

# The Top One-Minute Mindfulness Strategies to Use in Your Practice

Donald Altman, M.A., LPC

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**Donald Altman, M.A., LPC, is a psychotherapist, award-winning writer, former Buddhist monk, and teacher. An adjunct professor at Lewis and Clark Graduate School of Education and Counseling, he is also a faculty of the Interpersonal Neurobiology program at Portland State University and teaches various classes blending mindfulness and Interpersonal Neurobiology.**

**A prolific writer whose career spans more than 25 years, Donald has authored several pioneering books on mindfulness, beginning with his 1998 *Art of the Inner Meal*. His book *The Mindfulness Code* was named as "One of the Best Spiritual Books of 2010". He has also authored *Meal By Meal*, *Living Kindness*, and his newest book *One Minute Mindfulness*.**

**In addition to his books, Donald was a staff writer for an EMMY-Award winning children's television (*The Magic Door*, CBS Chicago), won an American Medical Writer's Association Award, co-created the first interactive comic strip on American Online, and has had articles appear in *New Age Journal*, *The Los Angeles Times*, and *Independent Business Magazine*, among others.**

**Donald reaches out to the professional community by serving as the vice president of The Center for Mindful Eating. Donald works extensively with mindful meditation in his own life, as well as offering these tools to others through his books and classes. He teaches mindfulness and spiritual values around the country. He is dedicated to bringing these ancient practices in tune with modern living and to invite wellness into our stress-filled lives. Donald is also a member of the Burma Buddhist Association. An avid motorcyclist, he enjoys riding his motorcycle along the beautiful Oregon coast.**

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# Top One-Minute Mindfulness Strategies to Use in Your Practice

Welcome!

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Consulting / Speaking / Training

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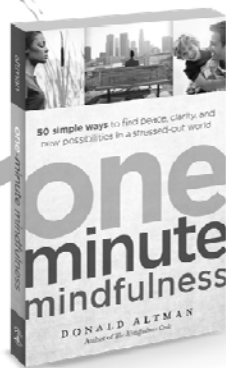
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## Overview

Intro: The Power of "One-Minute Mindfulness"

- How One-Minute Mindfulness Promotes Emotional Regulation and Changes the Brain

- 1) De-Stress Your Inner Space
  - 2) Finding Pleasantness
  - 3) Be the Pebble Meditation
  - 4) One-Minute Centering Intentions and Affirmations
  - 5) Gratitude for the Day
  - 6) Silence and Lessons from the Earth
- Closure

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*The trouble with ordinary reality  
is that a lot of it is dull,  
so we long ago decided  
to leave for somewhere better.*  
—Charles Tart, *Living the Mindful Life*

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*And the power of voluntarily bringing back a wandering attention, over and over again, is the very root of judgment, character, and will. No one is compos sui if he have it or not. An education which should improve this faculty would be the education par excellence. But it is easier to define this idea than to give practical directions for bringing it about.*

*--William James, The Principles of Psychology, 1890*

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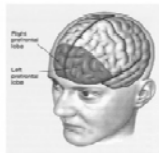
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## Mindfulness Changes the Brain

Unlike stress, when you are happy, peaceful, and positive, these emotional areas calm down and the **left** prefrontal cortex becomes active.

» Prefrontal Lobes



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## Mindfulness Changes the Brain

Research shows that this shift from right to left prefrontal activation is what happens when people experience mindfulness-based stress reduction practices.

» Prefrontal Lobes



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## Your Brain on Mindfulness

### Mindfulness Meditation Experiment\*

Mindfulness trained group had better immune system response than control group  
Mindful group had more left prefrontal cortex brain activity, higher left cortex baseline ratio

\*Psychosomatic Medicine 65:564-570 (2003)

► Prefrontal Lobes



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## Mindfulness Changes the Brain

The ratio of left-right activity persists in the long-term after learning Mindfulness-based stress reduction.

