Practicing Mindfulness & Compassion
The Greater Good Science Center

The Science of a Meaningful Life

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**Science:** Research Fellowships, Gratitude Initiative, Online Gratitude Journal (Thnx4.org)

**Books:** *Born to Be Good, The Compassionate Instinct, Raising Happiness,* *Are We Born Racist?*
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The Center for Building a Culture of Empathy
Goals and Flow of the Day

• The Science of Mindfulness and Compassion

• Trainings and Practices

• Programs and Stories from the Field
Mindfulness and Compassion: Similarities and Differences

Kristin Neff, Ph.D.
University of Texas, Austin
http://www.self-compassion.org/
What is Compassion?

Concern for the alleviation of suffering of sentient beings (self and others)
Three Components of Compassion for Self or Others
Mindfulness

- Requires noticing the suffering of self/others without avoidance or aversion
Kindness

- Treating self/others with care and understanding
- Involves active soothing and comforting
Common Humanity

- Seeing the experience of self/others as part of larger human experience
What is the Difference Between Mindfulness and Compassion?

Depends on how you define mindfulness!
Common Definition of Mindfulness:

Paying attention to present moment experience without judgment
Can be used as umbrella term for the dharma or contemplative practice more generally.
Four Aspects of M (Umbrella of Mindfulness)

• m1: Paying attention to experience in the present moment
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- m2: Relating to experience without judgment or resistance (mindfulness = m1/m2)
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• m4: Understanding the nature of both experience and the experiencer (wisdom)
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- m4: Understanding the nature of both experience and the experiencer (wisdom)

Four aspects are cumulative and build on each other m1 < m2 < m3 < m4
Four Aspects of M (Umbrella of Mindfulness)

• It is important to understand differences between m’s for research
Four Aspects of M (Umbrella of Mindfulness)

- It is important to understand differences between m’s for research
  - Self-report measures
  - Physiological differences
  - Brain function
Four Aspects of M (Umbrella of Mindfulness)

• It is important to understand differences between m’s for training
Four Aspects of M (Umbrella of Mindfulness)

- It is important to understand differences between m’s for training
  - All four aspects may spontaneously unfold, especially among long-term practitioners
Four Aspects of M (Umbrella of Mindfulness)

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  ➢ More direct training is sometimes needed, and there are specific practices for each “m”
Four aspects of M (Umbrella of Mindfulness)

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  - Training in compassion for oneself probably most needed
Four aspects of M (Umbrella of Mindfulness)

- It is important to understand differences between m’s for training
  - All four aspects may spontaneously unfold, especially among long-term practitioners
  - More direct training is sometimes needed, and there are specific practices for each “m”
  - Training in compassion for oneself probably most needed
    - MBSR and MBCT focus mainly on teaching m1/m2, teach self-compassion implicitly
Mindful Self-Compassion Program
(created by Chris Germer and Kristin Neff)

- Modeled on MBSR, designed as a sister program
- Focuses primarily on teaching self-compassion
Mindful Self-Compassion Program

• Modeled on MBSR, designed as a sister program
• Focuses primarily on teaching self-compassion
• Appears to raise self-compassion 2 to 3 times more than MBSR, 4 to 5 times more than MBCT
  ➢ Gains maintained for at least a year
Mindful Self-Compassion Program

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- Focuses primarily on teaching self-compassion
- Appears to raise self-compassion 2 to 3 times more than MBSR, 4 to 5 times more than MBCT
  - Gains maintained for at least a year
- For most, prior mindfulness training probably best, some may need self-compassion first
Paradox of Mindfulness and Self-Compassion

- Mindfulness (m1/m2) accepts painful experience without resistance, “being” with things as they are
- Compassion (m3) wishes the experiencer to be free from suffering, active self-soothing

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Paradox of Mindfulness and Self-Compassion

We give ourselves compassion not to feel better but because we feel pain.
Paradox of Mindfulness and Self-Compassion

