

MBSR – Not Just About Stress



Applied Humanism: MBSR-Based- Mindfulness Training for Academic Excellence and Student Wellness

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Applied Humanism – One Definition

- **Applied Humanism puts human nature, human basic needs and human basic rights, such as the right to preserve self, the right to maintain self worth, and the right to be informed, ahead of other societal elements such as the economy, politics, nationality, ethnicity, religion and science.**

<http://www.appliedhumanism.com/>

Applied Humanism at Western University

- 1. Empowering students to succeed by fostering an atmosphere of acceptance, safety, caring and discipline and by establishing a sense of self-respect and caring and to increase the skill of empathy toward others**
- 2. Teaching students the skill of mindfulness, to witness, evaluate and to act from a deep understanding, rather than judge and react to their moment-to-moment experience and to cultivate and deepen their sense of self-awareness**
- 3. To en"ourage" students to act with integrity, courage, compassion and empathy on behalf of their own and others' wellbeing and to increase the skill of self-control of emotions**

Applied Humanism at Western University

- 1. Applying (mindfulness) intervention methodologies where appropriate**
- 2. Fostering students' ability to take responsibility for their actions and their lives based on an understanding of the natural law of cause and effect, to increase their self-motivational and to increase positive coping skills**
- 3. To Elicit positive behavioral changes through mindfulness training and to help students increase positive communication skills**

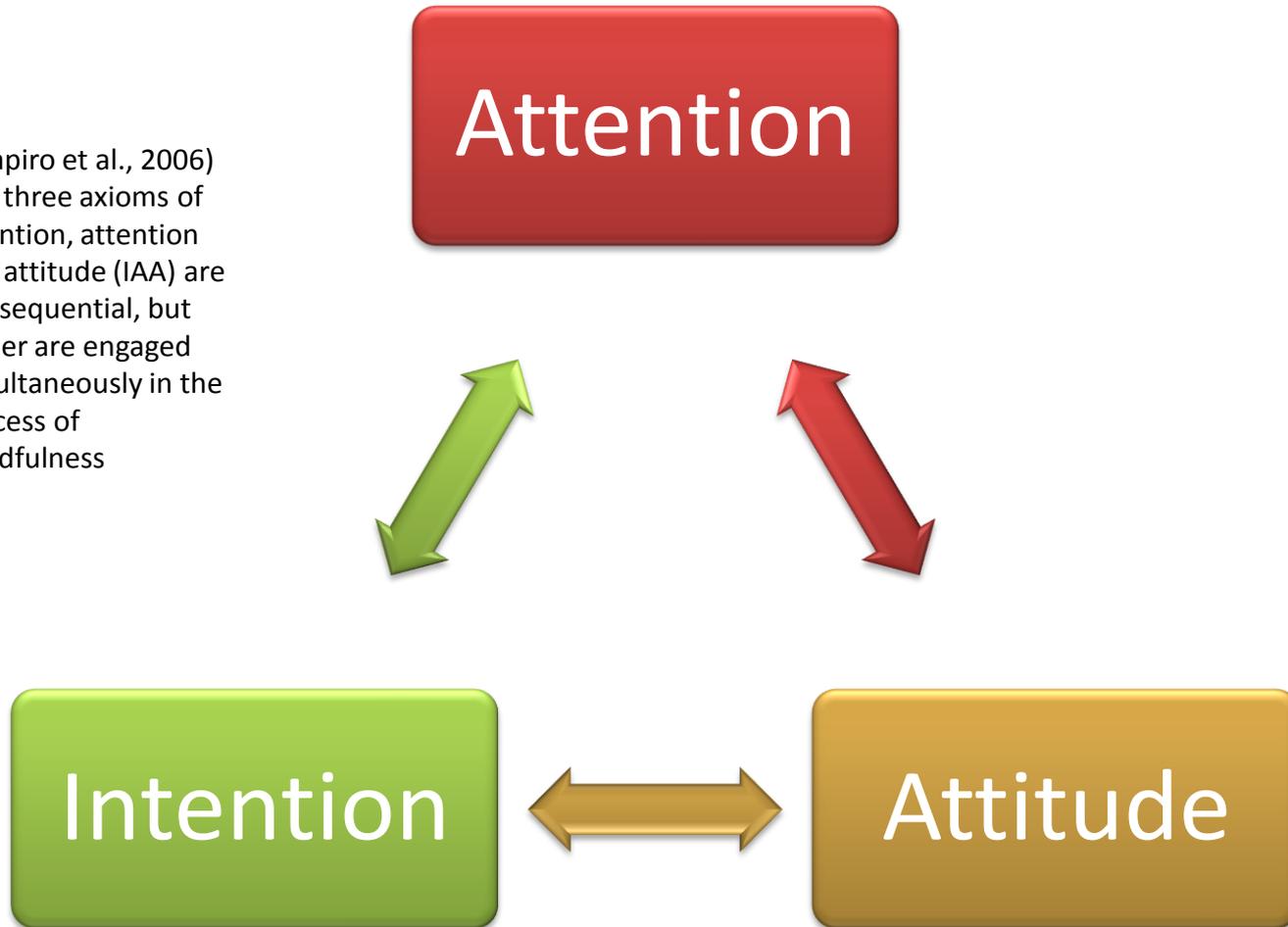
Adapted from: Model for Normalized Behavior Programming. *Journal of Humanistic Education and Development*,