The insula pathway (which connects the prefrontal and limbic area) grows in those who practice mindfulness and meditation, which may help to inhibit the limbic system.

► Prefrontal Lobes



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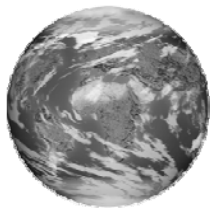
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## De-Stress Your Inner Space

*"While stress is a killer—literally—in next minute, you can perform a stress-defying maneuver, and you can do it one breath at a time."*

— One-Minute Mindfulness

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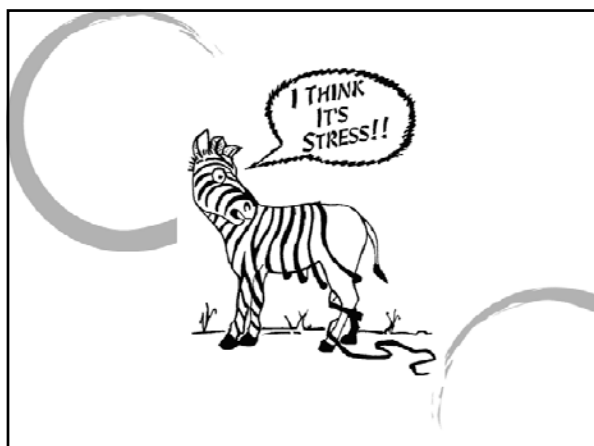
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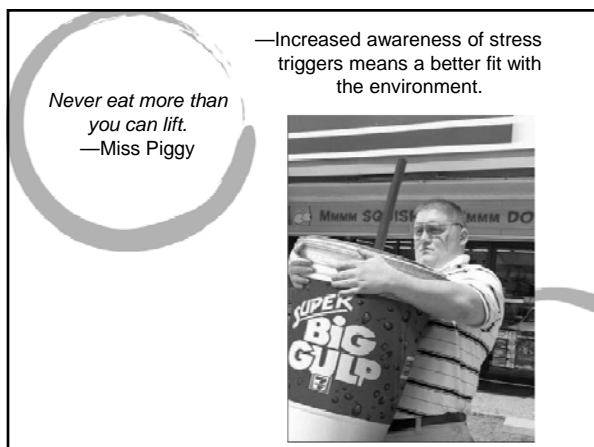
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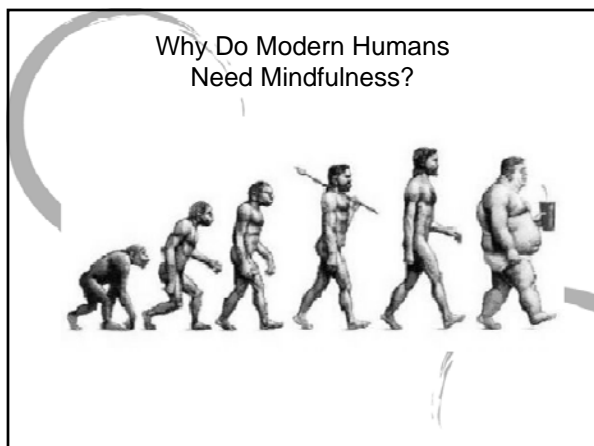
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Contemporary research shows that *you can't fully recover from any of these conditions by focusing on the symptoms. You have to change the way you live.*

-- Richard O'Connor, Ph.D., *Undoing Perpetual Stress*

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## 1-Minute Stress Detox



- Rewiring the Stress Response with **Breath**
  - 20-30 sec. to turn down stress volume
  - 10x increase in oxygen
  - Lower B.P., respiration
  - Increase alpha waves
  - Increase serotonin
  - Needs to be diaphragmatic

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## Mindful Laughter Benefits

- The stress hormones cortisol, dopac, and epinephrine decreased after the volunteers watched funny movies.
- Researchers found an average decrease in these stress hormones of 39%, 38% and 70% respectively.
- Humor significantly boosted the levels of endorphins and human growth hormone in test subjects—two beneficial regulators of the body's immune system.

