



THE SAFE AND MINDFUL MOVEMENT OF YOUNG REFUGEES AND MIGRANT INTO YOUTH GROUP

WHAT IS MINDFULNESS?



THE ORIGIN OF MINDFULNESS

- Ancient Origins, moderns application;
- Buddhism Roots but not only (Hinduism, Taoism, Christian, Muslim and Jewish)
- According to Robert Sharf, “the Buddhist term translated into English as ‘mindfulness’ originates in the Pali term **sati** and in its Sanskrit counterpart **smṛti**. Smṛti originally meant ‘**to remember**’, ‘**to recollect**’, ‘**to bear in mind**’. ...

[S]ati is an **awareness of things in relation to things**, and hence an awareness of their relative value. Sati is what causes the practitioner of yoga to ‘remember’ that any feeling he may experience exists in relation to a whole variety or world of feelings that may be skillful or unskillful, with faults or faultless, relatively inferior or refined, dark or pure.”



DEFINITIONS

- **“Paying attention; On purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally.”** (Jonh Kabat-Zinn, 2005)
- “Mindfulness is the psychological process of bringing one’s attention to the internal and external experiences occurring in the present moment, which can be developed through the practice of meditation and other training.” (Jonh Kabat-Zinn, 2013)
- Mindfulness is a state of awareness and a practice (Jennings, P. (2016); it involves attending to the present moment and cultivating an attitude of curiosity, openness and acceptance of one’s experience.(Bishop,2004) It is a secular (non-religious) practice and is backed by compelling scientific evidence.(Zenner, 2014)
- “A practice of learning to focus attention and awareness on moment-by-moment experience with an attitude of curiosity, openness, and acceptance.” (Marchand, 2012, p.234)



WHAT MINDFULNESS IS NOT?

a Religion

a medical treatment

just meditation

stress reduction, although it can significantly reduce stress



VIDEO AND RESOURCES

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HmEo6RI4Wvs> What is mindfulness – Kabat-Zinn



MINDFULNESS APPLICATION

- individual practice
- Children and schools
https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=22&v=Woqifou5luk&feature=emb_logo
- group practices (prison <https://liberationprisonproject.wordpress.com/menu/gallery/>)
- migration



MINDFULNESS AND MIGRATION

“Mindfulness is seen as compatible with migrant cultures and beliefs” (Hend Saab, bicultural psychologist, St. George Community Mental Health)

- Part of this was because mindfulness techniques were able to circumvent the stigma attached to mental health interventions and were seen to be compatible with migrant cultures and beliefs.
- Hend Saab says “mindfulness is proving to be a valuable tool in treating trauma experienced by some migrant and refugee groups”.
- The practice of mindfulness involves getting patients to become self-aware and attentive to the thoughts and experiences they are having in the **present moment**. These can be developed through meditation, breathing and other techniques.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=32&v=HA6iYjUK-tk&feature=emb_title

OUT OF OUR MIND. ART THERAPY AND MINDFULNESS WITH REFUGEES, POLITICAL VIOLENCE AND TRAUMA. THE ARTS IN PSYCHOTHERAPY, VOLUME 49, JULY 2016 BY KALMANOWITZ DEBRA, DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK AND SOCIAL ADMINISTRATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG.

OBJECTIVE: Understand how art therapy and mindfulness meditation could be integrated in the context of different cultures and political violence and in work with asylum seekers.

METHOD: ***Inhabited Studio** is a short-term **group program** that uses a holistic approach. 12 participants from 7 countries (aged 18-45) in 4 full-days art therapy and mindfulness workshop in Hong Kong; Participants made art, learned mindfulness meditation, and were assigned homework during the five days between the two workshops, which concluded with a focus group to identify cultural and religious factors that helped them cope with adversity

RESULTS: All had multiple traumatic events. Art therapy combined with mindfulness provided a process-oriented approach, engaging participants in the present (holistic).

“The combination of art therapy and mindfulness helped participants cope day to day and allowed participants to begin to get a sense of not only who they were and what they had lived through, but potentially who they could become” (Kalmanowitz, 2016)

“The presence of the group allowed for the individuals to be seen, witnessed and heard (even without words) and in so doing served to share and normalize behavior and expression”

THE AUTHORS OUTLINE NINE FEATURES FOUND IN THE WORK AT INHABITED STUDIO THAT MAY BE USED AS BROADER GUIDES FOR PROVIDING SUPPORT TO REFUGEES:

Safety: sense of emotional safety

Doing Vs Thinking: Experiential Approach

Changing our relationship to our thoughts and feelings: art externalizes our thoughts and feelings.

Time: present moment

Making Meaning: both making sense of trauma and of one's current experiences.



Flexibility: creative process can facilitate mental flexibility, mindfulness can make easier return to an emotional equilibrium.

Catharsis: “Art therapy can facilitate the expression of feelings that are associated with the trauma, suffering, and coping, such as anger, rage, vulnerability, depression, frustration or joy and pleasure. This can lead to a sense of relief as well as reveal that which was previously unconscious,”

Increased Self-awareness and self-knowledge: the process of making multiple pieces of art can help: “I have many mixed feelings although I am looking towards a better future. So the next painting I tried to sort out the colours to help me next time to be more focused... to know exactly what I want.”

Coping with loss: “Art therapy and mindfulness together allowed for the expression of loss and also to begin a process of the formation of a new identity... It took strength and imagination to create a new identity and the open structure, along with the non-judgemental attitude of the Studio provided the potential.”



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