



**Mindfulness: Supporting Compassionate and Effective Leadership During a Crisis**

**Virtual Conversation**  
**April 30, 2020 from 2:00 – 3:00 pm**

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# WELCOME!



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## FACILITATOR BACKGROUND



PhD Candidate  
 Faculty of Medicine, Institute of Medical Science,  
 University of Toronto



PhD Candidate, Dept. Neuroscience & Mental Health  
 The Mindfulness Project Team, SickKids Hospital



Certified Teacher  
 Search Inside Yourself Leadership Institute



Instructor  
 Applied Mindfulness Meditation Certificate,  
 School of Continuing Studies, University of Toronto



Order of Interbeing  
 14 Mindfulness Trainings  
 Thich Nhat Hanh, Plum Village, France

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## Who's joining us today?

<b>HR &amp; OD</b>	<b>41%</b>	CHRO, VP, Director, Manager, Consultant/ Specialist, Lead, Coordinator, Assistant
<b>Clinical Leaders</b>	<b>27%</b>	Physician, RN, Manager, Consultant/ Specialist, Lead, Coordinator
<b>Executives</b>	<b>12%</b>	CEO, COO, CFO, CNO, Board Director
<b>Quality, Safety &amp; Risk</b>	<b>7%</b>	Director, Manager, Lead
<b>Administrators</b>	<b>6%</b>	Executive Assistant, Administrative Assistant
<b>Labour Relations</b>	<b>6%</b>	Manager, Consultant/Specialist, Lead

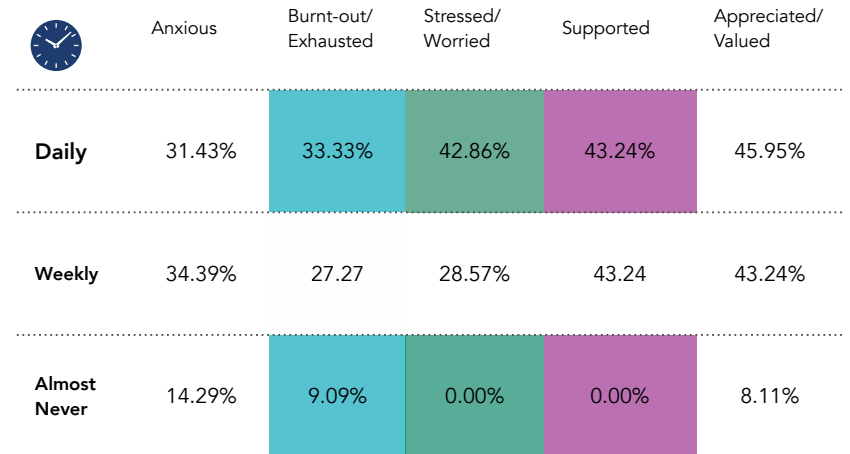
*Other: 1%*



## What challenges are HR/OD leaders facing?



## SURVEY FEEDBACK



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## SESSION GUIDELINES



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## TODAY'S SESSION

### Part 1: Evidence & Practice

- What exactly is mindfulness?
- Why should we care about wellbeing?
- The syndrome of burnout
- Neuroscience: the fight or flight response
- Empathy distress vs. Compassion fatigue
- Mental fitness: how to train our minds
  - ❖ Pillar #1 Focused Attention Practice (FA)

### Part 2: Forum & Next Steps

- Q&A
- Daily application & further resources

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# What exactly is Mindfulness?

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## WHAT IS MINDFULNESS?

“Mindfulness is the **awareness** of what is happening inside and around us in the **present moment**”

- Plum Village Community

“Mindfulness means paying **attention** in a particular way; on purpose, in the **present moment**, and **non-judgmentally**” - Jon Kabat-Zinn, MBSR

Mindfulness means paying **attention** to what’s happening in the **present moment** in the mind, body and external environment, with an attitude of **curiosity and kindness**

- UK All-Parliamentary Report, 2015

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## WHAT IS MINDFULNESS?