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## Mindful Laughter Benefits

- 48 heart patients with abnormal heart rates watched 30 minutes of humor each day.
- Compared to the control group, the humor group had lower blood pressure, fewer abnormal heart rates, and needed less heart medication.
- A one-year follow-up discovered only 8% of the humor group suffered heart attacks contrasted with 42% of those in the control group that received no humor therapy.

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## Mindful Laughter Reflection



Photo by Blaspende789, commons.wikipedia.org

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

[http://www.laughteryoga.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=857&Itemid=1153](http://www.laughteryoga.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=857&Itemid=1153)

- 1) Share 3 things that make you laugh: a favorite funny movie, comedian, friend, comics, etc.
- 2) How could laughing each day alter your mood and perspective?
- 3) What is one small way that you could help bring the balance of laughter or shared perspective into your day or career?

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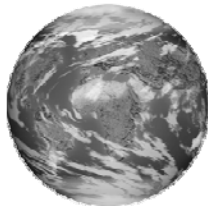
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## Finding Pleasantness

*"Shifting our awareness to what is pleasant and beautiful and good is deeply affirming."  
– One-Minute Mindfulness*

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## Finding Pleasantness for Depression



- Noting Pleasantness
- Evidence-based  
best practice
- All senses involved
  - Sets intention
  - Can include a centering ritual
  - New memories increase brain mass in the hippocampus

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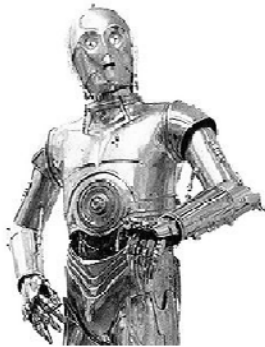
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—Stop being stuck on auto-pilot and  
using unhealthy coping skills.



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Déjà vu  
(having been there before)  
or  
Vuja De  
(not having been there before)



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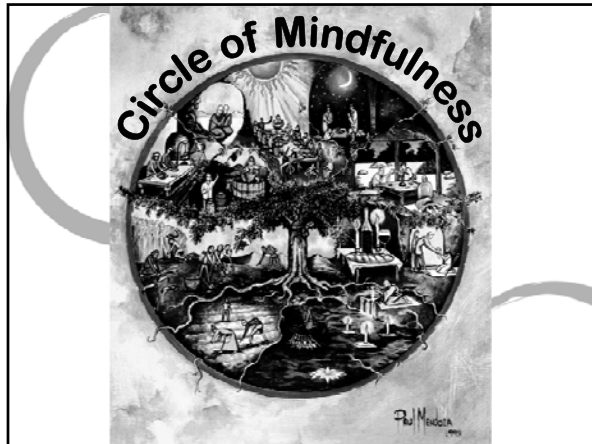
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## Be the Pebble Meditation

*"An anxious mind can be as turbulent as  
a raging river."*  
– One-Minute Mindfulness

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## Be the Pebble for Anxiety & ADHD

- **Meditation and ADHD**
  - ADHD symptoms in middle school children with 2x daily practice
  - After three months, researchers found over 50 percent reduction in stress and anxiety and improvements in ADHD symptoms
  - A second study with a control group measured brain function using electroencephalography (EEG). Preliminary data shows that three months practice resulted in significant positive changes in brain functioning during visual-motor skills.

