

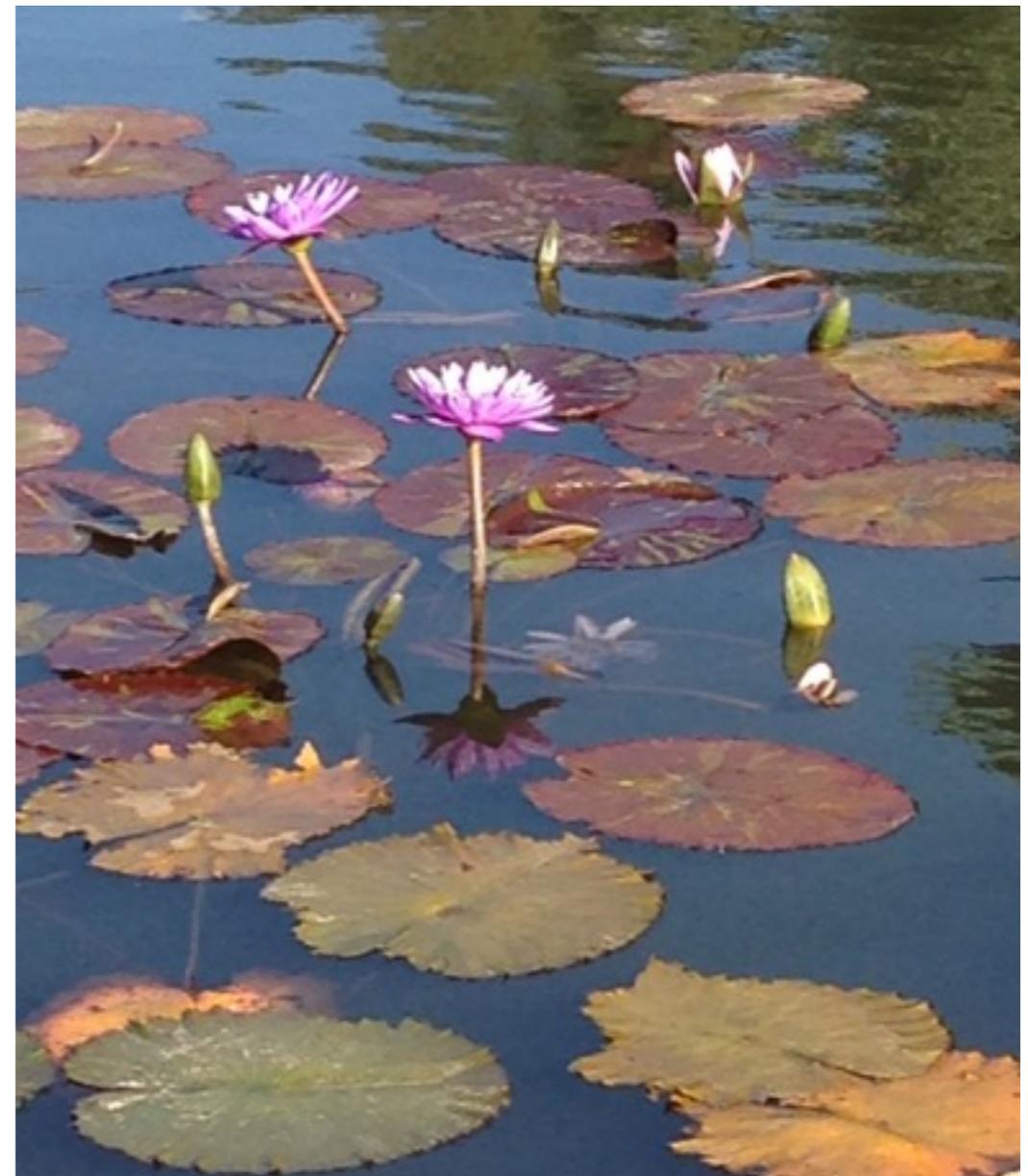


Mindfulness Meditation: A Resource For Mental Health Recovery

**NAMI Maryland Conference 2015
Presenter: Beth Terrence**

Introduction

- **Welcome**
- **Settling In Practice**
- **My Journey with Meditation**
- **Why Mindfulness Meditation?**



What is Meditation?

