

Mindfulness in Clinical Practice and Daily Life

John Mader, MA, LMFT

Clinical Lecture Series at UNC-CH School of Social Work

September 15, 2008

Today's Itinerary

1. **Identify specific methods of mindfulness to apply with self and clients.**
2. **Understand how DBT uses Core Mindfulness Skills to regulate emotion.**
3. **Understand how Core Mindfulness Skills work can lead to increased validation and closeness in families.**

Appreciations



- The Triangle Area DBT Group at triangleareadbtt.com
- Meggan Moorhead, EdD. Phone 919/ 286-3031
- Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) at behavioraltech.org

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Mindfulness: guiding definitions

Awareness without judgment of what is, via direct and immediate experience. *Marsha Linehan*

To be mindful means to be here, fully present, fully alive; not to be caught in forgetfulness, not to be caught in the past and the future. *Thich Nhat Hanh*

In the context of shamatha, mindfulness refers to attending continuously to a familiar object without forgetfulness or distraction. *Alan Wallace*

Awareness that emerges through paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, to things as they are. *Williams, Teasdale, Segal*

Inclusion of Mindfulness in Therapy

- Herbert Benson, 1975, used meditation to treat heart disease (decreased BP)
- APA, 1977, Study of Clinical Effectiveness of Meditation
- Jon Kabat-Zinn, 1982, Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction
- Marsha Linehan, 1991, Dialectical Behavior Therapy
- Stephen Hayes, 1994, Acceptance and Change Therapy
- Segal, Williams & Teasdale, 1995, Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy
- Martin Seligman, 1998, Positive Psychology



**MIND & LIFE
INSTITUTE**

- 2008: Investigating the Mind-Body Connection: The Science and Clinical Applications of Meditation
- 2007: Mindfulness, Compassion, and the Treatment of Depression
- 2007: Mind and Life XIV: The Universe in a Single Atom
- 2005: Mind and Life XIII: The Science and Clinical Applications of Meditation
- 2004: Mind and Life XII: Neuroplasticity
- 2003: Mind and Life XI: Investigating the Mind
- 2001: Transformations of Mind, Brain & Emotion
- 2000: Destructive Emotions

theory of neuroplasticity

-- the idea that the human brain, rather than remaining stable and unchanging after a certain point in adulthood, actually can change and develop new pathways through intentional mental practices like meditation.

Ω

"Imagine for a moment that you are deep inside a dark, cramped MRI chamber.

and then ...

The voice on the headphones you are wearing says, "now, please meditate, and wait for the pain stimulus to begin."



Lama Kathy Wesley
in 128-lead EEG Bonnet

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Shamatha Project



Alan Wallace

- Shamatha or shinay (Tib.) means "calm abiding"
- Method to enhance our capacity of for attention
- Shamatha consists of mindfulness (Tib. drenpa) with introspection (Tib. shes-bzhin)
- Results in increased stability, clarity and awareness

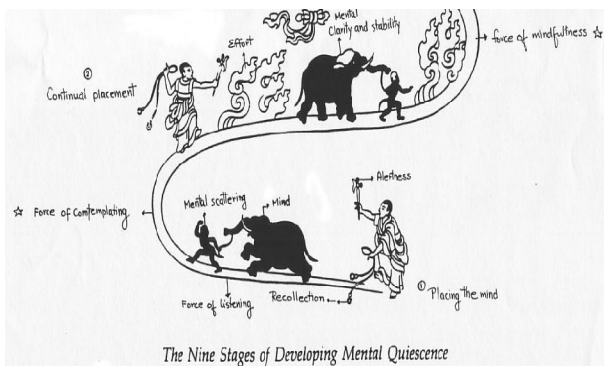
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Attention can be trained...



- Means for Cognitive, Attentional, Conative Balance
- Galileo's Telescope
- What if ...?

the first two stages of shamatha



Mindfulness: Benefits to Therapeutic Attention

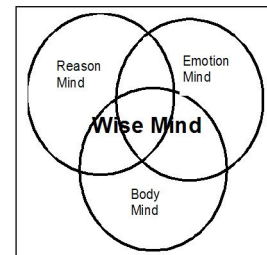
- Increased Presence
- Increased focus & concentration
- Greater clarity of perception and communication
- Strengthens skillful discerning and altering of patterns & consequences

6 Ways of Introducing Mindfulness

1. Square Breathing with Counting Breaths
2. Mindfully breathe 3x before getting up in the AM, going to sleep, or driving.
3. Count normal cycles of breathing to 21. ☺
4. Attend to the sensation of sounds for 1 min.
5. Select a daily task, such as washing dishes or brushing teeth with mindful attention.
6. Gratitude. Remembering one thing we appreciate in this moment.