\*online journal Current Issues in Education, Dec. 2008

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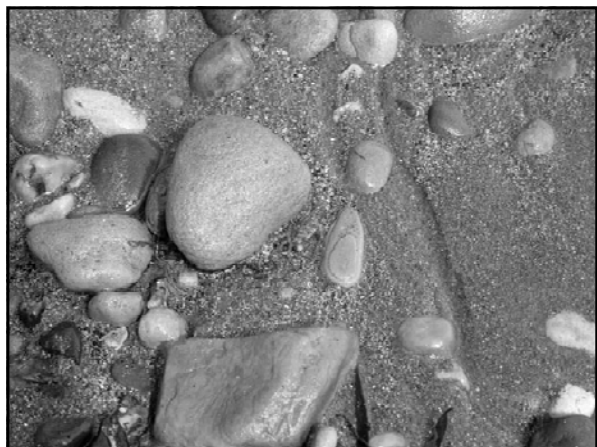
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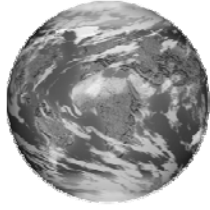
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## One-Minute Centering Intentions and Affirmations

*"Intentions help us to center and relieve  
the anxiety that transition often produces.  
Most importantly, they can keep us  
connected to our purpose"*  
– One-Minute Mindfulness

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## Words Can Soothe the Brain



- Guided Security Priming
  - Helps calm limbic system
  - Primes individual for feelings of trust and safety
  - Uses words that encourage overcoming fear and building connections
  - Helps visualize resources for difficult situations

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## Compassion in the Brain

High Gamma wave increase

Insula activity increase

Nucleus Accumbens (positive mood area)  
increase with feelings of love

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7tRdDqXgsJ0&feature=related>

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## Loving-Kindness Affirmation for PTSD & Depression



- Increases feelings of safety and trust
- Increases sense of connection
- Helps build empathy and relationships
- In case study\*\* LKM Improves negative symptoms in schizophrenics (anhedonia, avolition, asociality)

\*\* *Journal of Clinical Psychology: In Session*, May 2009, Vol. 65(5), 499-509

- Loving-Kindness Plus Security Priming
  - Study found it generates positive emotions\*
  - Significantly increased resources, including feelings of hopefulness, acceptance, and gaining social support

\* *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Fredrickson, Cohn, Coffey, Peck, and Finkel

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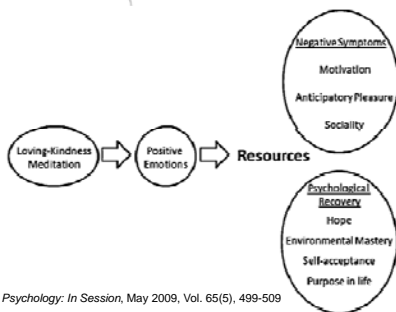
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## Loving-Kindness Language Builds Positive Emotions & Resources



*Journal of Clinical Psychology: In Session*, May 2009, Vol. 65(5), 499-509

Figure 1. The broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions as applied to LKM for negative symptoms of schizophrenia.

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May I be safe,  
May I be happy,  
May I be healthy,  
May I be at peace.

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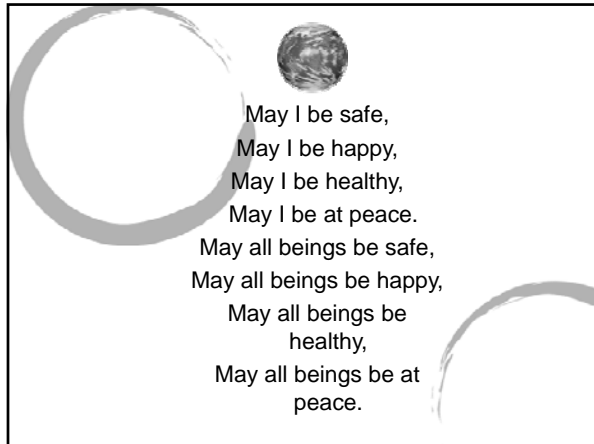
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May I be safe,  
 May I be happy,  
 May I be healthy,  
 May I be at peace.  
 May all beings be safe,  
 May all beings be happy,  
 May all beings be healthy,  
 May all beings be at peace.

