

Mindfulness Meditation: Stress, Craving, Trauma, & Self-Compassion

Dave Johnson PhD, Parkview Center for Healthy Living, (Call for **Free** programming/consults 260-266-6500)

- (S) STRESS:** A nonspecific response to any demand or change: Fight/Flight/Freeze. Physical, emotional, social, spiritual, family, work. Current and past: brain/physiology remembers, and the nervous system doesn't recognize past vs current. Think: Enduring, Cumulative, Perceptual, velocity of change, & the body keeps score! Amygdala, Cortex, Neurotransmitters, & Hormones: Dopamine (more), Serotonin (enough), Oxytocin (love), Endorphins (protect/pain), Cortisol (Survival fff) ...
 - What seems to cause stress in your life: people, time pressures, illness, family, grief, death, finances, spiritual, loneliness, pain, conflict, overwhelmed, fear, uncertainty, confusion, job, interpersonal, sleep issues, addiction, other? What trips your trigger? When/Where/how most likely to occur? How does your body keep score (i.e. weight gain, heart disease, cancer, etc)? What are your patterns of stress reactivity (physical, emotional, spiritual...?)
- (M) MINDFULNESS:** 1. **INTENTIONAL** (To be present, here, now, thisness, VERSUS autopilot or mindless, or high jacking, triggering, or impulsive or non-thinking responses). 2. **ATTENTIONAL** (Moment to moment Sensory Awareness) (shttspi). Awakening. Alert. Noticing. Focusing. Sustaining this AWARENESS. 3. **ATTITUDINAL** (Cultivation of Non-judgmental & Curious, Compassionate, kind, calm, empathy, and perception of impermanence...versus dualistic thinking, rushing, reactivity) Even with own emotions of shame, guilt, loneliness, anger, bitterness etc. This too shall pass. TENDER. 4. **NON-ATTACHED** (live & let live vs control or fix, problem solve, change). Becoming a better "watcher" vs reactor. Fly on the wall. 5. **NON-DOING** (non striving and "being" vs "doing") 6. **UNITIVE PRESENCE** (Wholeness and everything somehow connected) Spiders web! 7. **EXPANDING OPTIONS** (Second peek at first thought, impulse, or reaction (Autopilot/high jacked). Being in the NOW versus in our thinking or over-thinking ruminative, reactive, or monkey mind! 7. **PRACTICING** (Formally and Informally). Becomes a way of being! 7. **HEALING/HABIT LOOPS** (Self, Relationships, & environments... inner and outer peace). RECALL this is dose dependent...a person doesn't get "fit" by knowing the "should" exercise. Every day 10-45 minutes. REMEMBER: Trigger-Behavior-Reward...very primitive AND efficient. Why, What, How?
- (B) Beware: AUTOPILOT THINKING,** Monkey mind and rumination linked with hijackings, buttons, impulse (self-control) and **dualistic thinking** (we don't know what we don't know and have a tendency to make things up based on previous experiences ...think amygdala...primitive brain/reptilian). Remember: Ego can't fix ego; false gods and preoccupations, such as, addictions, thinking, overthinking, and ego centric attachments are insatiable.
 - When are you most likely to be high jacked? We are most vulnerable when we are FHALT: Fear, Hungry, Angry, Lonely/emotional and Tired. We can also be high jacked when we think we are multitasking, i.e. eating and driving, eating while talking on the phone or eating while having fun. Sometimes substances like alcohol also make us more vulnerable to being on **AUTOPILOT**.
 - When does **AUTOPILOT** get in the way of your health (physical, emotional, spiritual, sexual, socials, relational, work, sleeping, eating, stress tolerance & coping? What is your "Go-To"...negative narrative...shame, guilt, faulting...?
- (J) JOURNALING:** Intentional pausing and reflecting life insights and lessons through writing (not ledgering of events as in diary). This process is a way of sorting and making a bit more concrete those thoughts or behaviors which are elusive, confusing, filled with emotion, or autopilot in nature. Connecting the process with mindfulness, this multisensory writing experience illuminates and makes more tangible life's transforming experiences (pain, loss, grief, fear, love, joy, gratitude, serendipity, serenity, etc) and assists in promoting more intentional presence in everyday living. Journaling promotes the tasting of life twice, in the moment and again in reflection. How can you mindfully integrate this into your life? How might this help you recognize patterns?

WHY Journal? Intentional presence, reflection on purpose, getting unstuck, staying focused on noticing and being a watcher, sorting, reflecting, letting go, setting aside...Reminiscing is not mindful but can help lead to mindfulness. AND WHITE SPACE...Liminal...

WHEN Journal? Occasionally as needed. Private. Your eyes only. Safe. Think multisensory.

HOW to Journal? (Pause, Breathe, calm, soothe, sway, touch heart or bless self, notice autogenics, stillness, progressive tension release mindful relaxation/fff of muscular skeletal system, music, flow, think environment, May use color, texture, notebook, paper, tea, candle, etc.) NOT daily☺.

HOW & WHEN TO REFLECT: Read out loud/confidant (no judgment), new color pen for insights when reading aloud, date entries, intentional reflections... bit ah ha's and little whews..insight is like tail end of a dream.