**awareness**  
**present moment**

**attention**  
**present moment**

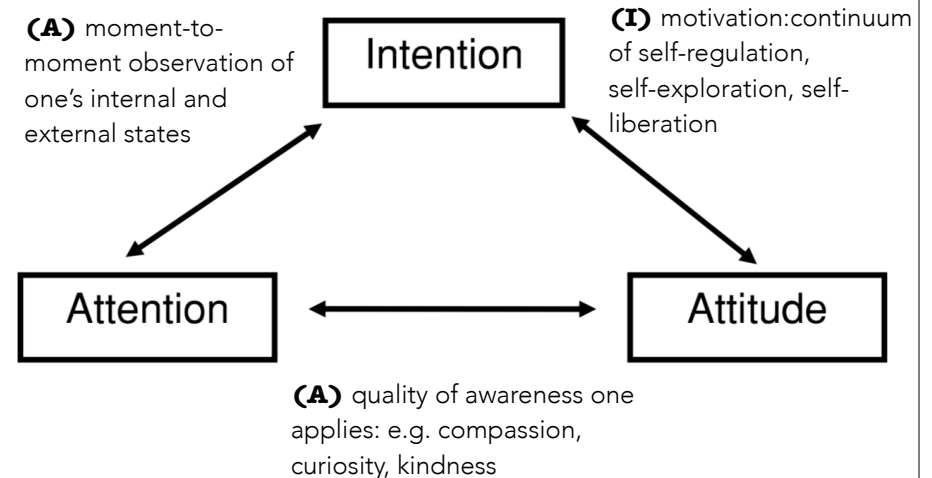
**non-judgmentally**

**attention**  
**present moment**

**curiosity and kindness**

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## MECHANISMS OF MINDFULNESS



Shapiro, S. L., Carlson, L. E., Astin, J. A., & Freedman, B. (2006). Mechanisms of mindfulness. *Journal of clinical psychology*, 62(3), 373-386.

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**Why** do we care  
about wellbeing?

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## WELLBEING

“Wellness includes **not just the absence of distress or illness** but also **emotional wellbeing, physical health, and social relationships.**”

Schrijver, I., Brady, K. & Trockel, M. (2016). An exploration of key issues and potential solutions that impact physician wellbeing and professional fulfillment at an academic centre. PeerJ

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## WHY IT MATTERS

“Balanced, happy people are **more productive**, more **creative**, more **collaborative**, **better at long-term goal pursuit**, more likely to find **employment**, more physically and **psychologically resilient**, and more.”

Graduate Student Happiness & Well-Being Report, The Graduate Assembly, University of California Berkley, 2014

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The science of  
**burnout**

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# WHAT IS BURNOUT?

“A syndrome conceptualized as resulting from chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed.”

International Classification of Diseases ICD-11  
World Health Organization

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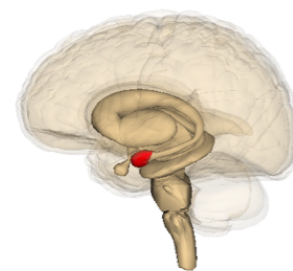
MBI-HSS [MP] 3 sub-scales	
Sub-scale	Characterized by...
1. Emotional Exhaustion (EE)	Decreased emotional energy/resources, loss of enthusiasm for work, feelings of having nothing left to give to others (Amofo et al., 2014; Kumar, 2016; Shanafelt et al., 2012)
2. Depersonalization (DP)	Emotional distance from job role, negative/cynical attitude, impersonal feelings towards clients/patients (Amofo et al., 2014; Kumar, 2016; Shanafelt et al., 2012)
3. Personal Accomplishment (PA)	Decreased self-worth in relation to work, feelings of incompetence, inefficiency, and inadequacy (Amofo et al., 2014; Kumar, 2016)

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What does **neuroscience** tell us about our brains, stress and achievement?