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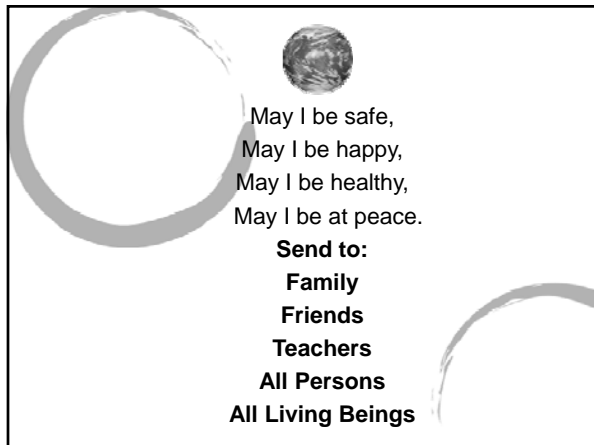
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May I be safe,  
 May I be happy,  
 May I be healthy,  
 May I be at peace.  
**Send to:**  
**Family**  
**Friends**  
**Teachers**  
**All Persons**  
**All Living Beings**

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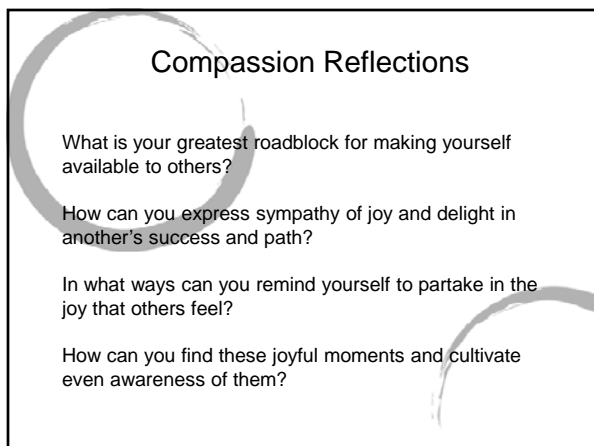
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**Compassion Reflections**

What is your greatest roadblock for making yourself available to others?

How can you express sympathy of joy and delight in another's success and path?

In what ways can you remind yourself to partake in the joy that others feel?

How can you find these joyful moments and cultivate even awareness of them?

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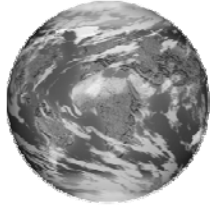
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## Gratitude for the Day

*"Gratitude is a potent vaccine that inoculates us against negativity."*  
— One-Minute Mindfulness

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## Power of Gratitude



### Depression Intervention:

2003 study reported in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, had participants write down five things they were grateful for during the week for a period of 10 weeks. Results showed:

- 25% happier than persons who wrote down their day's frustrations or simply listed the day's events.
- More optimistic about the future.
- Felt better about their lives.
- Participated in one and a half hours more exercise per week than those in the control groups.

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## Power of Gratitude



A second study revealed:

- "The gratitude group reported significantly bigger increases in their happiness levels from before to after the intervention." It was only necessary for participants in this study to do the practice once a week, such as on a Sunday night, for the benefits to be felt."
- Sonja Lyubomirsky in her book, *The How of Happiness*

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## G.L.A.D.



### GRATITUDE

*Write down 1 thing that you are grateful or thankful for today:* (such as health, color of the sky; conversation with friend; etc.)

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## G.L.A.D.



### LEARNING

*Write down 1 thing that you learned today about yourself or another:* (self-growth, wisdom, or even knowledge)

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## G.L.A.D.



### ACCOMPLISHMENT

*Write down 1 thing that you accomplished today:* (such as any activity or movement toward a long-term goal; etc.)

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## G.L.A.D.



### **DELIGHT**

**Write down 1 thing that you found delightful today:** (such as one simple thing that was beautiful, something that brought you joy, made you laugh or feel good, etc.)

