



MINDFULNESS

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Objectives

- The participant will be able to answer the following questions and be able to practice Mindfulness and experience its benefits
 - What is Mindfulness?
 - How does Mindfulness Work?
 - How do I “do” Mindfulness?
 - How can I use Mindfulness in my life?

What Is Mindfulness?

- *Mindfulness means paying attention in a particular way;*
 - *On purpose*
 - *In the present moment*
 - *Without judgment*
 - *John Kabat-Zinn, Mindfulness for Beginners*
- This can be applied on many levels:
- Tools and Techniques
 - Enhance performance
 - Help you lose weight
 - Reduce the physiologic effects of stress
 - Reduce the psychological effects of stress
- Meditation and Spiritual Practice
 - Thich Nhat Hanh and others
 - Buddhist concepts of impermanance, no attachment, and loving kindness

How does Mindfulness “Work”?

- Stressed-Out Brain



How does Mindfulness “Work”?

- Mindful Brain

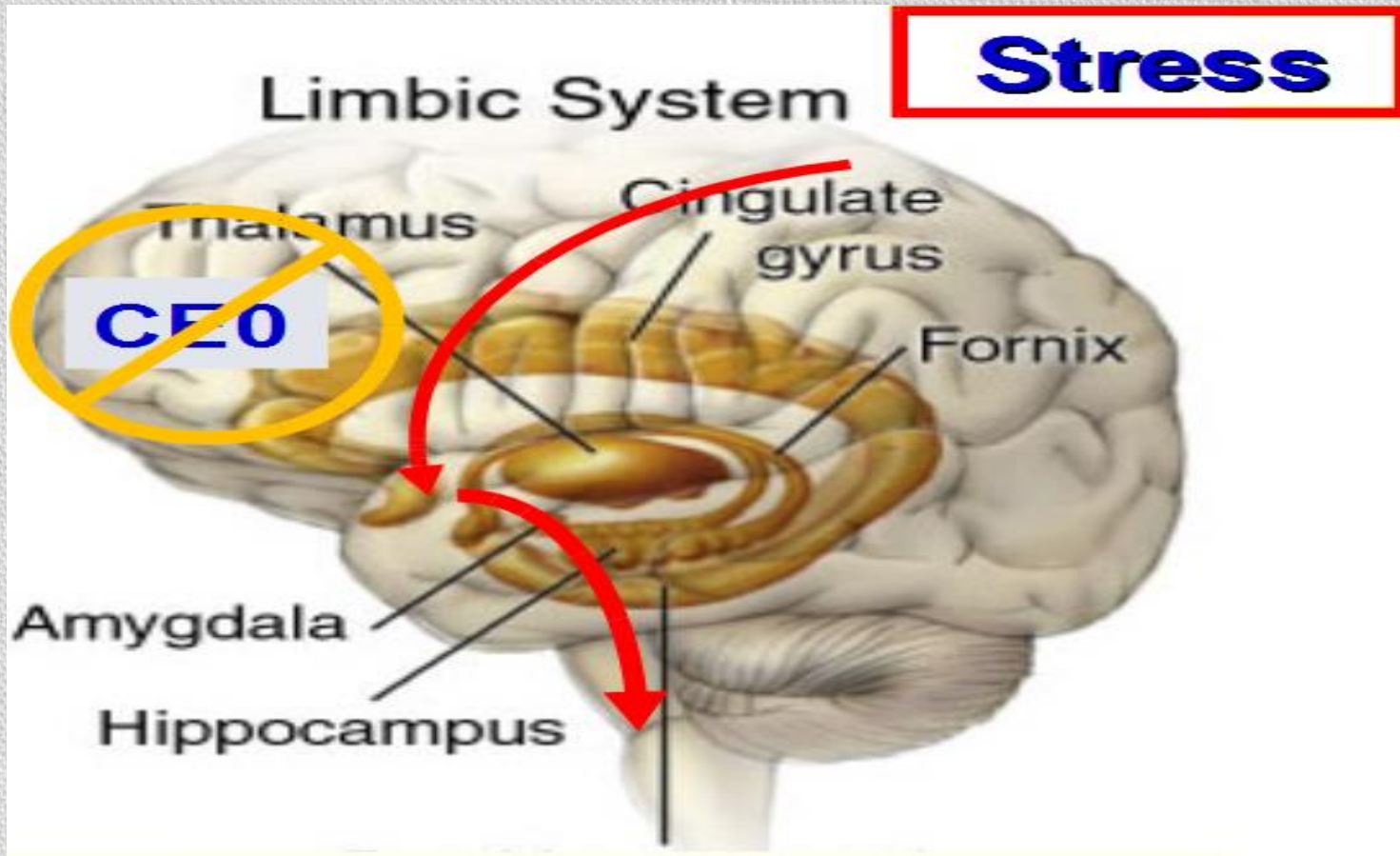


But seriously, studies show

- Improvement in psychological well-being
 - Brown, Kirk Warren; Ryan, Richard M. The benefits of being present: mindfulness and its role in psychological well-being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol 84(4), Apr 2003, 822-848
 - Mindfulness-based cognitive therapy for depression. ZV Segal, JMG Williams, JD Teasdale, 2012
- Improvement in immune function
 - Davidson, R, et al; Alterations in Brain and Immune Function Produced by Mindfulness Meditation, *Psychosomatic Medicine* 65:564-570 (2003).
- Improvement in chronic pain
 - Kabat-Zinn, J, et al; The clinical use of mindfulness meditation for the self-regulation of chronic pain. *Journal of Behavioral Medicine*, 1985.
- Improvement in weight loss
 - Tapper, K, Shaw, C, et al; Exploratory randomised controlled trial of mindfulness-based weight loss intervention for women. *Appetite*; Vol 52 (2): 396-404.
 - Dalen, J, Smith B, Shelley, B, et al; Pilot study: Mindful Eating and Living (MEAL): Weight, eating behavior, and psychological outcomes with a mindfulness-based intervention for people with obesity. *Complementary Therapies in Medicine* (2010) 18, 260-264.
- ... And many more too numerous to cite, check out <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mindfulness>

Some Quick Neuroscience

- Mindfulness helps decrease the stress response



How do I “do” it? (Demonstration)

- By **DOING NOTHING**

- Sit or lie down comfortably
- Shut out all external stimulation
- Breathe deeply by expanding your abdomen first, then your chest
- Focus only on your breath, not on your thoughts
- Allow the thoughts to come and go, but don't allow your mind to latch on to them