Self-compassion provides the emotional safety needed to mindfully open to our pain.
Mindfulness and Compassion: A Beautiful Dance
The Biological Landscape of Mindfulness & Compassion

Emiliana Simon-Thomas, Ph.D.
Science Director, Greater Good Science Center
University of California, Berkeley
The Vagus Nerve (m2/m3)

- PNS influence on heart rate – slows beat down during outbreath
- Associated with affiliation, tend & befriend, general positive emotional tone
- Sensitive to safety
Oxytocin (m2/m3)

- Supports caretaking/nurturance, affection, social bonding (esp. long term)

- Promotes trust
The Brain: Hypothalamic-Midbrain Care/Nurturance Circuitry (m3)

- Supports parental approach care/nurturance behaviors
- Sensitive to safety (emergent) vs. threat (quashed)
The Brain: Insula & Midline Shared Circuitry (m3/m4)

- Enables emotional resonance
- Is a catalyst for appraisals & attributions
The Brain: Temporal Parietal Junction & Social Emotional Expertise (m3/m4)

- Represents meaning of emotion signals
- Enables ‘seeing from their point of view’
The Brain: The Prefrontal Cortex & Attention/Attunement/Awareness (m1/m2)

- Harnesses/channels ‘monkey mind’
- Enables efficient recovery
The Brain: Mesolimbic Rewards & Amygdala Fear/Vigilance (m2)
The Brain: Resourceful, Overlapping, and Malleable

Practicing Mindfulness & Compassion mindful
A Biological Profile of m4: Compassionate Mindfulness

↑ Vagal Tone & autonomic “flexibility”
↑ Oxytocin “Tone”
↑ Hypothalamic-midbrain social bonding “Tone”
↑ Frontal lobe “flexibility”
↑ Connections between reward & social engagement/expertise pathways

↓ Connections between fear/vigilance & social engagement/expertise pathways
↓ Overregulation of attunement/emotion suppression
Thanks!
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mindful
taking time for what matters

Practicing Mindfulness & Compassion
Compassion Focused Therapy

Paul Gilbert PhD, FBPsS, OBE
Mental Health Research Unit, Kingsway Hospital Derby
www.compassionatemind.co.uk
www.compassionatelowelling.com
The Two Psychologies of Compassion

Compassion can be defined in many ways:
As a sensitivity to the suffering of self and others with a deep commitment to try to relieve and prevent it

Two different Psychologies
– To approach, understand and (how to) engage with suffering
– To work to alleviate and prevent suffering –nurturing

Each more complex that might at first seem
Compassion Focused Therapy: A Social Mentality

Caring/Helping
Giving

Specific Competencies
e.g., attention empathy

Facilitators vs Inhibitors

Care/Help Seeking/
Receiving

Specific Competencies
e.g., openness responsive

Facilitators vs Inhibitors

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Compassion as Flow

Different practices for each

Other -> Self
Self -> Other
Self -> Self

Evidence that *intentionally* practicing each of these can have impacts on mental states and social behaviour.

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Why do we need Compassion?
Life is Hard
Compassion Begins With a Reality Check

- We have gene-built evolved brains
- We all are born, grow decay and die – and are susceptible to disease and injury
- We are socially shaped – from our gene expressions to our sense of self
Compassion: Challenges of Our Evolved Brain and the Distressed Mind
Need compassion for a very tricky brain