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## Share the Gratitude Story



**Ask your client to think of one thing he/she has gratitude about, and to share with you the story behind it.**

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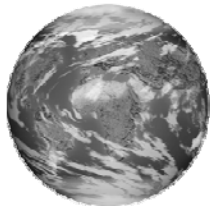
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## Silence and Lessons from the Earth

*“Silence offers nothing less than a revolution of our inner being. It invites a return to abiding peace, clarity, and equanimity.”*  
– One-Minute Mindfulness

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Peace of Wild Things-- Wendell Berry

When despair for the world grows in me and I wake in the night at the least sound in fear of what my life and my children's lives may be,  
I go and lie down where the wood drake rests in his beauty on the water, and the great heron feeds.  
I come into the peace of wild things who do not tax their lives with forethought of grief.  
I come into the presence of still water.  
And I feel above me the day-blind stars waiting with their light.  
For a time I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.

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Attention to Reduce Stress:  
Nature and Outside Time

**Attention Restoration Theory**

Developed by Stephen Kaplan of the University of Michigan in 1980s.

2 Kinds of Attention: Voluntary and Involuntary

**Voluntary attention-** directed attention and focus.  
Involved in problem solving.  
Uses energy and depletes the brain of energy;  
causes loss of focus  
Urban stimuli require directed attention (such as to avoid getting hit by car)

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## Attention to Reduce Stress: Nature and Outside Time

### Attention Restoration Theory

**Involuntary attention**- a effortless form of engagement with the world that restores attention and focus.

Nature is especially conducive to our involuntary engagement.

People have a preference for natural scenes after expending mental energy and problem solving.

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## Nature in Therapy:

### Attention Restoration Theory

Nature restores energy in the workplace and reduces stress.

Reduces aggression and anger

May reduce mild depression



Journal of Environmental Psychology, 28 (2008)  
192–199, A Plasma Display Window

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## TV and Attention

### Attention Restoration Theory

Effects of TV:

"Rather than lightening the load on direct attention, television actively captures it in an attempt to prevent the viewer from changing the channel (Mander, 1977)."

"Researchers have found a direct correlation between the amount of time someone spends in front of the television and that person's irritability."

"TV provides an escape from everyday trials, but over the long-term such escapism prevents the mind from engaging in much-needed reflection."

**This Side of Paradise by Eric Jaffe, Observer, May/June 2010**

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## Mindful Brainstorming with Clients

- 1) Discuss how being depleted of mental energy, focus, and attention affects your life and those around you.
- 2) How would being able to restore your energy make a beneficial difference in your work and relationships?
- 3) What is one concrete strategy for including nature in your in work? In your personal life?

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## Closure



*With much gratitude!*

*Blessings in the minute, Donald*

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## Mindfulness Bibliography

The Mindful Awareness Research Center (MARC)  
Located at UCLA, includes an extensive bibliography for researchers, psychologists, mental health therapists, and others in the medical field.

<http://marc.ucla.edu/body.cfm?id=38&oTopID=38>



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## Mindfulness Research

Mindfulness Research Monthly is a free newsletter of all the new mindfulness research that is being published.

The goal is to provide researchers, practitioners, and the general public with monthly publication updates in mindfulness research and to inform mindfulness science.

<http://www.mindfulexperience.org>



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## The Top One-Minute Mindfulness Strategies to Use in Your Practice

### Program Objectives

Please use the objectives below to answer the online objective questions.

At the completion of this seminar, I have been able to achieve these seminar objectives:

1. Use breathing as a powerful stress reduction method to counter anxiety.
2. Describe how to focus attention away from negative mood states by grounding awareness in the external world.
3. Explain a calming meditation for increasing concentration and shown to be helpful for ADD.
4. Create space from feelings of depression through affirmation and intention as a way to strengthen feelings of safety.
5. Use gratitude as a daily practice to create a new narrative and reduce depression.

**\*\*If there are no additional objectives above, please select "not applicable"**

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