Dialectical Behavior Therapy

- Origins and Purpose
- 4 Basic Assumptions
- Dialectics and Stance of Therapist
- 4 Modules



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Marsha Linehan

Randomized
Controlled Trial:
DBT vs. Community
Treatment-as-Usual
(TAU) for Chronically
Suicidal Borderline
Personality Disorder
(University of Washington)

*Linehan, et al., 1991, 1992, 1993,
1994*

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DBT < TAU

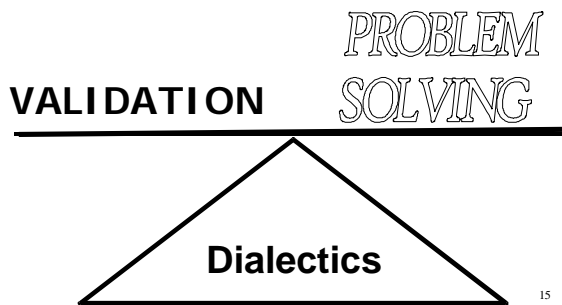
- % with suicide attempts or SH
- Number of self-harm behaviors
- medical risk of self-harm beh
- treatment dropouts
- psychiatric inpatient days
- anger

DBT > TAU

- social adjustment
- global adjustment

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*Gaining Balance via
Core DBT Strategies*



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DBT & Therapy-Interfering Behaviors of the Therapist

- Behaviors that Unbalance the Therapy
- Disrespectful Behaviors
- Mindlessness and Reactivity

Imbalance of Therapist Extreme Stances

- Extreme Change or Acceptance
- Extreme Flexibility or Rigidity-Stability
- Extreme Nurturing or Withholding
- Extreme Vulnerability or Irreverence

In DBT, Both Client and Therapist Practice Mindfulness

- **Observing:** just notices
- **Describing:** puts words on experience
- **Participating:** enters life directly

- **Nonjudgmentally:** neither good nor bad
- **One-mindfully:** attention in the moment
- **Effectively:** focusing on what works

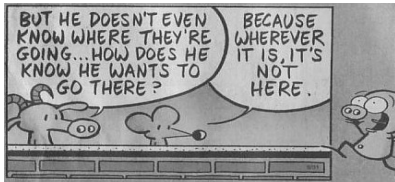
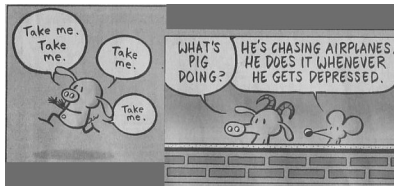
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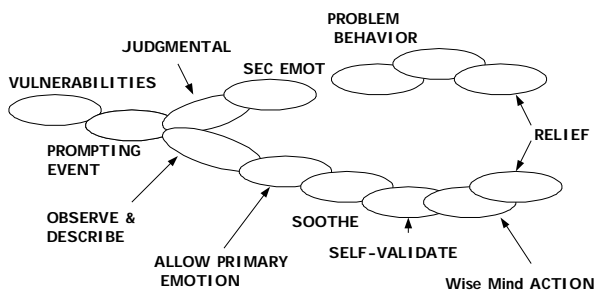


PEARLS BEFORE SWINE! by Stephan Pastis

DBT & Emotion Regulation

- Mindfulness of Current Emotion
 - Refrain from Inappropriate Behavior
- Self-Soothe Physical Agitation
- Redirect Attention
- Take Positive Action toward Goal
 - Opposite Action to Emotion

Example: Applying Mindfulness in the Chain of Primary Target



DBT & Distress Tolerance

- Radical Acceptance leads to empathy, compassion, staying present
- Does not validate maladaptive behavior
- Acceptance often precedes Behavior Change

Application of Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) Within Families



- Family Skills Training started by Perry Hoffman of Cornell.
- Research on application with couples by Alan Fruzzetti at UN-Reno



... more effectively use dialectical frameworks and DBT skills with emotionally sensitive clients and their families.

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DBT Family Skills Training Group

- 4 Basic Assumptions
- Validation, Validation, Validation
- 4 Modules
- Family Education Findings

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In DBT Family Skills, All Practice Mindfulness

Mindfulness of Emotions

Mindfulness of Wise Mind

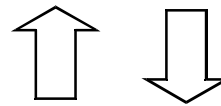
Mindfulness of Validation

Mindfulness of Needs

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Biosocial Theory of Emotional Sensitivity

Biological Dysfunction in the Emotion Regulation System



**Invalidating
Environment**

Pervasive Emotion Dysregulation

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Cycle of Emotion Dysregulation

Emotional Vulnerability

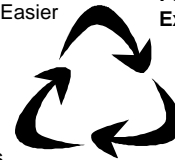


**Inability to
Modulate Emotions**

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Cycle of Validation

leads to... Partner is Easier
to Understand



**Mindfully
Validating your
Partner's
Experience**

leads to... Partner's
Accurate
Expression ↑

leads to... ↓ of
Partner's
Neg. Emotion

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Eight Ways We Can Validate

(from A. Fruzzetti, 2004)

1. Mindful Listening
2. Reflecting and Acknowledging
3. Clarifying and Summarizing
4. Placing problem behavior in a larger context
5. Expressing Equality and Respect
6. Normalizing
7. Matching Vulnerability
8. Responding in Action

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closing dedication...

May all be free from suffering
and the causes of suffering.

May all have happiness and
peace of mind.