

Community College Faculty Self-Care Tips

To Avoid Burnout by Forming Meaningful Connections

Beatriz Gonzalez, Sheela Vemu, Manisha Ranade & Kusali Gamage

Our Journey



Adjusting to Pandemic

Community College Faculty
found their jobs more difficult



Feeling of Isolation & Lack of Social Interactions



Creating a Community

Reached out to other
Community College faculty to
share & build supportive
connections



Well-Being Mindset

Creation of a focus group with
a solutions-based approach

Sheela Vemu

Assistant Professor at Waubensee
Community College

Courses: Biology, Microbiology,
Anatomy & Physiology

Hobbies: Storytelling, Travel &
Contemplative Practices

Interesting Fact: I served in the Youth
National Cadet Corps (India) for three
years.





Beatriz Gonzalez

Professor, Santa Fe College

Courses: Biology

Hobbies: Walking, kayaking, watching international shows

Interesting Fact: I fenced competitively and was part of the Puerto Rican national team some years ago



Manisha Ranade

Assistant Professor, Santa Fe College

Courses: Algebra (College, Intermediate), Contemporary Math, Physics

Hobbies: Dance, yoga, art

Interesting Fact: Trekked above 10,000 ft on 3 continents, yet living on the flattest land now

Kusali Gamage

Adjunct Professor at Austin Community
College

Courses: Geology

Hobbies: Baking, walking, yoga

Interesting Fact: Have sailed across the
Pacific ocean from Singapore to Hawaii



“Mindful and Mindless Activity”

Name one of each activity that you have recently engaged in - a mindful one and a mindless one

THINK PAIR SHARE

MINDFULNESS AND ITS BENEFITS



- Reduce stress
- Remove distracting negative talk
- Improve health and wellbeing
- Rewire the brain



TIMELINE OF MINDFULNESS

- Age-old practice in Hinduism & Buddhism; Meditation also in most other religions, primarily in monasteries
- 20th century Spiritual teachers, thinkers – transcendental meditation, self-realization, Yoga
- Mind-body connection in medicine – Alternative medicine
- MBSR: Mindfulness based stress reduction
- Apps to go...



FROM YOGA THERAPY

*ORIGIN OF DISEASE-PSYCHOSOMATIC, STRESSFUL LIFESTYLE BASED AILMENTS

Mind is restless - busy with thoughts, emotions, worries

Disturbance in Prana - disturbed breath rate, sleep, heart rate up, digestion disturbed

Affects Body Level - lower immunity, weakest organ gets disease

ROLE OF STRESS

Stress = response to a demanding situation

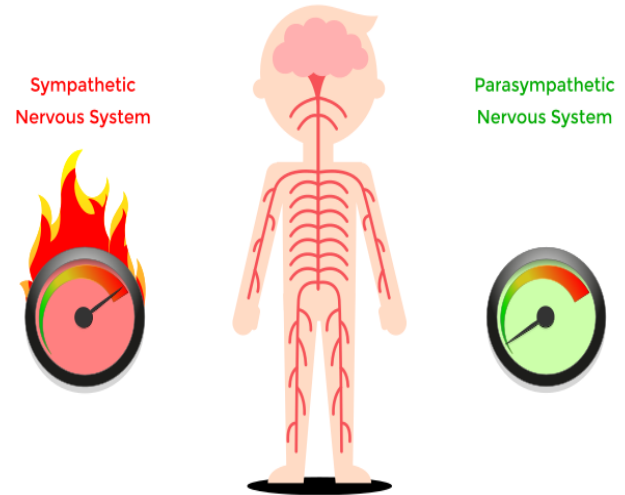
Sympathetic nervous system

Fight or flight

Parasympathetic nervous system

Rest & digest

Autonomic Nervous System (ANS)



SOME MYTHS ABOUT MINDFULNESS

- It is a religious practice
- It gives peace and bliss
- It is time consuming



PRACTICE

GENTLE STRETCHES TO RELIEVE TENSION

SITTING PRACTICE

CULTIVATING DAILY PRACTICE



- Mindful eating one meal – what, how, when and thank the cook
- Sitting practice 10 - 20 minutes
- Observe the mind, wait before reacting
- Practice gratitude for 3 things

REFLECTIONS

- Less reactive
- Less stressed
- More patient



- Found more time
- Boundary between home & work life



- Felt calm
- Taking more time to think before responding



- Feeling intermittent joy many times
- Less reactive even in thoughts



REFERENCE MATERIALS

- Eckhart Tolle, “The Power of Now”
- Thich Nhat Hanh, “Present Moment Wonderful Moment: Mindfulness Verses for Daily Living” or any of his other books or podcasts
- Canvas course in Commons, “Mindfulness for success” – modules can be copied into any class on Canvas LMS
- <https://www.uclahealth.org/marc/> repository of guided meditations
- <https://mindfulness.ufl.edu/index.php/research> research information on benefits

REFERENCE ARTICLES ON MINDFULNESS

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- Zastavker, Y. V., & Venkatesh, M. J. (2020, October). Democratizing Engineering Education Through Contemplative and Mindfulness Practices. In 2020 IEEE Frontiers in Education Conference (FIE) (pp. 1-4). IEEE.

QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS

come on... come **ON**... inner peace....

