

What prevents us from being our most effective?

- **Stress** – a little stress can motivate us to take action, but too much of it can lead to distorted perspectives and an impaired ability to respond.
- **Established thought patterns** that limit creativity – an inability to think outside the box.
- **Not being in the here and now**, but letting thoughts and fantasies keep us in the past or the future.

Understanding these things intellectually does not seem to help. Reading books about them or telling yourself to 'relax' or 'be in the moment' doesn't either. However, these are skills that can be experientially trained, through the practice of mindfulness.

Mindfulness trains you to:

- see things more clearly and hence respond more effectively, with reduced stress.
- expand your awareness and ways of thinking to become more creative.
- live in the present moment – the only place where true happiness and satisfaction can be found.

What is Mindfulness?

Mindfulness is the practice of paying attention, in a nonjudgmental way, to the present moment - to what is happening within and around us right now. When we pay attention in this way, we see things more clearly and develop a greater understanding of why things are the way they are.

As we do, we begin to feel more alive, experiencing life in the exquisiteness of the present moment and begin to release the limiting forces that prevent us from accessing our powerful inner resources.

The skills of Mindfulness -- concentration, equanimity and deep relaxation -- are developed through practice, aided by good teaching and techniques that are suited to the individual. Just as anyone, regardless of aptitude or existing skill level, can become a better piano player by taking lessons and practicing, so we can all learn the fundamental life skills of Mindfulness.

Mindfulness is thousands of years old. Its benefits have been chronicled throughout the ages. Western scientific studies are just now proving what many have known for a long time - that Mindfulness is one of the most effective tools for improving one's quality of life.

What Happens as Mindfulness Grows?

We cultivate the capacity:

- to remain **calmer, focused and relaxed**, even in the midst of difficult situations.
- to respond more readily and healthily to body signals resulting in **better physical and mental health**
- to be **less judging and more accepting** of ourselves, others, and life's challenges
- to **respond more and react less**
- for increased **emotional intelligence**

People report moderate to high impact on their ability to:

- **Adapt to change**
- **Solve problems**
- **Appreciate life**
- **Make decisions**
- **Relate to others**

People also report significantly fewer:

- **stress-related physical symptoms** such as headaches, tension, sleep disturbances, and digestive problems
- **stress-related emotional experiences** such as anger, anxiety, fear, helplessness, and depression

Lou Carcasole B.Sc, M.B.A,
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A top student in his engineering class at the University of Toronto and subsequent work in the field speaks to Lou's technical and scientific foundation. He went on to consult to business and assist the CEO of the Ontario Development Corporation in improving management/union relations and helping to create a de-centralized structure for the organization.

But what really matters about Lou is that he is passionate about human development as *the* key component of organizational effectiveness. He has always wanted to know why change is so difficult; not only those changes that are imposed on us but also those we try to effect in ourselves and our surroundings.

Lou's work as a change consultant in organizations led to the painful conclusion that even cutting edge methodologies have disappointing results. "There will always be new trends in organizational development," says Lou. " But I have found that what truly and profoundly brings out the tremendous potential in individuals and effects long-term change is the ancient practice of Mindfulness."

Lou has taught Mindfulness to over one thousand people, with powerful results, as demonstrated by the data he collects and feedback from individual clients.

Who Can Benefit?

Anyone can benefit. There are no prerequisite skills needed. The only requirement is the willingness to make a strong effort. Mindfulness is not easy - it is not a quick fix. However, it is a deep and lasting fix that takes a bit of time and patience. Research results show very impressive benefits after only eight weeks.

What are the Costs?

Costs vary according to program design and other factors.

The cost to the Canadian economy alone from such problems as depression and stress related problems has been estimated to be in the billions of dollars. The cost to any organization due to health benefit costs, absenteeism, and decreased productivity and effectiveness is great. Individuals bear the cost through their suffering and diminished potential. Mindfulness has been shown to be extremely effective in reducing many of these problems and hence, their related costs.

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THE EVOLUTION OF SUCCESS

You may already be successful in your field! You can be even more successful, deriving deeper satisfaction and happiness from your work and the other areas of your life. This program will help you do just that!

Professor Richard Davidson* tells us: "Rather than thinking about qualities like happiness, [flourishing, and resilience] as traits, we should think about them as skills - not unlike motor skills, such as bicycle riding, or skiing. These are skills that can be trained."

* [Neuroscientist at the University of Wisconsin, and researcher into the effects of mindfulness on brain function and immunity]

The practice of Mindfulness is precisely about training these skills.

We've taught over 1,000 people to be more effective and happier by harnessing the power of Mindfulness.

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