



Mindful Nutrition: Nourishing our physical, mental and emotional well-being through mindfulness

Week 7

Vitality!

Restoring Our Bodies on a Cellular Level Through Nutrition and Meditation

The Serenity Prayer

-Reinhold Niebuhr

GOD GRANT ME THE
SERENITY
TO ACCEPT THE THINGS
I CANNOT CHANGE
COURAGE
TO CHANGE THE
THINGS I CAN AND
WISDOM
TO KNOW THE DIFFERENCE

Jon Kabat -Zinn, Univ. Wisconsin Study, UCLA, CM study

Right- sided brain - left- sided brain shift (within the prefrontal cerebral cortex)

Meditators (after only 8 weeks of meditating) handled emotions more effectively

Increased immune response

Decreased some of the negative effects of loneliness

-Kabat-Zinn, Jon Full Catastrophe Living, p. xlv-xlv

Inflammation:

Decreases NF-kB transcription activity

Decreases C-RP levels

Cell - mediated Immunity:

Increases CD4 & T cell count/activity

Biological Aging:

Increase Telomerase activity

Mindfulness meditation and the immune system: a systematic review of randomized controlled trials:
<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/26799456/>

One Tree...



One Tree...

We may admire a tree in many ways.

We may admire its beauty; its shape, its changing, colorful leaves, the texture and color of its bark, its age...

Then, again, we also may consider the roots of the tree - how they nourish the tree. We may be curious about the content of the soil that nourishes the roots. Is the soil arid? Is the soil subject to toxins? What is the condition of the water supply that affects the soil? And what about the environment? Are there contaminants in the air? What is the quality of the air? How much sun nourishes the tree? Is it in partial shade? Is it living in community with other trees?

We realize the tree is much more than a tree - it is interconnected and interrelated with its environment. The tree and its environment is constantly changing... May we look more deeply at the tree? At creation? At every living creature? May we consider more deeply every human being? - Inspired by Sharon Salzberg

Meditation Teacher Sharon Salzberg Talks About the Power of Loving-Kindness

<https://www.mindful.org/meditation-teacher-sharon-salzberg-talks-about-the-power-of-loving-kindness/>

Sharon Salzberg: Frequently in instructing meditation, we say “rest” your attention on the breath. It’s a quality of resting and settling right from the start, a gentle act, not a labored struggle. And as a result of the practice, we develop increased *concentration*, yes. That is a key factor.

But we also develop greater *awareness* of what’s going on with ourselves, what’s happening with our emotions, and when we see a thought, we don’t push it away. We notice it. We see it for what it is. That’s how we begin to get to know ourselves better, and by extension experience what’s happening with others more. We feel our connection to them more. Paying attention is one of the kindest things we can do—for ourselves, for others.

[We can hold both focused attention and an opening focus....]

From Sharon Salzberg (world renowned meditation teacher and author) ,
Real Change

The truth is, meditation would not be as meaningful for me at this time in my life of it were just about me. For my part, my experience, practicing, studying, and teaching mindfulness and loving-kindness meditations is that they work to:



Sharon Salzberg, *Real Change*

****Build a quality of resilience that can shore us up for the long haul;***

****help clear our minds to make better choices, with strategies based in the values we want to live by:***

****teach us how to be with feelings of loss or frustration or pain in a way that is healing and onward leading, instead of devastating;***

****help us focus our energies more productively and relieve the exhaustion of finding too many battles to fight;***

****join forces with others more effectively and harmoniously:***

****transform how we see ourselves, those we work with, and those whose decisions and actions we work against; and***

****lighten and open our hearts as we cultivate the power of connection.***



Vitality- practices that may lead us to
freedom....

Creating an environment where our cells and our bodies may
thrive

Vitality: Foundational Practice - where it may take us

Start with the foundational practice - following your breath - using your breath or a mantra or something as an anchor for your attention.

Then just notice with gentleness and kindness what distracts you- if these are minor thoughts - just watch them come and go - but if it is a stronger emotion and/or thought just consider it for a minute or two and then let it go- or let it be...

We may hold both of these practices in our present moment experience. We may always return to the breath, or our mantra....