GENERAL FOCUSED JOURNAL PROMPTS:

1. What word or phrase resonates with me? Challenges me? Sensations noticed in body? What is mine to do?
2. If my life is a book...what would the title be?
3. What is the name of the current chapter?
4. What are the stressors that generally consume much of my attention?
5. When am I likely to be "emotionally hijacked"? (think specifically) Patterns?
6. What are my "go to" thoughts/obsessions/ruminations when I get hijacked? (Self/other negative cognitions or soothing thoughts?) Patterns? Narrative and storyline?
7. What are my "numbing" or "go to" habits when I am stressed? (pos or neg) Patterns?
8. How are my personal relationships impacted by my habits or hijacking? Patterns?
9. What are my recurrent stories connected to? ...joy, pain, grief, loss, fear, shame, anger, resentment... Patterns? Bananas?
10. What moments do I fear missing when I get lost in my head? (Family, friends, creations, blessings, God/Source, body disconnect with food/drink/sex/pain?)
11. Other stories, dialogues, questions, drawings, non-dominant hand...journal is a teacher & guide
12. (I) Intentions for health: What do you want to become more aware of? Ie eating, being present, etc? Patterns?
13. (J) Journal: My learning, my questioning, my intentions (a way of sorting and making things multisensory).
14. What lessons am I learning? How am I being transformed by the joy & pain of my life? VS "why is this happening to me?"
15. What is my life purpose? Who is with me in this journey? How can I be more intentional about cultivating my tribe?
16. What's Important now (W.I.N.) in light of my current situation?
17. What is my Mantra? A word or phrase that helps center, calm, or soothe. ANCHORS? Breath, tea, tokens, puzzle, pebbles.
18. Who/What/When/How does my mindfulness meditation practice connect with my HEALTH? Intentions?
19. How can I problem solve, get support, identify resources to help, understand better, simplify etc?
20. How can I better "observe", have awareness, or come to curiosity about MY health & stress? Non reactivity? Calm? Tender?
21. How can I practice this awarenensing and observing my body and my mind? Noting? Naming? Touching?
22. What metaphors can help me with this awarenensing? i.e. breathing in calm like the ripple in a pond... I can notice my thoughts are like cars on a road, unable to control... My thoughts are like clouds...they move....impermance?
23. My insights are like the tail end of a dream...what are my insights about my stress? pain? Joy? Self-Compassion?
24. How is healing different from curing? Can I be healthy with disease? Dying? Living? Being?
25. When/Where practice: Nature, sit, stand, sway, breath, the ordinary becomes the conduit to the extraordinary....divine.
26. Boost Self-Compassion: letter to self? Neg self-talk? Mantra? Common Humanity? Mindful? Myths of S-C?

PRACTICE MINDFUL MEDITATION LOG or TABLE...DIFFERENT THEN A JOURNAL:

DATES:	WHAT ARE MY INTENTIONS?: (examples): health, relationships, disease prevention, healing, eating, fitness, feeling alive, self-esteem, career, changing response to stress response & reactivity, getting unstuck with unhealthy patterns, listening to my body, Calm, Kind, aware, non-attached, spiritual connections, SELF-COMPASSION (kind, common humanity, and mindfulness). Prayer...	INSIGHTS/ RESPONSES?: What was my response to my practice?: How am I expanding my "awareness" of sensory moments? What word or phrase resonates with me? Challenges me? Sensations noticed in body? What is mine to do? Unitive presence? Expanding options? Spiritual intuitions/God/Higher Power? Other's responses to me? Emotional Intelligence?	HIJACK? What are my insights about "go to" or automatic responses? Patterns? When am I most likely to be hijacked? Vulnerable, FHALT? Shame, anger, guilt, etc?
Monday			
Tuesday			

1. Dr. Dave's Social Media: Facebook: Integrate Mindfulness (integrative healing resources)
2. Twitter: @davejohnson2; Linked In dave johnson. TEDx TALK:
3. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YuBXYJiKaSc&list=PLsRNoUx8w3rOzQw1WASl0IuWfrfRsfEbZ&index=14>
4. Parkview Health Monthly Dr. Dave Mindfulness & Stress Blog (includes audio meditation LINK)
<http://community.parkview.com/blog/parkview-health-2/setting-your-intention-to-cope-with-change>
5. Kabat-Zinn, J.: Full Catastrophe Living, Mindfulness for Beginners, Coming to our Senses, Everyday blessings...etc.
6. AP's: 1. Headspace. 2. 10% happier. 3.Centering Prayer 4: On Being. 5. HALLOW 6, Calm
7. Other Gurus: Richard Rohr, Thomas Merton, Tom Keating, Mary Oliver, Bessel Vander Kolk, Andy Pudicombe, Kristin Neff, Christopher Germer, Daniel Goleman, Richard Davidson, Stephanie Dowrick, Sharon Salzberg, Tim Ferris, Dan Harris, Julliet Funt, Thich Nhat Hanh, Eckhart Tolle, Arthur Zajonc, Ester Sternberg, Rachel Naomi Remen, Deanna Winston, David Treleaven, Judson Brewer, Michael Gregor, Ira Progoff, David Cooperrider/Diana Whitney.
8. Orgs: American Mindfulness Research Association; <https://www.umassmed.edu/cfm/>
9. Local meditation group with resources: <https://www.imfw.org/home> (teens, adults, kids, & REFUGE RECOVERY)
10. Frameworks: AI Appreciative Inquiry; EI Emotional Intelligence; White-Space; Mindful Leadership
11. <https://www.ahna.org/Membership/Member-Advantage/Whatisself-care>
12. FREE ONLINE: <https://palousemindfulness.com/> <https://www.uclahealth.org/marc/mindful-meditations>
13. FREE ORIENTATION <https://medschool.ucsd.edu/som/fmph/research/mindfulness/programs/mindfulness-programs/MBSR-programs/Pages/MBSR-Orientation-Video.aspx>