- **Meditation is a practice that has been found in cultures and religions all over the world for thousands of years**
- **Meditation is a means of transforming the mind and shifting our habitual patterns.**
- **Meditation practices are techniques that encourage and develop concentration, clarity, emotional positivity, and a calm way of being.**
- **There are many forms of meditation practice some of which include sitting, walking, contemplation, guided visualization and mindfulness.**
- **Today, meditation is used worldwide to support for physical, mental, emotional and spiritual well-being.**

What is Mindfulness?

- **Mindfulness simply means practicing moment to moment awareness.**
- **Mindfulness is a secular meditation practice that has its roots in the Buddhist tradition, which is focused on the training and refinement of attention and awareness, compassion and wisdom.**
- **Mindfulness has become part of the American mainstream in recent years.**
- **Mindfulness is not just a practice, but a state of being in attention to the present moment.**
- **When you're practicing mindfulness, you are observing your thoughts and feelings from a distance, without judgement, comparison or the need to understand.**
- **Mindfulness is a way to be present to life as it unfolds.**

Defining Mindfulness...

- Jon Kabat-Zinn, the founder of Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR), and one of the leading proponents of mindfulness practice, defines mindfulness as follows...

“paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally...”

- There are many ways to practice Mindfulness and it's important to explore and find tools and techniques that are supportive for each individual.
- Part of practicing Mindfulness is about being open, curious and willing to explore. The curriculum is life itself!
- Listen as Jon Kabat-Zinn Defines Mindfulness...
<https://youtu.be/wPNEmxWSNxg>

Benefits of Mindfulness

Practitioners have long know the benefits of mindfulness meditation. Now, current research shows that practicing mindfulness, even for just a few weeks, can bring a variety of physical, psychological, and social benefits. Some of the overall benefits of practicing mindfulness include:

- Reducing stress
- Decreasing anxiety and depression
- Improving self-awareness
- Boosting working memory
- Enhancing clarity and focus
- Reducing emotional reactivity
- Fostering relationship satisfaction
- Improving immune functioning
- Developing Emotional intelligence
- Enhancing feelings of well-being
- Cultivating a positive attitude
- Increasing empathy and compassion for other and self!

Sounds pretty good, doesn't it!

How Mindfulness Works

Mindfulness practice actually changes our brains! Studies reviewing MRI's of Mindfulness practitioners show:

- **An increase in the density of gray matter in the Pre-frontal Cortex, an area connected to awareness, concentration and decision-making.**
- **The brain's "fight or flight" center, the Amygdala, appears to shrink, helping to reduce our response to stress.**
- **An increase in activity in the neural networks involved in understanding the suffering of others and regulating our emotions.**
- **The connection between the amygdala and the rest of the brain gets weaker, while the connections between areas associated with attention and concentration get stronger.**

Summary of Research

Here is a brief summary of recent research from Dan Seigel, co-director of UCLA's Mindful Awareness Research Center:

- **University of New Mexico researchers found that participation in an 8-Week Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction course decreased anxiety and binge eating.**
- **Office workers who practiced MBSR for twenty minutes a day reported an average 11% reduction in perceived stress.**
- **Eight weeks of MBSR resulted in an improvement in the immune profiles of people with breast or prostate cancer, which corresponded with decreased depressive symptoms.**
- **A prison offering Vipassana meditation training for inmates found that those who completed the course showed lower levels of drug use, greater optimism, and better self-control, which could reduce recidivism.**
- **Fifth-grade girls who did a ten-week program of yoga and other mindfulness practices were more satisfied with their bodies and less preoccupied with weight.**
- **A mix of cancer patients who tried MBSR showed significant improvement in mood and reduced stress. These results were maintained at a checkup six months later.**
- **The likelihood of recurrence for patients who had experienced three or more bouts of depression was reduced by half through Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy, an offshoot of MBSR.**
- **After fifteen weeks of practicing MBSR, counseling students reported improved physical and emotional well-being, and a positive effect on their counseling skills and therapeutic relationships.**

