

The Power of Mindfulness
The Psychology and Neuroscience of Stress
Reduction and Resiliency
National Reproductive Health Conference
2014
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Seminar/Mini-Retreat

- ▶ What Makes Us Resilient
- ▶ What Gets in the Way
- ▶ How Mindfulness and Compassion Help
- ▶ How to Apply it to Your Life

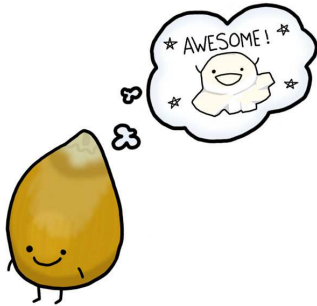
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Disclosures

- ▶ Nothing to disclose

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Pop into the Present



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Objectives

- ▶ Describe what is mindfulness and how it helps interrupt the stress cycle.
- ▶ List and practice one short mindfulness exercise that can be integrated into difficult moments of the day or be taught to the patients to work prevent burnout.
- ▶ List and practice a key self-compassion practices to practice for self-care and to use with patients in creating healing.

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What Makes Us Resilient



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Let's Take a Walk Down the Street



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What Gets in the Way?



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Benefits of Positive Feelings

- ▶ Most of our decisions are made from the emotional center of the brain, positive emotions have a big impact:
- ▶ More open and approaching in life
- ▶ Increase hope and optimism
- ▶ Mediate depressive thinking
- ▶ Bolster Immune functioning
- ▶ Increase resiliency

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Try this Little Experiment



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Positive Feelings Include

“If you connect to the world with a sense of meaning and purpose your brain won't look for artificial boosts.”

- ▶ Kindness
- ▶ Empathy
- ▶ Compassion
- ▶ Gratitude
- ▶ Hope
- ▶ Forgiveness
- ▶ Love
- ▶ Joy
- ▶ Resiliency



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Automatic Negativity Bias



- ▶ Evolutionary reason
- ▶ John Cacioppo - Brain More Sensitive to Negative Information
 - Brain lights up more with negative information than positive
- ▶ Want a Good Relationship?
 - John Gottman - 5 Positive Interactions to 1 Negative Interaction
- ▶ Want a Good Life?
 - Barbara Frederickson - 3:1 to feel happy.

Ito, T. A., Larsen, J. T., Smith, N. K., & Cacioppo, J. T. (1998). Negative information weighs more heavily on the brain: The negativity bias in evaluative categorizations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 75, 887-900



How the Brain Changes

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Reactions

Thoughts?
Feelings?

Three Ways

- ▶ Brain Change Influences Mental Perception
- ▶ The Mind Influences Brain Change
 - State-Dependent Activity
 - Trait-Dependent Neuroplasticity
- ▶ With intention, effort, repetition and strategy we can use the mind to change the brain for the better.

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What Kind of Learning?

- ▶ Explicit Memory – Memorizing events, facts, dates, names, general knowledge
- ▶ Implicit Memory – Memorizing procedures, walking, talking, eating, how to relate to difficult emotions.
- ▶ Implicit memory is what we're after in breaking old emotional procedures and patterns.

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Preventing Burnout with Mindfulness and Self-Compassion

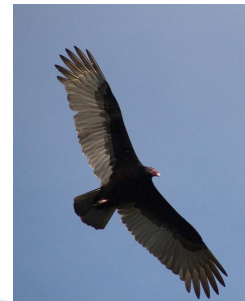
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Implicit Vs. Explicit: Demonstration