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# NEUROSCIENCE: THE BASICS



## Amygdala

- Detects if a trigger is a threat
- Initiates “flight/fight/freeze” response



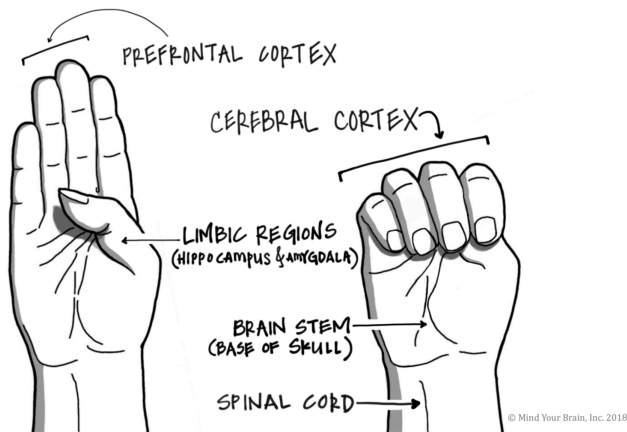
## Prefrontal cortex

- Center for executive function
- Regulates thoughts/emotions/actions
- Impacted by chemicals caused by stress

 Image Author: Life Science Database (LSDB)

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## Hand Model of the Brain



Siegel, D. (2018). *Aware: The Science and Practice of Presence*: Penguin.  
Illustration by Madeleine Siegel [madeleineisiegel.org](http://madeleineisiegel.org)

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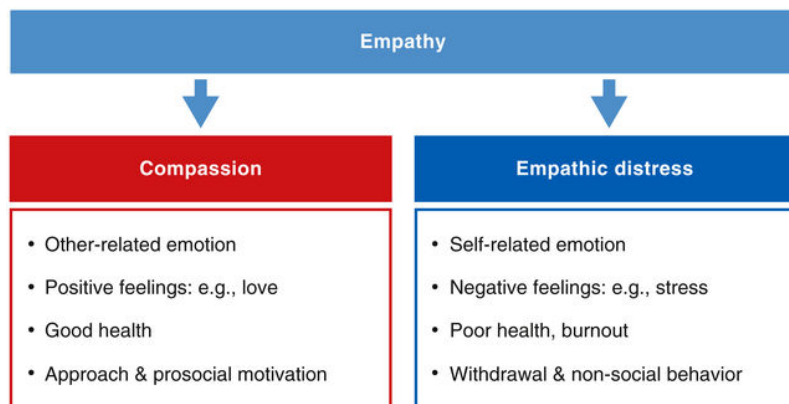
## POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF MINDFULNESS

Mindfulness has been indicated to positively benefit personal wellbeing, perceptual sensitivity, self-regulation, empathy, concentration, motor skills, cognitive performance, better focus, working memory, academic performance, moral reasoning, ethical decision making, along with decreasing anxiety and stress.

(Boccia et al., 2015; J. A. Brewer et al., 2011; Goleman & Davidson, 2017, pp. 250-251; Jon Kabat-Zinn, 2003; Raffone et al., 2019; Walsh & Shapiro, 2006; Young et al., 2018)

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## EMPATHY & COMPASSION



Current Biology

Singer, T., & Klimecki, O. M. (2014). Empathy and compassion. *Current Biology*, 24(18), R875-R878.

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### Neuroscience Recap

## PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS FOR...



If I notice that I am feeling overwhelmed, angry or unresponsive this is a good time to check if I am having an amygdala hijack.



Before you send an email to a colleague, consider reading the email as if you were receiving it yourself. Is there any language in the email that might trigger an amygdala response? If yes, see if you can re-write before sending.



Share the "hand model" of the brain with your family members. Later, if someone gets upset say "hello" to their amygdala with an attitude of kindness & curiosity, then try following one full breath per finger to re-engage the pre-frontal cortex.

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Okay, sounds good but...  
**How?**

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## Mental Fitness

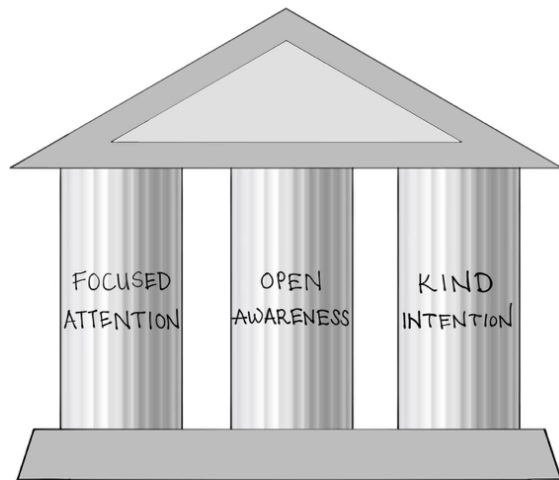
*"For both sports and meditation, the end results vary depending on what you actually do"*

(Goleman & Davidson, *Altered Traits*, 2017, p. 9).