Specific MBSR-Based

**MINDFULNESS EFFORTS AT
WESTERN UNIVERSITY**

Model of Mindfulness

(Shapiro et al., 2006)
The three axioms of intention, attention and attitude (IAA) are not sequential, but rather are engaged simultaneously in the process of mindfulness

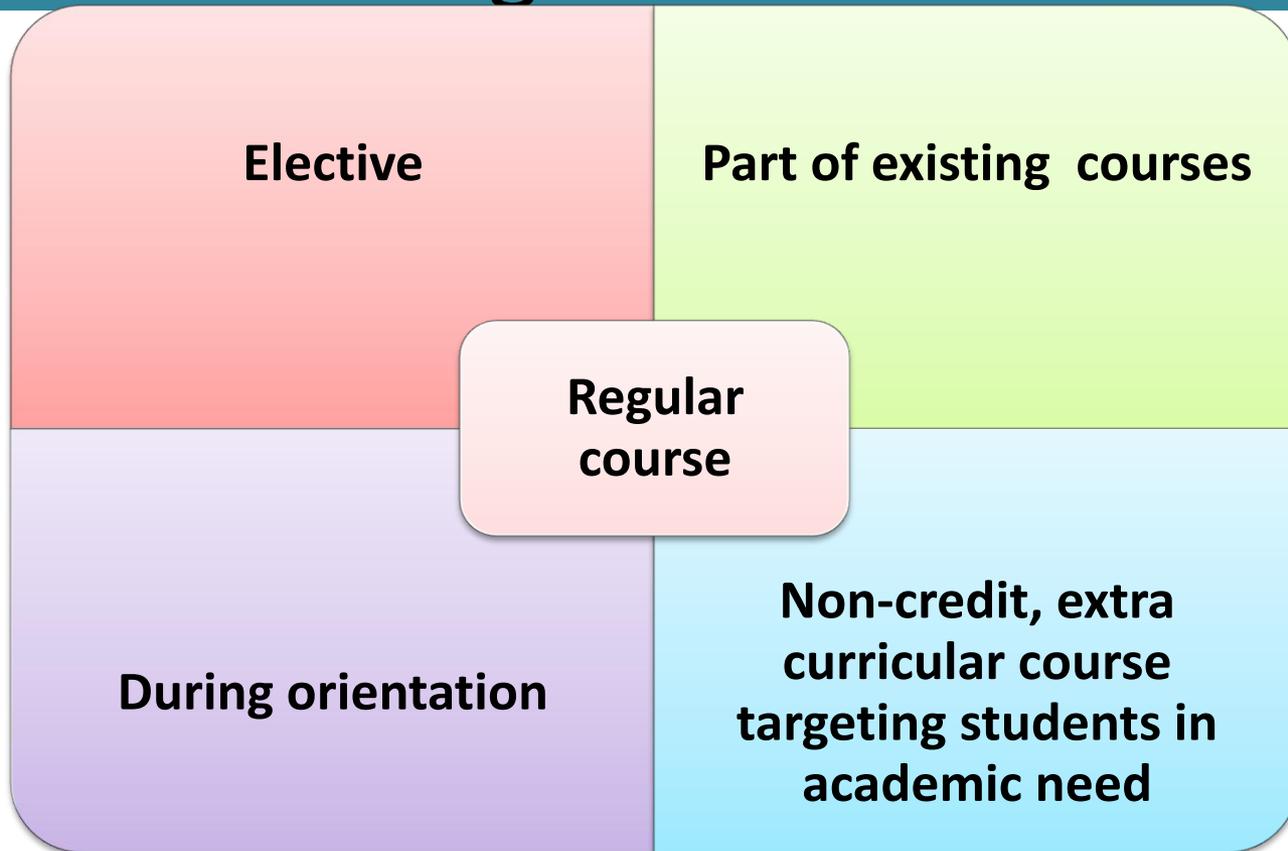


LEAD Services: Applied Humanism in Action

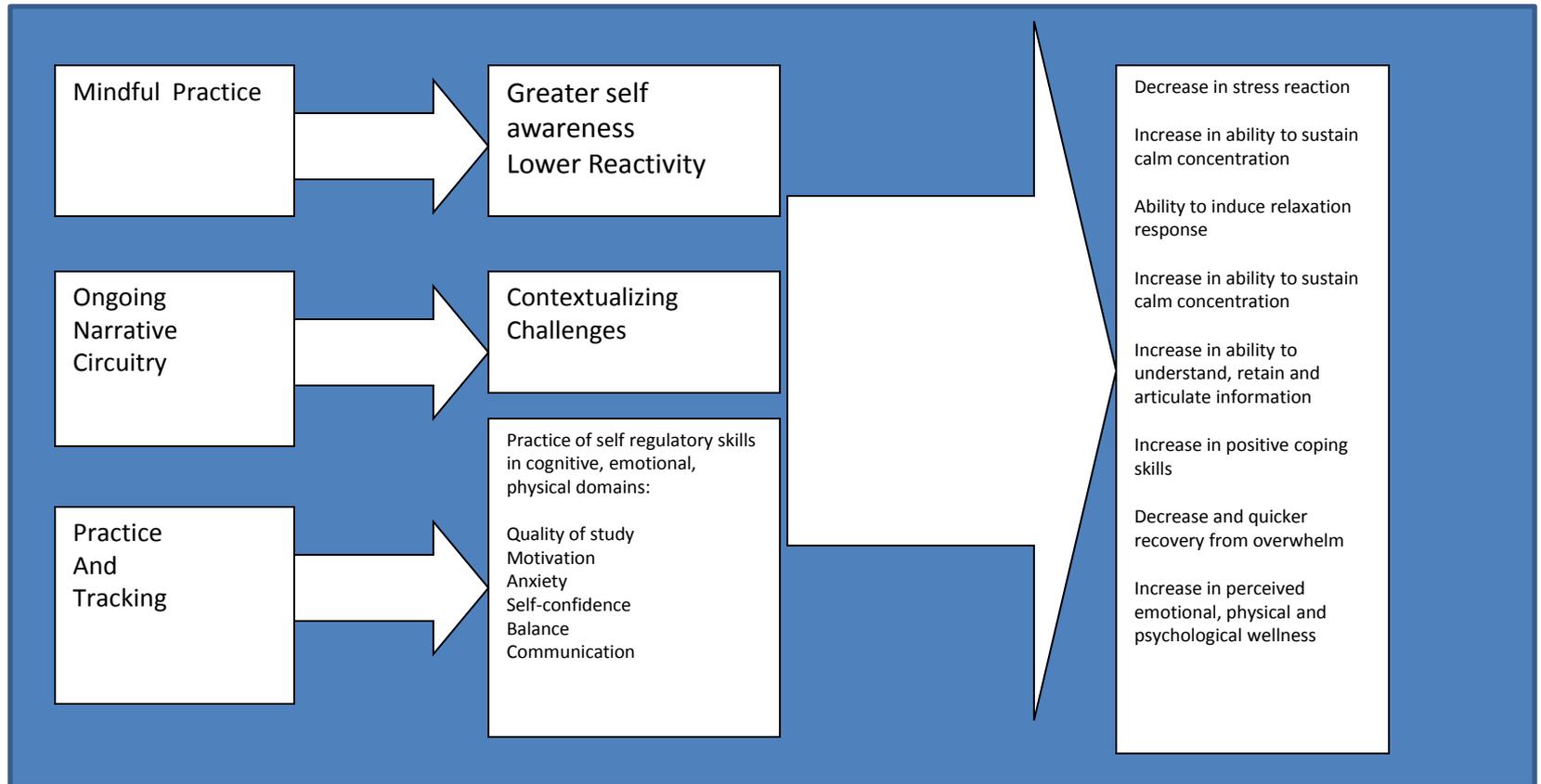
Building Upon an Evidence Based Model

- Connecting all emotional intelligence and attention skills training efforts with specific, task and goal oriented study and learning needs
- Introducing MBSR-based stress management, motivation, concentration workshops during orientation
- Teaching MBSR-based mindfulness meditation as stress intervention in three weekly meditation groups
- Working with all colleges to integrate mindfulness, emotional intelligence and stress management skills components
- Teaching MBSR-based applied mindfulness course in the MSMS curriculum
- Raising self-awareness in all *private session students* with a “basic training” model of mindfulness, concentration, self awareness and motivation skills

Integrating MBSR – Based Mindfulness Teaching Into Curricula



Applied Humanism at Western University: MBSR-Based-Mindfulness Training for Academic Excellence and Wellness, the MSMS Model



Daily Practice and Documentation of Habituation Process and of Behavior and Competencies Changes

- Daily journal documentation of strategies
- Daily tracking of self regulation of emotion and thoughts as they are mediated through the practice of mindfulness strategies.
- Daily tracking of shifts and improvements of (chosen)competencies, such as study skills, quality of focus, motivation, sense of well-being, etc.
- Daily tracking of practice



Mindfulness Training has gone
Mainstream

OUTSIDE OF WESTERN UNIVERSITY

Mindfulness, It's Everywhere!