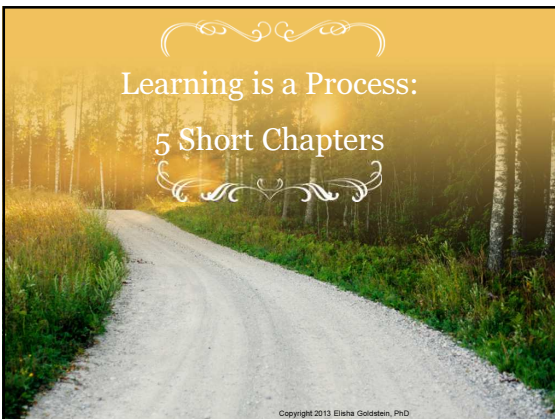
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Two Wings to Fly



Amber Burnette

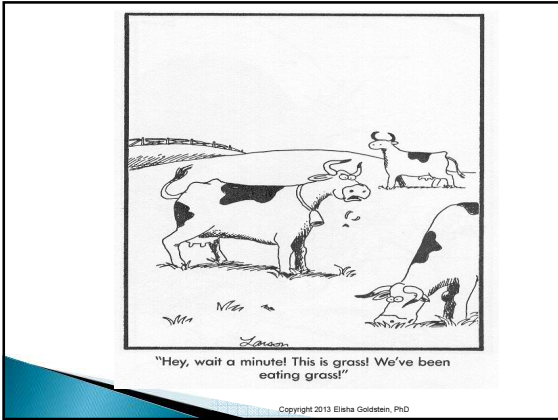
Learning is a Process: 5 Short Chapters



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Why Mindfulness?

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A New Way to Treat Emotional Suffering

The sadness or anxiety, hatred, or passion, under the gaze of our concentration and meditation, reveals its own nature. That revelation leads naturally to healing and emancipation.


The sadness, or whatever, having been the cause of pain, can be used as a means of liberation from torment and suffering. We call this using a thorn to remove a thorn. We should treat our anxiety, our pain, our hatred and passion gently, respectfully, not resisting it, but living with it, making peace with it, penetrating into its nature by the meditation on interdependence.

~ Thich Nhat Hanh, *The Miracle of Being Awake*

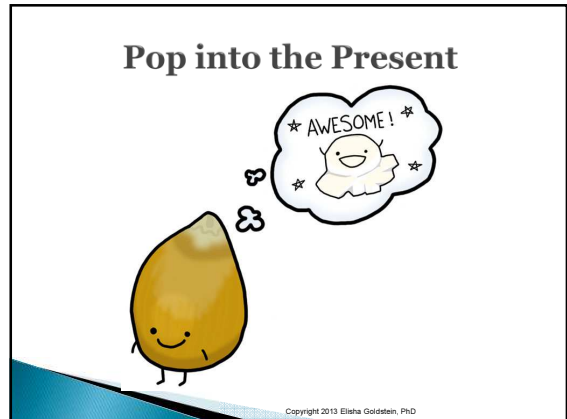
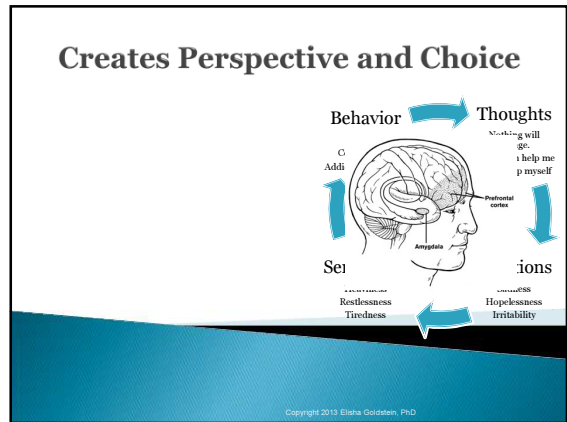
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Victor Frankl

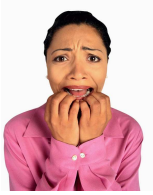
- ▶ What *The Now Effect* is predicated on:
- ▶ "Between stimulus and response there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom."