- Let go of the thoughts, keep focusing on your breath
- Set a timer and start with 5 minutes and work your way up to desired amount of time
- You can do this anytime
- Mindfulness requires only your mind and whatever you are focusing on

How can I use this in everyday life?

- Enhance Performance/Reduce Stress:
 - Break large tasks up into multiple smaller tasks that you can focus on for short time frames and give your mind breaks between tasks
 - When you have to switch tasks (humans cannot multi-task), stop the previous task at a natural stopping point, so it's easier to pick up later
- Mindful Eating:
 - Slow Down
 - Eat only when you are hungry, taking one bite at a time, chew it completely, and stop eating when you are full
 - When you feel like eating when you shouldn't (stress, boredom, whatever), practice 5 minutes of mindfulness meditation and figure out what need is being replaced with the perceived need to eat

Everyday Life

- Physical & Psychological Benefits
 - Schedule personal time each day for mindfulness meditation
 - Use this practice to calm your mind when you get angry or upset
 - Whenever you detect yourself falling into an old, familiar pattern, stop and examine what is actually going on. Notice the physical sensations in your body; notice the emotions that have bloomed; notice what stories your mind is generating that make your body tense and inflame your emotions. It's important not to disparage yourself for falling into an old and unhelpful pattern. Recognize the potentially explosive negative charge generated by your body, thoughts, and emotions. Accept that it has arisen, then make the decision to be in control of it instead of being controlled by it. ***Citation
 - Do the practice when you have difficulty sleeping
 - If you don't like to sit for long periods of time, try walking meditation

Conclusion

- Mindfulness costs nothing
- It only requires your mind, your breath, and your focus
- It involves nothing more than focusing the mind on whatever is happening in the present moment, outside of the patterns we have built up over a lifetime.
- Mindfulness interrupts the conditioned responses that prevent us from exploring new avenues of thought, choking our creative potential. Each time we stand up against a habit—whether it's checking our smartphone during a conversation or reacting defensively to a coworker's passing remark—we weaken the grip of our conditioning. We lay down new tracks in the brain and fashion new synaptic connections. We become less likely in the future to default to patterns that can trap us into being satisfied with ineffective and outmoded strategies. ***Citation