Eight week mindfulness training produces positive changes in brain structure seen on MRI

The Science of Mindfulness

The Development of Executive Attention: Contributions to the Emergence of Self-Regulation

Mindfulness based stress reduction lowers psychological distress in medical students

Physician wellness

Brief Meditative Exercise helps cognition

Mindfulness: Training for Executive Function

The effects of Meditation on the Body

Calming the Mind: The Science of Meditation

Mindfulness and Professionalism in Dentistry

Consciousness and Cognition: Mindfulness meditation improves cognition: Evidence of brief mental training

What is Mindfulness & Mindfulness Meditation?

- Mindfulness is the **intentional cultivation of moment to moment awareness without judgment or involvement in distractions**, such as thoughts, or emotions. It is the **quality of awareness** not the particular focus which is important in the practice.
- **Mindfulness Meditation is a secular practice** in which mental and related somatic events are affected by engaging in specific methods of attention.

Brief History and Definition of Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction, MBSR

- Medical, behavioral, **evidence-based model**, pioneered by Jon Kabat-Zinn, Ph.D. in 1979 at the University of Massachusetts Medical Center.
- **There are over 200 medical and community centers in the US with MBSR programs.**

MBSR on the Brain

- **Increases grey matter density** in the hippocampus - Important for learning and memory –
- **Enhances executive functioning** – Important to sustain attention, diminish distractibility
- **Increases grey matter also in structures associated with self-awareness** (self regulation), compassion and introspection, internal sense of stability and clarity
- **Decreases grey matter density** in the amygdala – main player in stress and anxiety

7 Pillars of Mindfulness Jon Kabat-Zinn

- Non-judging witness
- Patience accepting the process
- Beginners Mind to know that we don't know
- Trust self reliance
- Non-Striving in meditation
- Acceptance not resisting the present moment
- Letting Go of tension-producing thoughts, feelings

The Training Components

- Meditation taught as attention training
- “De-centering” thoughts to focus
- Body scan
- Light stretching, body awareness
- Breath work
- Daily “applied” mindfulness practice in everyday activities

Attention Components of the Program

- Attention to the Body
- Attention to the Breath
- Attention to Thoughts
- Attention to Feelings
- Attention to the Mind

“Attention to” – rather than “involvement with”

Attention Training Cultivates Effort Control

Effort control has been shown to increase **executive attention** and has been linked to brain areas involved with **self-regulation**, increasing competencies such as **attention, shifting focus and inhibitory control.**

Executive Function **is Trainable!**



- Experiments have shown **that attention is trainable, and can lead to generalized cognitive processing improvement.**

Michael Posner, professor emeritus in neuroscience, University of Oregon has this to say:

- **Mindfulness (meditation) has been tested as attention training with college students and shown to improve executive function.**
- <http://www.sharpbrains.com/blog/2008/10/18/training-attention-and-emotional-self-regulation-interview-with-michael-posner/>

Mindfulness at Universities

- UCSD
- <http://ucsdcfm.wordpress.com/2011/02/22/mindfulness-based-stress-reduction-mbsr-meditation-studies-show-brain-changing-results/>
- Mindfulness in Medicine
- <http://ucsdcfm.wordpress.com/psy-238/> - an elective course
- Umass
- <http://www.umassmed.edu/content.aspx?id=41252>
- Semel Institute, UCLA
- psychoneuroimmunology
- <http://mar>
- c.ucla.edu/body.cfm?id=16
- <http://marc.ucla.edu/body.cfm?id=18>
- Penn Medicine
- <http://www.pennmedicine.org/stress/about/our-team.html>
- Yale <http://medicine.yale.edu/psychiatry/ytnccare/resources.aspx>

Resources

Brief Meditation and Cognition

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2010/04/100414184220.htm>

Changes in Gray matter in MBSR participants, affecting memory, concentration, learning , emotional regulation, etc.

http://www.nmr.mgh.harvard.edu/~lazar/Holzel_Pre.Post_MBSR.2010.pdf

Mindfulness Training for Executive Function

<http://www.psych-it.com.au/theses/article.asp?page=72>

<http://www.sharpbrains.com/blog/2008/10/18/training-attention-and-emotional-self-regulation-interview-with-michael-posner/>

The Science of Meditation

<http://www.time.com/time/covers/1101030804/om/>

The Development of Executive Attention: Contributions to the Emergence of Self-Regulation

<http://www.psych-it.com.au/theses/article.asp?page=72>

Official MBSR site

<http://www.umassmed.edu/content.aspx?id=41252>

Physician Wellness

http://www.medicine.virginia.edu/administration/faculty/faculty-dev/copy_of_home-page