

The background features a series of concentric circles in light gray, some solid and some dashed, creating a ripple effect. A large red speech bubble shape is centered on the page, containing the main text.

Mindfulness Meditation: Understanding its Benefits for workplace wellness

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Introduction

- Mindfulness is an ancient meditation practice rooted in the teachings of the Buddha.
- “Mindfulness is awareness that arises through paying attention, on purpose, in the present moment, non-judgementally.” Kabat-Zinn.
- Today, mindfulness is practiced in a non-sectarian way to facilitate an attentional attitude of detached observation.
- It is characterized by paying attention to the present moment with openness, curiosity, and acceptance.


Introduction

- Psychologists and medical workers are using mindfulness as a therapeutic instrument and have created manualized protocols to treat numerous clinical conditions such as stress and chronic pain.
- Non-clinical practitioners are using these protocols to support their wellness.

Interventions Based on Mindfulness Meditation

Source: UCLA Mindfulness Awareness Research Center (MARC) 2015 [May 29, 2015].

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)	MBSR involves teaching of body scan to encourage open non-judgmental observation and acceptance of painful or unpleasant sensation, negative thoughts, or emotions instead of cognitively appraising them, and increasing anticipatory anxiety, avoidance, or other maladaptive patterns.
Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT)	MBCT encourages acceptant non-judgmental observation of negative thoughts and emotions instead of their cognitive appraisal triggering ruminative negative thoughts, and habitual emotional reactivity.
Mindfulness-Based Relapse Prevention (MBRP)	MBRP teaches relapse prevention skills, and non-judgmental, open and acceptant observation of cravings. It aims to decouple the negative thoughts and emotions that are associated with cravings, and relapse.
Mindfulness Training for Smoking (MTS)	MTS provides targeted training in how to apply mindfulness to specific determinants of a particular condition, for example used for smoking cessation.
Mindfulness-Oriented Recovery Enhancement (MORE)	Involves teaching neutral, open, and acceptant observation of painful sensations. It also incorporates positive psychology, and behavioral techniques directed towards neuroscientific underpinnings of addiction.

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- Individuals and corporations are investing millions of dollars to integrate mindfulness and other contemplative practices to improve workplace functioning and support optimal performance of employees.
 - Notable leaders such as LinkedIn's CEO Jeff Weiner, Google's Engineer Chade-Meng Tan ("the Jolly good fellow of Google") and one of the most influential business thinkers, Dr. Daniel Goleman are driving change in corporate culture to develop employee engagement, job satisfaction, productivity, resilience and wellness through mindfulness training.

Benefits of Mindfulness

- Empirical research in organizational psychology and management link mindfulness to better workplace functioning
- Research on human service professionals indicate that cultivating resilience and mindfulness may assist in preventing psychological distress burnout and secondary traumatic stress

Attitudes

Mindfulness mainly fosters the following attitudes:

- Attention on the present
- Compassion for oneself and others
- Detachment from Negative thoughts and emotions

Benefits of Mindfulness Meditation

- ***Mindfulness improves well-being and resilience***

Absenteeism costs \$520 per person annually and \$3,055 presenteeism annual cost per person in Japanese companies.

Benefits of Mindfulness Meditation

- ***Mindfulness increases productivity***—As Kersemaekers et al (2018) noted, mindfulness training improves productivity at work and improves the wellbeing of employees.
- When your staff is happier and feel appreciated, productivity improves.
- This productivity also comes when people are able to concentrate on one task at a time which achieves a state of flow.
- Rather than worrying about hundreds of things, employees deal with one task at hand at a time (one step at a time). And when people are concentrated, errors can be reduced and avoided.

Benefits of Mindfulness Meditation

- ***Improve your leadership skills***—mindfulness practice has helped many team leaders and managers improve their leadership skills as it trains the mind to be detached. Leaders who practice mindfulness become more aware of their own thoughts and emotions which help them make meaningful decisions based on facts not personal impulses or feelings.
- UK's Mindfulness All-Party Parliamentary Group (MAPPG) has applied mindfulness in numerous policy narratives.

Jamie, Bristow ((2019). Mindfulness in Politics and Public Policy. *Current Opinion in Psychology* (28:87-91).

Benefits of Mindfulness Meditation

- ***Improves relationships between employees and promotes better teamwork—***
- research in mindfulness (Karlin, 2018) indicate that employees who practice mindfulness work in teams and have high levels of empathy. They accept one another and work better together.

Benefits of Mindfulness Meditation

- ***Enhance creativity and innovation***—creativity in your team is more than crucial.
- This does not only imply invention of new products and services for your organization, but also creativity in problem-solving and development of more efficient and effective processes for organization.
- Byrne and Thatchenkery, 2019 indicated in their research that mindfulness training in workplace has a positive impact on employee's creativity levels as a result of the increased awareness and attention.

Benefits of Mindfulness Meditation

- ***Develop better decision-making skills***—when we are more detached and more objective, we can make better and meaningful decisions easily.
- Mindfulness reduces our tendency to carry on with something simply because we have invested in it our money and time.
- But the question is, is it worth doing?
- Mindfulness can help us investigate more deeply and evaluate these ideas and situations.
- This way, we are able to make decisions not based on bias or past experiences but with clarity.

Benefits of Mindfulness Meditation

- ***Transform the overall culture of your organisation***—mindfulness practice can transform the overall culture of the organisation from “mind full” to “mindful” organisation.
- A mindful organisation involve employees acting in ways that are mindful, open-minded, empathetic and focused.
- Mindfulness organisations also focus on what is around them and act proactively rather than on autopilot.

Conclusions

- In today's world faced with a lot of challenges including economic and social issues, organisations are forced to develop new strategies and use coping mechanisms to address distress and illnesses among employees.