**New Brain**: Imagination, Planning, Rumination, Integration

**Old Brain**: Emotions, Motives, Relationship Seeking-Creating
Need compassion for a very *tricky* brain

**Mindful Brain**

**New Brain:** Imagination, Planning, Rumination, Integration

**Old Brain:** Emotions, Motives, Relationship Seeking-Creating

COMPASSION
Need compassion for a very tricky brain

Mindful Brain

New Brain: Imagination, Planning, Rumination, Integration

Old Brain: Emotions, Motives, Relationship Seeking-Creating

Competitive
Compassion and Emotions
Types of Affect Regulator Systems

Incentive/resource-focused
Wanting, pursuing, achieving
Activating

Non-wanting/Affiliative focused
Safeness-kindness
Soothing

Threat-focused
Protection and Safety-seeking
Activating/inhibiting

Drive, excite, vitality

Content, safe, connected

Anger, anxiety, disgust

Practicing Mindfulness & Compassion
Types of Affect Regulator Systems

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Practicing Mindfulness & Compassion
Practicing Mindfulness & Compassion
Practicing Mindfulness & Compassion
Safeness, Affiliation and Affect Regulation
Practicing Mindfulness & Compassion
Practicing Mindfulness & Compassion
Types of Affect Regulator Systems

Incentive/resource-focused
- Wanting, pursuing, achieving
- Activating

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- Safeness-kindness
- Soothing

Threat-focused
- Protection and Safety-seeking
- Activating/inhibiting

Drive, excite, vitality

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Practicing Mindfulness & Compassion
Between self and others

Self to self

Calms

Affiliative/Soothing

Threat

120 Million year evolving system to regulate threat
Compassion and Caring
Showing we care
Caring-Compassionate Mind

ATTRIBUTES

Sensitivity
Sympathy

Care for well-being
Distress tolerance

Non-Judgement
Empathy

Compassion

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Conclusion

Humans are capable of wonderful things, but also terrible things. Very mixed mind – many seeds

Our minds are really a mixed range of potential motives, ways of thinking and behaving – and we easily dissociate one state of mind from another

By improving our understanding of the nature of compassion, it’s facilitators and inhibitors, both as a giver and receiver, we may be better placed to cultivate the good in us. This could be the focus for the next generation
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mindful
taking time for what matters

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Mindfulness & Compassion

Shauna L. Shapiro, Ph.D.
Santa Clara University
Acknowledgments

Greater Good, Dacher Keltner, Jason Marsh

Jon Kabat-Zinn, Jack Kornfield, Tara Brach, Gary Schwartz, Roger Walsh, Coquelicot Gilland, Shinzen Young, Benedict and Nancy Freedman
Mindfulness Defined

“The awareness that arises out of intentionally paying attention in an open, kind and discerning way.”

Shapiro & Carlson, 2006
Three Core Elements of Mindfulness

Intention

Attention

Attitude
Intention

Your intentions set the stage for what is possible. They remind you from moment to moment of why you are practicing... I used to think meditation practice was so powerful...that as long as you did it at all, you would see growth and change. But time has taught me that some kind of personal vision is also necessary.

What is your intention for being here?
“The most important thing is to remember the most important thing”

Suzuki Roshi
Attention

• Present Moment Awareness

• Monkey mind

• Mindfulness practice tames and stabilizes the mind so we can see clearly.

“An unstable mind is like an unstable camera; we get a fuzzy picture.” Christopher Germer
Attitude

How we pay attention
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitude</th>
<th>What we practice becomes stronger</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acceptance</td>
<td>Kindness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Openness</td>
<td>Patience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curiosity</td>
<td>Letting Go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonstriving</td>
<td>Caring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust</td>
<td>Compassion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Practicing Mindfulness & Compassion
Neuroplasticity

Our repeated experience shapes our brain.

Mindfulness practice increases grey matter density in areas of the brain associated with learning, self-awareness, emotional intelligence, interoception and compassion. (Lazar, 2005; Britta Hölzel, 2011)

Cortical thickening correlated with experience: The more you practice the stronger the cortex. (Lazar, 2005)
Does Mindfulness Practice Increase Compassion for Self and Other?

Research demonstrates mindfulness training increases compassion for self and other in physicians, medical students, counseling psychology students, undergraduates, psychologists and other health care professionals.

Shapiro, Jazzeri, Goldin, 2012
Shapiro, Oman, et al, 2008
Shapiro, Brown, Bielge, 2007
Shapiro, Astin, et al, 2004
Shapiro, Schwartz, Bonner, 1998
How Does Mindfulness Cultivate Compassion?

