

# Mindful Nutrition

October 6, 2020



# Mindfulness And Immunity



## Immunity continued...

Not a vaccine but rather a lifestyle:  
Our 8 week sessions are dedicated to nourishing, nurturing  
and healing

# Paying attention to our Thoughts and Emotions in the Present Moment influences our aging Process

2009 Nobel Prize was shared with Elizabeth Blackburn

For the discovery of the anti-aging enzyme Telomerase.

Blackburn with Elissa Epel's work at UCSF shows that especially highly stressful thoughts and ruminating obsessively about the past influence the rate at which we age.

Telomere's are the specialized DNA repeat sequences at the tips of all of our chromosomes that are essential for cell division, and shorten over time as we age. Epel, Blackburn and colleagues showed that Telomere shortening is much more rapid under chronic stress

Specifically, it is how we perceive that stress that makes a difference in how quickly telomere's degrade and shorten.

# The Telomere Study (con't)

Why is this important?

- 1) We don't have to make the sources of our stress go away. (Some sources of stress will not go away).
- 2) We can change our *attitude* and thereby our *relationship to our circumstances* that can make a difference in our health, well being and possibly to our longevity.
- 3) To date - the study suggests that the longer telomeres are associated with the difference of how present you are (focused or engaged in your task in the moment) versus mind wandering. (wanting to be somewhere different from where you are in the present moment).
- 4) Note: In contrast to 3) above, the kind of mind wandering one has when sitting on a beach/vacationing and allowing our relaxed mind to go where it will is a healthy mind wandering experience.  
- Jon Kabat-Zinn, *Full Catastrophe Living*

# Telomerase Studies

Other studies looked at the levels of Telomerase (an enzyme; one specific molecule/measured in immune cells circulating in the blood).

The studies suggest that when we *perceive* situations threatening to our well-being, these *perceptions* can have an effect on this molecule which plays a major role in our health and possibly our longevity.

- Jon Kabat-Zinn, *Full Catastrophe Living*

# What these studies tell us

The implications of this research may prompt us to wake up a bit more and to pay more attention to the stress in our lives. We may also have greater awareness of how we might shape our relationship to stress over the long haul with greater intentionality, wisdom, and compassion.

- Jon Kabat-Zinn, *Full Catastrophe Living*

# Mindfulness and Healing

## Why loving connection is essential

The way we regulate our nervous system is partly by ourselves. we can learn to breathe, we can learn to be mindful. We can learn to be present. But largely it is our ability to connect in a meaningful, intimate way that really helps both parties regulate their nervous systems and cut down on the stress response.

- Jon Kabat-Zinn, *Full Catastrophe Living*



“The most beautiful things  
in the world cannot be seen or  
touched, they are felt with the heart.”

— **Antoine de Saint-Exupéry,**  
**The Little Prince**



# Why do we need healing? Stress/Perceived Stress

Poverty

Food Deserts

Loneliness

Measuring up to social media posts - definition of success?

Bullying

Hurrying and Worrying in our modern world; Can you imagine music without rest stops?

Paralysis in analysis - rampant with technology

Too much clutter in our lives

Lack of connecting with nature

Lack of civility/ divisiveness

Uncertainty

Negativity Bias - looking out for perceived danger

Anger, Fear, Anxiety

Lack of sleep



## The Body-Mind effect

Have you ever noticed how we may be less patient when we are hungry?  
[HAngry] :)

It is also the mind-body effect that what we eat, what happens to the microbes in our belly, affects our mood and it affects our resilience and our ability to deal with stress. - Joan Borysenko

# Simple ways to address stress/ perceived stress

\*Name your emotion

Simply saying what you are feeling out loud - to yourself or to a trusted friend  
down-regulates your stress hormones

\*Reach out to a family member, friend, or someone in need

\*Practice: guided meditation (through an app or other channel)

\*Eat something (preferably nourishing)

\*Be authentic - discover yourself; what is true for you in your practice

\*Connect with nature

\*Sleep

\*“Installing the good” - combating negativity bias- Joan Borysenko quote -  
Joy, laughter, gratitude

Joan Borysenko

# May we be comfortable with Intimacy?

“A pause gives us space to come into a fresh and creative relationship with our life.

“The beginning of intimacy is to know what is going on inside us – knowing and regarding that with acceptance and kindness.”

“We begin to sense in our own life how our happiness is related to feeling connected.”

The National Institute for the Clinical Application of Behavioral Medicine  
Conscious Loving: Pathways for Awakening our Heart, Tara Brach

# Immunity begins at home with Mindfulness.

One way we speak of being at home in mindfulness refers to being at home in our bodies, and with ourselves. When we build immunity through mindfulness, it is supportive to begin with ourselves. The following links are good ways to get started with building compassion, resiliency and immunity.

## 10 -Day Lovingkindness Challenge with Sharon Salzberg

*"Lovingkindness opens our attention and makes it more inclusive, transforming the way we view ourselves and the world. Instead of being so caught up in the constructs of 'self' and 'other' and 'us' and 'them' that we tend to walk around with, we see things much more in terms of connection to all. And the transformation from alienation to connection begins with ourselves."*

—Sharon Salzberg

[https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLyOuAoSmZkKp4eQiHraCEcSTkwN5ohom0&utm\\_campaign=C201005-10DLKC-Access-1%20%28TkqSiE%29&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=Customer%20Service&\\_ke=eyJrbF9lbWFpbCI6ICJsYXgxNzU1QGdtYWIsLmNvbSIsICJrbF9jb21wYW55X2IkljogIkpNRGdhcSJ9](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLyOuAoSmZkKp4eQiHraCEcSTkwN5ohom0&utm_campaign=C201005-10DLKC-Access-1%20%28TkqSiE%29&utm_medium=email&utm_source=Customer%20Service&_ke=eyJrbF9lbWFpbCI6ICJsYXgxNzU1QGdtYWIsLmNvbSIsICJrbF9jb21wYW55X2IkljogIkpNRGdhcSJ9)

# Building Resiliency and Self-Care

Contemplative-Based Resilience Project  
For Caregivers in Crisis

[https://www.garrisoninstitute.org/initiatives/programs/contemplative-based-resilience/?utm\\_source=Donors&utm\\_campaign=463eb690ba-EMAIL\\_CAMPAIGN\\_2020\\_09\\_28\\_08\\_11&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_4f2796fe5d-463eb690ba-422093881](https://www.garrisoninstitute.org/initiatives/programs/contemplative-based-resilience/?utm_source=Donors&utm_campaign=463eb690ba-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2020_09_28_08_11&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_4f2796fe5d-463eb690ba-422093881)

## Election Sanity Series

Election Sanity Series 10% Happier/ What's Love Got To Do With It? JoAnna Hardy

[https://www.tenpercent.com/podcast-episode/joanna-hardy-288?utm\\_source=election\\_sanity&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=105brandlove](https://www.tenpercent.com/podcast-episode/joanna-hardy-288?utm_source=election_sanity&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=105brandlove)

Joan Borysenko

<https://www.joanborysenko.com/>

# Clearing - Martha Postlewaite from Tara Brach

Do not try to save  
the whole world  
or do anything grandiose.  
Instead, create  
a clearing  
in the dense forest  
of your life  
and wait there  
patiently,  
until the song  
that is your life  
falls into your own cupped hands  
and you recognize and greet it.  
Only then will you know  
how to give yourself  
to this world  
so worthy of rescue.



# Embodied Awareness

“Feel your breath.  
Feel the life of your body.  
Feel your heart. Feel fully here- intimate with this moment experience.”  
-Tara Brach

Practice



