



Mindfulness-Based Substance Abuse Treatment for Incarcerated Youth and Young Adults

Sam Himmelstein, Ph.D.

Outline for this Talk

- Tell you a little more about myself
- Define mindfulness
- Present conceptual map for why mindfulness is a good intervention
- Review relevant mindfulness research
- Define and discuss the relevancy and need for relational mindfulness
- Practice two mindfulness meditations
- Review sample curricula

Who am I?

- Clinician at the Alameda County Juvenile Hall
- Author
- Researcher
- Trainer



- Where my path truly started...

Who's in the room?

- Therapists?
- Probation professionals?
- Mindfulness practice?

Lion Mind Vs. Dog Mind



Mindfulness Defined

- Standard definition:

“paying attention, on purpose, in the present moment, with an attitude of nonjudgment” (Kabat-Zinn, 1994)



- Formal meditation
- Informal mindfulness
- What is the point of mindfulness and does the research suggest generally?

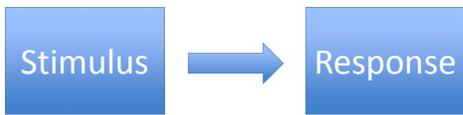
Let's practice!

- Mindfulness of the breath

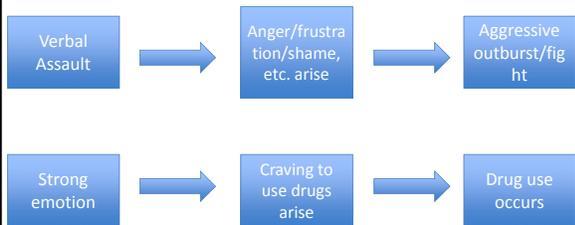


Conceptual Map

- Why mindfulness should be an option as an intervention for incarcerated youth and young adults?



Example



Conceptual Map Cont'd

"Between stimulus and response there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In that response lies our growth and our freedom." (Viktor Frankl)



Research is supporting this concept

- Quantitative: Significant **increases in self-regulation** and **decreases in stress**. **Increases in cautionary attitude towards drugs**
- Qualitative: **Increased self-regulation, decreased stress, increased overall awareness and well-being, acceptance toward mindfulness as an intervention when taught skillfully**
- Colleagues research support improved executive function

Quotes from Youth

• Self-Regulation

I don't know if you remember when I first came in here, I was hella hot [angry] ... we did the breathing, and I still felt mad, but then as I started doing more breathing, I started doing breathing in my room, just a lot of breathing, and the exercises you taught me with the stomach, the chest, those really helped ... Like if it was at a 10, it would go down to a solid five or four.

Now I think twice about something. If somebody called me something, instead of swinging, I could take back a second and think about my consequences I might get ... it [mindfulness] makes you think about, "are you sure you want to do this? Or you want to react that way?" It just helps me a lot.

Self-Regulation Cont'd

I actually did that [mindfulness exercises] today when I was told I couldn't, I wasn't gonna be in my PE class no more because of another person here who I got into it with, but I was just like, I took a few, I got upset, so I took a few breaths, and then I just talked to the staff and tried to work something out. And it works. It worked real well . . . it was just like a focus thing, it's just focusing. Like there's an easier way to focus on whatever it is I'm doing right then and there in that particular moment instead of everything else. I would use that a lot, in class and stuff.



Quotes Cont'd

- Self-Awareness

I got a lot out of it. I like, got to know myself better. More than I was, 'cause I feel like I wasn't paying attention to me for a couple of years. And now I feel like I'm aware of me and what I want and what I need, and what I want to pursue. And this has helped me a lot.

So I feel like, I'm like even free sometimes. I ain't got shit to worry about, I'm just meditating, my mind's just blank and hollow, nothing really coming in, just like the present moment shit we're always talking about. It's like that.

Potential for Reduced Relapse

I aint gonna lie. I was supposed to not come back to camp, and I was supposed to hit the blunt [marijuana], when I was in the house. 'Cause my boy, when we got back to the house, he was out there rolling a blunt. I ain't gonna lie, once I seen him in the wheelchair, I already knew I was gonna do something; drink, or something . . . I used STIC. I kinda looked at him (takes a deep breath while talking), and I took a deep breath, and just calmed down, sat down, and I was like, "damn man, it's good to see you." But at the same time I was really thinkin' about the blunt. He was like, "you gonna smoke?" I was like, "nah, I'm good." he was like, "fool, what the fuck? Since when do you say no?" I felt more me, doing me. I'm like, "nah I'm good" . . . you feel me?

- What's needed for future research?

Let's practice some more!

- The Bodyscan



Relational Mindfulness

- Relational mindfulness vs. explicit mindfulness
- Levels of mindfulness
 - Teaching explicitly
 - Philosophically
 - The process level
 - The facilitator (the self)



Relational Mindfulness Cont'd

- Level of the self
- Must have a personal practice
- Focus on the interpersonal
 - Authenticity
 - Human relationship and connection
 - How we conceptualize how change works



Relational Mindfulness

- Authenticity



Relational Mindfulness Cont'd

- Intention for Human Connection
 - Rather than an immediate solution focused approach
 - Curiosity
 - Skillful Self Disclosure (example)



Relational Mindfulness Cont'd

- Alternative Stance on Behavioral Change
- Three disclaimers
 - Okay to help if they want help
 - Must be authentic and non-manipulative
 - Can still confront high-risk behaviors
 - Example

Relational Mindfulness Summary

- Authenticity
- Intention for Human Connection
- Alternative/Radical Stance on Behavioral Change

Sample Session 3

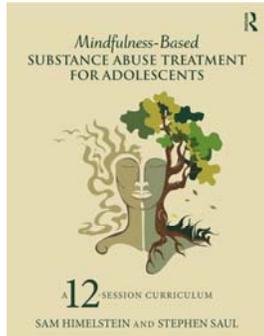
- STIC Role Play (facilitator)
- Discussion: Reaction Vs. Response
- STIC Contemplation
- STIC Role Plays (group participants)
- Mindfulness Meditation: Mindfulness of the Breath
- Mindful Check-In

Sample Session 4

- Centering Meditation: Mindfulness of the Breath
- Poem "The Perfect High"
- Mindful Check-In
- Pros and Cons of Drugs Debate
- Personal Pros and Cons
- Mindfulness Meditation: Body Scan

Interested in the full curriculum?

- Book will be published by Routledge in July 2015
- Certification training intensive August 1st and 2nd



Any Questions?



For more information about training and more, get on mailing list and/or go to:
www.centerforadolescentstudies.com
