Mindfulness and Meditation
What’s It All About? And How Does It Improve My Work?
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Why are you here, today?

“Balance the two efforts of getting somewhere and being somewhere at the same time”

Buddha Shakyamuni
What is mindfulness?

Mind Full, or Mindful?
Mindfulness

- “Learning to be fully alert and available in the present moment.”  
  MC
- “Drop our resistance and be intelligently and energetically alert.”  
  MC
- “Giving permission to not be in charge or not depending on ego answers, but to allow for inner guidance and support.”
- “Being fully aware of something, in the moment with it, and not judging or resisting it.”  
  RH
- “Awareness that arises through paying attention, on purpose, in the present moment, non-judgmentally. It’s about knowing what is on your mind.”  
  J K-Z
- “Make the Now the primary focus of your life. Whereas before you dwelt in time and paid brief visits to the Now, have your dwelling place in the Now and pay brief visits to past and future when required to deal with the practical aspects of your situation.”  
  ET
What is the purpose? What difference does it make?

- Positive Health Effects
  - Lowers blood pressure
  - Calms and relieves stress
  - Better immune response

- Better at Work
  - More focused
  - Better concentration
  - More creative
  - Like your co-workers more

- Your Personal Connection
What is the *power* in the ‘power of now’?
“Can we be at home in our lives - can we be open, honest, and at ease under all circumstances, moment by moment” ... “and nothing can be excluded, especially not our jobs.”

► Michael Carroll, Awake at Work

Mindfulness teaches us to be at home in ourselves
Meditation - awareness of your body
Mindfulness Practices

- “Law of Little Things” Rick Hanson, Buddha’s Brain
- Brief actions we can do each day
- Switch an attitude or perception
- Meditation
Mindfulness at Work

- Pick a mantra for your day (E.g. “Peace begins with me”)
- Focus on your breathing (to slow down and calm)
- Take a relaxing lunch break (even 15 minutes)
- Write a gratitude note (one thing at the end of the day)

  Forbes September, 2017. How to Practice Mindfulness at Work (online article)

- In your office, do a little feng shui (e.g. arrange your desk so you see the door without being in line with it)
- Keep a plant (bring nature inside)
- Hang a green painting (this color makes you more creative)
- Have a timer to focus on increments at work (use phone app)
Mindfulness at Work (continued)

- Buy a stress cube (fidgeting at work to improve attention, promote creativity, and slash stress)
- Do chair yoga (breath, move, and stretch every hour)
- Find workplace benefits (group meditation, yoga)
- Have a happier commute (moment of silence before you start, compassion with people around you, physical sensations, breathe!!)


- Phone call, pause and breathe
- Notice your emotions and feelings, breathe and explore
- Pause and choose (I choose peace over ... frustration...)

How to eat a Tangerine with Awareness  

- Thich Nhat Hanh

- When you are eating the tangerine, you are aware that you are eating the tangerine
- When you peel the tangerine, you know that you are peeling the tangerine
- When you remove a slice and put it in your mouth, you know that you are removing a slice and putting it in your mouth
- When you experience the lovely fragrance and sweet taste of the tangerine, you are aware that you are experiencing the lovely fragrance and sweet taste of the tangerine
- Do not forget the tangerine and thus the tangerine becomes something very real to you. If the tangerine is real, the person eating it is real
Meditation = a mindfulness practice

- Focus on the body or the breath
- Lovingkindness (generate love and compassion and radiate it to others (or yourself)
- Mantra recitation
- Prayer and contemplation
- Mother Nature and the elements
Connecting with Nature

- Working in a mindful way with the natural elements for support and healing
- We connect deeply (both at the physical and soul-level)
- The practice can cultivate positive qualities and eliminate negative ones
- Earth, Water, Fire, Air, Space

Balance the two efforts of getting somewhere and being somewhere at the same time

- **Balance** - simply being present, an alertness that is flexible, resourceful, relaxed

- **Being somewhere** - letting go of fears, desires, habits and routines and trusting in ourselves fully at the present moment

- **Getting somewhere** - becoming... stepping forward... in a calm, resilient, thoughtful way
  
  - so easy to get off-balance when we *only* focus on the future and where we’re going, feeling worried, anxious, uneasy

- “The divine play between being and becoming.”
  
  - anonymous
Lovingkindness Meditation
Thank you! (... and you have homework)

The real gift of gratitude is that the more grateful you are, the more present you become.

Robert Holden
References


Hanson, Rick. 2011. Just One Thing: Developing a Buddha Brain One Simple Practice at a Time. New Harbinger Publications