1. What we practice becomes stronger
2. Slowing down
3. Interdependence
4. Remembering our essential nature
1. What We Practice Becomes Stronger
2. Slowing Down

When we are hurried, stressed, scared we lose touch with our natural compassion. Mindfulness helps us slow down, see clearly and stay connected to our deepest values.
3. Mindfulness Helps Us See Our Interdependence

We are all cells in God’s body

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4. Remembering Our Essential Nature

A clinical example: Mindfulness for PTSD.

Learning to welcome all of our experience with compassion...even the seemingly unforgiveable.
The bud stands for all things
even those things that don’t flower,
for everything flowers,
from within, of self-blessing;
though sometimes it is necessary
to reteach a thing its loveliness,
to put a hand on the brow of the flower
and retell it in words and in touch
it is lovely
until it flowers again from within,
of self-blessing.
Presence of Heart

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If you can sit quietly after difficult news…

If in financial downturns you remain perfectly calm…

If you see your neighbors travel to favorite places without a tinge of jealousy…

If you can happily eat whatever is put on your plate…

If you can love everyone around you unconditionally…

If you can always find contentment just where you are…

You are probably…
A Dog!

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Thank you for your kind attention.
Mindfulness-Based Childbirth & Parenting (MBCP)
Training the Mind, Body, and Heart for Childbirth and Beyond

Nancy Bardacke, RN, CNM, MA
UCSF Osher Center for Integrative Medicine
UCSF School of Nursing
www.mindfulbirthing.org
A Brief History

- 1994 -- MBSR
- 1998 -- Formal adaptation of MBSR into MBCP (in my living room)
- 2007 -- UCSF Osher Center for Integrative Medicine
- 70 classes in 15 years
- More than 1,300 expectant parents
Why Bring Mindfulness to Expectant Families?

- Pregnancy is stressful
- Childbirth is stressful
- Parenting is stressful
- Being born is stressful!
“Gestation is the time when our nervous systems are under construction and being wired for equanimity and stability or for hypersensitivity and vulnerability to the stressors of the world outside the womb…”

Robin Karr-Morse with Meredith S. Wiley

Scared Sick: The Role of Childhood Trauma in Adult Disease
Can Mindfulness Bring Benefit?

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Perhaps…

- 9 week course x 3 hours
- Daily home practice: 30 min/day 6 days/week
- Silent daylong retreat
- Reunion after birth
Mindfulness Practices

- Body Scan
- Sitting Meditation
- Yoga
- Walking Meditation
- Loving-kindness Practice
- Mindfulness in daily life

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MBCP Practices

- Mindful pain practices
- Inquiry practice: fear
- Mindful partner communication
- Thread of mindful parenting
- Community
### MBCP Pilot Observational Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INCREASED:</th>
<th>DECREASED:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive emotions</td>
<td>Negative emotions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mindfulness</td>
<td>Depressive mood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~attention/awareness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~non-judging</td>
<td>Pregnancy anxiety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~non-reactivity</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Preliminary Qualitative Findings

- Increased confidence and decreased stress/fear post MBCP
- High use of mindfulness pain coping skills during childbirth
- Mindfulness sustained in the postpartum period
- Relationship benefits:
  - Attunement behaviors, increased couple intimacy
  - Common language, empathic connection
- Interrupt intergenerational patterns of suffering
Expanding MBCP

Centering Pregnancy with Mindfulness Skills, SFGH
More expansion...

- Future Research
  - PEARLS: Labor related pain
  - OPAL: Survey of MBCP alumni ~N=500
  - International Collaborations: UK, the Netherlands, Sweden, Hong Kong

- Teacher Training / UCSD
It’s not about the birth...
Mindful Lawyering: Peacemaking and Healing through Compassion

Rhonda V. Magee, J.D.
University of San Francisco School of Law
An Opening Practice: S.T.O.P.