Already Free: Buddhism meets Western Psychotherapy on the Path of Liberation,
Bruce Tift

On any given day, you may want to explore emotions/feelings that are not easy for you. Using R A I N, and especially with investigating/ curiosity explore - briefly (so that you do not go down a rabbit hole). Anxiety, for example is an emotion that we all feel to some degree. “Give yourself permission to sit with it”... says Bruce Tift, Author of *Already Free: Buddhism meets Western Psychotherapy on the Path of Liberation.*

We really might want to consider committing to the experience of anxiety, because it's not going anywhere

Open the door wide to your fear and anxiety. Touch it. Be curious about it. Then let it go. See the contrast between your anxiety and the space around it. – Carolyn Gimian

Vitality: We all have a story

Returning to the present moment can help us to be resilient not only in the face of our own pain, but also in the face of others' pain. We can listen to what [others are] saying deep inside. If someone is hateful, what lies beneath that hate? From that, we might begin to make a connection as a first step to bridging a divide. - Mitch Abblett

May we listen?

Vitality: Forgiveness - along the path to freedom

So, what is the next step?

The ancient buddhists tell us that we all want to be:

Held (or met).....Known.....and Felt (that felt sense of being held(met)- in a mutual, caring and loving relationship).

Is it possible to forgive ourselves and someone close to us? It may be the only way to move forward.

Forgiveness {Curiosity, Lovingkindness, Kindness and Gratitude...to ourselves and others - all help us to forgive- and move on}

Practice: Mountain Meditation

.Ring the bells (ring the bells) that still can ring

Forget your perfect offering

There is a crack in everything (there is a crack in everything)

That's how the light gets in

Before You Speak let your words pass through three gates:

- Is it Kind?
- Is it Helpful?(or Necessary)?
- Is it True?



APPS

Sleep: Mindfulness.com has a new sleep tab

Insight Timer: <https://insighttimer.com/>

Plum Village App: <https://plumvillage.app/>

20 Breaths Practice, Penn Program For Mindfulness

One at a Time: **The 20 Breaths Practice**

The 20 Breaths practice helps you to create a powerful moment of stillness and silence in the middle of activity and stress. Like all mindfulness-based techniques, it requires practice and rewards patience. If you stay with it, and especially if you practice even when you think you are too busy or distracted, you are guaranteed to learn from it. You will discover for yourself that your own natural resources are never farther away than the next breath.

Here are some suggestions to make this practice work for you.

1. **Come to a “Full Stop”** at the beginning. Deliberately stop everything else that you are doing. The practice only lasts a few minutes, so give it your full attention.
2. **One breath at a time** You are really practicing 20 very short mindfulness practices. Each session only lasts for the duration of one breath, about 5 seconds or so. Every breath is different. Each one is short enough for you to devote yourself to it fully. Don't worry about what happened during the last breath, or what will come next. Don't critique your performance. See if you can bring your full attention to the breath that is alive right now. You will notice, of course, that your mind wanders into the past and future. That is not a problem; it is how you learn about mindfulness. Just don't wander away completely. Simply notice it, and gently return to the moment of breath that is here. If you completely miss one breath (or 10), don't worry. Another is about to begin.
3. **Full attention** See if you can bring all of your attention to the present moment of breath. You are bringing your full awareness to meet the breath. Each time you notice that some of your attention is elsewhere, see if you can bring that part of attention back to meet the next breath. Notice distractions, not to fight with them, but because once you notice them you will have the opportunity to undo them in the next moment. Distractions are opportunities. Once we notice them, they will show us how to return to the present moment.
4. **Let go completely at the end of each breath.** Give yourself a moment to completely relax, release, let go. Count the breath in that moment. It is easiest if you count right before you start your next inhalation.
5. **Take a fresh start** when the next breath begins. This breath is new, never before experienced. Catch it while it is fresh, right at the moment when it first arises. See if you can find that moment, the exact moment where the breath is found.
6. **Rest for at least a few moments** at the end of the practice. If you can, schedule each 20 Breaths practice to last for five minutes. During the last minute or two, after you've finished the counting, sit and rest gently with the continuous flow of the breath. Pause for a moment after you open your eyes, sense the body and the breath, and notice the world around you.

Resources

Nutrition.gov website: <https://www.nutrition.gov/>

Eat.Right.Now app, Judson Brewer, MD, 2016 <https://goeatrightnow.com/>

Unwinding Anxiety app, Judson Brewer, MD <https://www.unwindinganxiety.com/>

The Mindful Way Through Anxiety, Lizbeth Roemer, Susan M. Orsillo

Full Catastrophe Living, Jon Kabat Zinn, Bantam 1990.

Mindfulness meditation and the immune system: a systematic review of randomized controlled trials
<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/26799456/>

Mindfulness for Beginners, Jon Kabat Zinn. Sounds True 2002

Mindful Diet, Ruth Wolever, Beth Reardon, Scribner 2015

“A Guided Loving-Kindness Meditation with Sharon Salzberg”

<https://www.mindful.org/a-guided-loving-kindness-meditation-with-sharon-salzberg/>