Ways to Practice Mindfulness

- **Observe your breathing. Notice the in and out breaths.**
- **Walk mindfully.**
- **Eat mindfully.**
- **Connect with your senses. Observe what you smell, see, hear, taste or touch.**
- **Practice pausing between actions. Stop, breathe and center. Proceed mindfully as you move from one activity to another.**
- **Listen wholeheartedly. Be fully present as you listen to others and/or the sounds around you.**
- **Observe your thoughts and emotions as they arise. Simply notice.**
- **Create a formal daily Mindfulness practice.**

Simple Mindfulness Practices to Explore...

- **Sound Meditation with bells**
- **Breath practice with movement**
- **Breath practice with labeling or counting**
- **Mindful Listening**
- **Guided Mindfulness Meditation**
- **Loving-kindness & Compassion Meditation**

About Beth Terrence



Beth Terrence, LMT, CHP, CPRS has been a practitioner and facilitator in the field of Holistic Health and Wellness for over 20 years. She provides Integrative Holistic Healing Programs for Individuals, Groups and Organizations in the MD/DC area and virtually. She is a trained CCAR (Connecticut Community for Addiction Recovery) Recovery Coach and Certified PEER Recovery Specialist in Maryland. She is also a person in long-term recovery.

Beth is passionate about bringing Holistic Resources into Mental Health & Addiction Treatment and Recovery. She works with several organizations including M-ROCC (Maryland Recovery Organization Creating Communities), The Center For Mindful Awareness, an organization bringing Mindfulness Meditation to underserved populations in the Baltimore area and Heal My Voice, an international organization that helps women and girls to heal through writing and sharing their stories.

Beth will also be launching a new blog, Holistic Recovery Pathways, on 11/1/15 that will offer information on holistic resources and wellness tools to support individuals, families and communities in long-term recovery. Learn more at <http://holisticrecoverypathways.com> or www.bethterrence.com.

Contact Info:

Phone:
443-223-0848

Email:
holisticrecoverypathways@gmail.com

References

- **Benefits of Mindfulness.** <http://greatergood.berkeley.edu/topic/mindfulness/definition>
- **What is Mindfulness? Jon Kabat-Zinn.** <http://www.mindful.org/jon-kabat-zinn-video-series-on-mindful-org/>
- **What Does Mindfulness Meditation Do to Your Brain? Tom Ireland** <http://blogs.scientificamerican.com/guest-blog/what-does-mindfulness-meditation-do-to-your-brain/>
- **The Science of Mindfulness.** Dan Siegel. <http://www.mindful.org/the-science-of-mindfulness/>

Recommended Reading

- **Full Catastrophe Living by Jon Kabat-Zinn**
- **Wherever You Go, There You Are by Jon Kabat-Zinn**
- **Heal Thyself by Saki Santorelli**
- **A Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Workbook
by Bob Stahl and Elisha Goldstein**
- **The Mindful Way Through Depression: Freeing Yourself from Chronic Unhappiness by Mark Williams, John Teasdale, Zindel Segal & Jon Kabat-Zinn**
- **Buddha's Brain: The Practical Neuroscience of Happiness, Love & Wisdom by Rick Hanson**

Resource Links

American Mindfulness Research Association ~ <https://goamra.org>

Center for Mindful Awareness ~ <http://centerformindfulawareness.org>

Insight Meditation ~ <http://www.insightmeditation.org>

Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction ~ <http://www.umassmed.edu/cfm/stress-reduction/>

Mindful ~ <http://www.mindful.org>

The Greater Good Science Center ~ <http://greatergood.berkeley.edu>

UCLA Mindfulness Awareness Center ~ <http://marc.ucla.edu>