

MINDFULNESS: THE KEY TO MANAGING STRESSORS UNIQUE TO THE NURSING PROFESSION

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HOW THE EXPERTS TREAT HEMATOLOGIC MALIGNANCIES

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Disclosures

- Kyowa Kirin - Speaker Board
- Helsinn - Speaker Board
- Incyte – Advisory Board

Objectives

- Define mindfulness
- Describe methods of practicing mindfulness
- Discuss the potential benefits of mindfulness practice in stress mitigation
- Mindful practice exercises

Stress and Nursing

- Nursing recognized as inherently stressful
- Cumulative secondary trauma
- Deleterious effects on both physical and mental health status
- Stress reduction programs at a systems level often neglect strategies to deal in the moment
- Mindfulness helps to acquire the skills to address situations and mitigate negative effects

Zeller, J.M., & Levin, P.F. (2013). Mindfulness interventions to reduce stress among nursing personnel. An occupational health perspective. *Workplace health & safety*, 61(2).

Default Mode

- “Mindlessness” (Langer, 1989)
 - Our tendency to be in “autopilot”:
not focused, reactive mode.
 - Most of our waking hours are spent in “thinking about” mode:
default mode of mind.
 - Not present moment/not here NOW
 - Lack of Attention

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Automaticity and Reactivity



Where Does the Mind Go and Who is in Charge?

- “Mind-wandering is an excellent predictor of people’s happiness”
- How often our minds leave the present and where they tend to go is a better predictor of our happiness than the activities in which we are engaged.
- A wandering mind is an unhappy mind
- Killingsworth, M. A., & Gilbert, D. T. (2010). A wandering mind is an unhappy mind. *Science*, 330, 932.

Which One Describes You?



Mind Full, or Mindful?

Mindfulness

- Paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgementally to the unfolding experience, moment to moment

Jon Kabat-Zinn

Mindfulness is NOT

- Relaxation technique
- Not about having a “particular” kind of experience
- Not religiously affiliated
- Not about absence of thought
- Not easy, but it is simple
- It isn't about doing things slowly

Benefits of Mindfulness Awareness Practice

- Present in history for over 2500 years
- Reduces stress
- Reduce chronic physical pain
- Boost immune system
- Aid in coping with painful life events
- Enhance positive emotions including happiness and compassion
- MINDFULNESS CHANGES YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO LIFE
- Taking control over the automaticity and reactivity components that are the default of response to experience

Mindfulness Awareness Practice

Formal Practice

- bringing attention to a chosen focus
- noticing when distracted
- returning to that chosen focus
- with a gentle, kind, non-judgmental understanding and matter-of-factness
- usual objects of attention are breath

Informal Practice

- same quality of attending
- directed to the mundane events/experiences of everyday life
- that is, paying attention to what you are doing as you are doing it and being fully aware of that
- Eating, working, STOP,
- walking

Benefits of Mindful Intervention

Psychological:

- Improved cognitive & attention skills; choosing a response rather than reacting to a situation
- Cultivates capacity for self-regulation
- Effective in reducing stress, depression & anxiety
- Enhances skills for interpersonal relationships
- Offers reprieve from stress

Benefit of Mindful Intervention

Physiological:

- Decreased heart rate and blood pressure
- Improved, more restful sleep
- Changes perception of pain
- Improved immune function- NKC
- Increase activity in mPFC (medial prefrontal cortex)

Take Back Control

- Explore the benefits of Mindfulness in your daily life
- Try techniques when you experience symptoms to find what works for you
- Allow yourself to stumble
- Think of self care as a prescription for long term fortitude and self healing
- Be in the moment

Turning Practice Into Habit; Turning Habit Into Lifestyle

- Four Steps to Behavior Change
 - Simple, small changes with achievable goals
 - Supportive environment
 - Motivation- internal and external
 - Repetition
 - Repetition
 - Repetition
 - Are you paying attention?
 - REPETITION

Simple Practice Techniques

- Posture- Different postures for different times. Relaxing Into Posture Practice
- Breath as the anchor-Practice Finding Your Breath-Abdomen, Throat, Nostrils
- Body as a doorway to mindfulness-STOP TECHNIQUE

STOP

- S– Stop what you are doing
- T– Take a breath
- O– Observe how you are feeling
- P– Proceed with what you were doing

Exercises

- Walking meditation
- Eating exercise
- Pain mitigation

Emotional Distress

- Dealing with anxiety and fear
- Anger expression
- Feeling Overwhelmed
- RAIN technique-
 - Recognition
 - Acceptance
 - Investigation
 - Non-Identification

Mindfulness Easy to Learn - Practice to Master

- Many benefits to being present in a non-judgmental place
- Decrease in reactivity and automaticity lead to more control over response
- Experience of symptoms is a combination of physiologic manifestations and emotional attachment to experience
- Practice of simple tools daily leads to habits
- Habits lead to change

Resources

- <http://marc.ucla.edu/>
- <http://www.grit.ucla.edu/About/Mission>
- <http://www.insightla.org/mbsr/>
- <http://mindful.usc.edu/>
- <http://palousemindfulness.com/selfguidedMBSR.html>- Free online course