?

<http://www.mindfullivingprograms.com/mindfulness.php>

Current training

<http://www.mindfullivingprograms.com/whatMBSR.php>

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/>

WTOP.com, Mindfulness contributor, Kathleen Hall

 at the bottom of the Home page in the Spotlight area

 actually covers getting along with others effectively, reduce stress level, etc.

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

 covers some of the perspectives associated with meditation, 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

*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/

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

Guided Meditation

a thing, a piece of nature

 in this case keep 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 only 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