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## Three Pillars of Mind Training

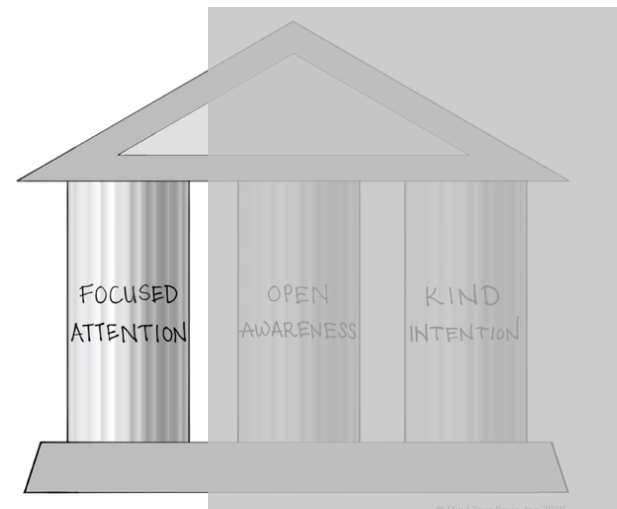


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Siegel, D. (2018). *Aware: The Science and Practice of Presence*: Penguin.  
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## Three Pillars of Mind Training



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# Focused Attention (FA)

## Description

In this meditation the practitioner selects an 'anchor' (e.g. the breath) towards which to purposefully direct attention. When **distraction naturally arises, the aim is to notice the distraction, then redirect attention back to the anchor** (Brewer et al., 2011; Lippelt et al., 2014; Villamil et al., 2019).

## Outcomes associated with practice

Stabilizing of attention, which can allow for greater clarity, focus, concentration and communication between brain networks, increasing feelings of calm, stability and wellness (Brewer et al., 2011; Villamil et al., 2019).

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# Mindfulness Activity

## FA Keyword Guided Meditation

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## TAKE A MOMENT TO REFLECT

What is going on in your body?

What is going on in your mind?

Are you calmer and slower?

Are you tight and anxious?

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## Focused Attention Recap

## PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS FOR...



Try adding a 3-5 minute keyword FA practice at a regular time during your day. Use this as an opportunity to calm your nervous system & collect some data on the current state of your mind.



Before a meeting starts follow 3 full in-and-out breaths as a mini-FA practice. You can do this either by yourself, just before you join the meeting, or with the whole team.



FA practice can be challenging for younger people. A fun alternative is to practice "sitting like jello" vs. "sitting like a mountain". Try being very jiggy and silly when you sit like jello, then very still and focused when you sit like a mountain. Overtime you can increase the length of time you sit like a mountain.

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## FORUM: QUESTIONS & REFLECTIONS



## FURTHER RESOURCES

**Practice**



**Connect**



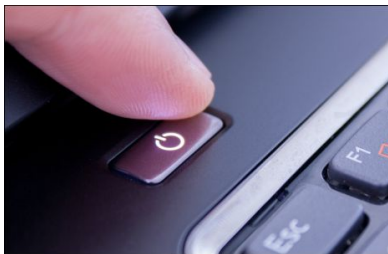
**Read**



Session materials will be emailed to you directly and further resources can be found through the OHA website

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## EVERYDAY BELLS OF MINDFULNESS



Thank  
You

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Navigating the Emotional Roller Coaster: Leveraging Emotional Intelligence to Lead in a Crisis

Join the virtual conversation: May 6, 2020 from 2:00 – 3:00 pm

[www.oha.com/learning](http://www.oha.com/learning)



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