Mindfulness is

being more fully alive

to the unrepeateable moments of our lives,

and acting from the wisdom that arises from there.
The Mindfulness Revolution

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The Mindfulness Revolution: changing the “how” of conflict transformation.

- Increasing well-being
- Peaceful contact with the present
- Rethinking legal education
- Expanding skill set
- Transforming Processes

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It Means Opening Up the Law School Classroom....

...and bringing the whole person back in.
Mindful Lawyers are More Compassionate Lawyers.

The movement to transform law practice begins with: Mindfulness,

Which supports: our own inner healing,

compassionate self-development

and commitments to heal and bring peace to the world.
Mindful, Compassionate Lawyers are Psychologically Flexible and Can Help Others Become so:

Excerpted from: Acceptance and Commitment Therapy Made Simple, Russ Harris, M.D. (2009)
“Contemplative Law”: Integrating Compassion, Peacemaking and Healing

Developing Lawyers in Three Ways, through Three Windows:

- Intra-personal
- Inter-personal
- Inter-systemic
Window #1: Presence Leads to Self-healing.

Compassionate self-care.

Mindfulness-Based Practices have been shown to significantly reduce the stress of people in a wide range of fields.

My own research and personal experience confirm this finding: A full 97% of respondents so far report finding that contemplative practices help them manage stress.
Window # 2: Compassionate Lawyering Creates New Possibilities.

Compassionate Relationship healing and conflict transformation.

Mindfulness-Based Practices help transform conflict through compassion, supporting ethical, relational healing.

Here again, 97% of respondents in my study self-report that these practices improve their relationships.
Window #3: Real change happens.

Compassionate Re-Invention of Self, Practice and Law Itself.

Mindfulness transforms our understanding of who we are and reshapes our work.

“It has helped me to see how interconnected all of life is. I am beginning to view the law profession as one that can heal relationships instead of one that is adversarial.”
Mindful Conflict Management and Transformation: Compassionate Lawyers Working to Heal and Bring Peace to a Broken-hearted world.
Sustaining Compassion in Health Care

Robert McClure, LCSW, CEAP
Sharp HealthCare
The Center for Compassion and Altruism Research and Education (CCARE)

Stanford University School of Medicine
“The cultivation of compassion is no longer a luxury, but a necessity, if our species is to survive.”

- H.H. Dalai Lama
Burnout and Compassion Fatigue

Burnout and S satisfaction With Work-Life Balance Among US Physicians Relative to the General US Population

45.8% of 7288 physician respondents reported at least 1 symptom of burnout. Physicians in specialties at the front line of care access seem to be at greatest risk. The conclusion: burnout is more common among physicians than among other US workers.

According to various studies, at least one-third of nurses who work in high-risk settings may be suffering from compassion fatigue at any given time. There may be a relationship between the symptoms of compassion fatigue and the risk of committing medical errors, and patients are less satisfied with the care.

NCI Cancer Bulletin July 24, 2012, Vol. 9, No. 15

JAMA Oct 8, 2012, Vol. 172, No. 18

Practicing Mindfulness & Compassion
Compassion Cultivation Training (CCT) 2012

- 9 weekly 2 hour meetings
- In class lectures, guided meditations, group discussions.
- Daily life practices and recorded guided meditations.
- Monthly follow up class
CCT Six Steps

1. Settling and Focusing the Mind
2. Loving kindness and compassion for a loved one
3. Compassion for oneself
   Loving kindness for oneself
4. Embracing shared common humanity
5. Cultivating compassion for others
6. Active Compassion Practice
Our Strategy

• Grow organically

• Bottom up

• Word of mouth

• Cultivate leader champions
Common Humanity

• Seeing the experience of self/others as part of larger human experience
You are a part of the Greater Good

Get Involved!

✓ Sign up for our FREE monthly newsletter
✓ Volunteer . . . live or virtually
✓ Become a member – get great benefits!
✓ Follow us on Facebook and Twitter
✓ Make a tax-deductible donation

Visit us at greatergood.berkeley.edu
Thank You!

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