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“Putting Feelings into Words”



Jane



Dick

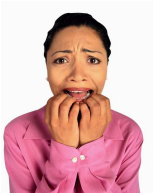
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“Knowing the way you think and where you place your energy allows you to step away from the various stories and mind traps that don’t serve you and enter the space of awareness where you can consider alternatives for creating a more flexible, healthier mind.”

~ The Now Effect

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“Putting Feelings into Words”



Fear



Anger

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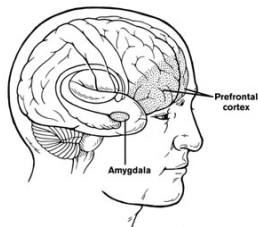
Breath as an Anchor

This is a practice you can do anywhere, anytime to break out of auto-pilot, steady the mind, recenter and refocus. Allow it to be playful.

- ▶ *See the thought*
- ▶ *Touch or linger with it*
- ▶ *Go gently back to the breath*

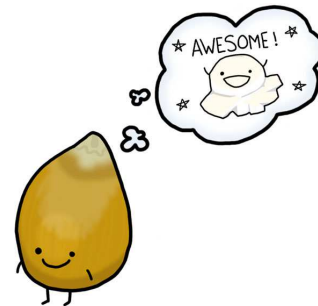
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“Putting Feelings into Words” Research Study Results



- ▶ Putting Feelings Into Words: Affect Labeling Disrupts Amygdala Activity in Response to Affective Stimuli” *Psychological Science*, pp. 421-428.

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Why Self-Compassion



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The Neuroscience of Resiliency



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What is it?

"Being aware of our own suffering with an inclination to help ourselves."



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What Comes Up for You?



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Self-Compassion Practice



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The Power of Vulnerability



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*Don't turn away. Keep your gaze on
the bandaged place. That's where the
light enters you.*

~ Rumi
13th Century Sufi Poet

It's Always Here

*Wherever you are
that's the entry point.*

~Kabir

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Who is Your Compassion Hero?



If Time Slips By?

Forgive yourself for
the time gone by
and in this
moment of
awareness **invite**
yourself to begin
again.



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How to Apply it in Life?



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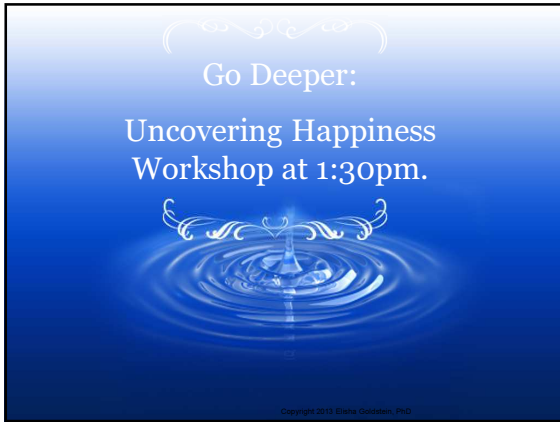
What is the Secret?

How
Did the rose
Ever open its heart
And give to this world
All its
Beauty?
It felt the encouragement of light
Against its
Being,
Otherwise,
We all remain
Too
Frightened.



from "The Gift"
Rumi (12th/13th)

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Resources

Books and Audio

- › *Uncovering Happiness: Overcoming Depression through Mindfulness and Self-Compassion*
- › *Mindfulness Meditations for the Anxious Traveler*
- › *The Now Effect: How this Moment Can Change the Rest of Your Life.*
- › *A Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Workbook*
- › *Mindful Solutions Audio Series* (Stress, Anxiety, Depression, Addiction, Work, ADHD)
- › *Mindfulness and Psychotherapy* Blog – blogs.psychcentral.com/mindfulness

Mindful Centers

- › InsightLA.org
- › Mindful Awareness Research Center (MARC): <http://marc.ucla.edu>
- › Spirit Rock, Northern California
- › Insight Meditation Society (IMS) Barre, Massachusetts
- › Center for Mindfulness at University of Massachusetts Medical School: www.umassmed.edu/efm

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