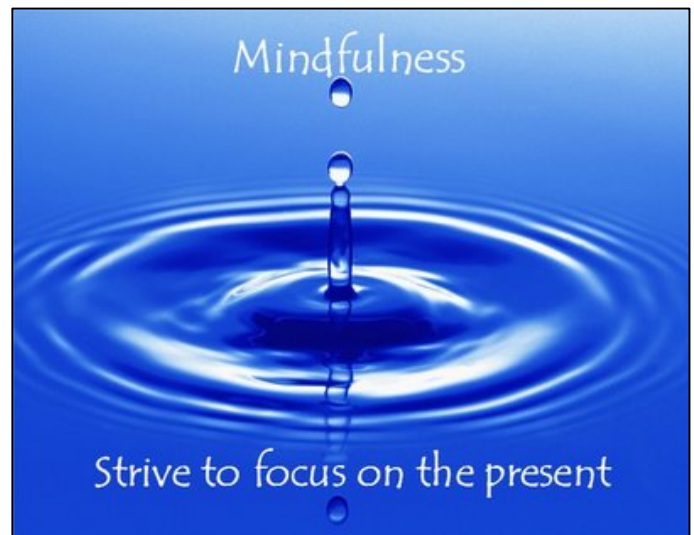
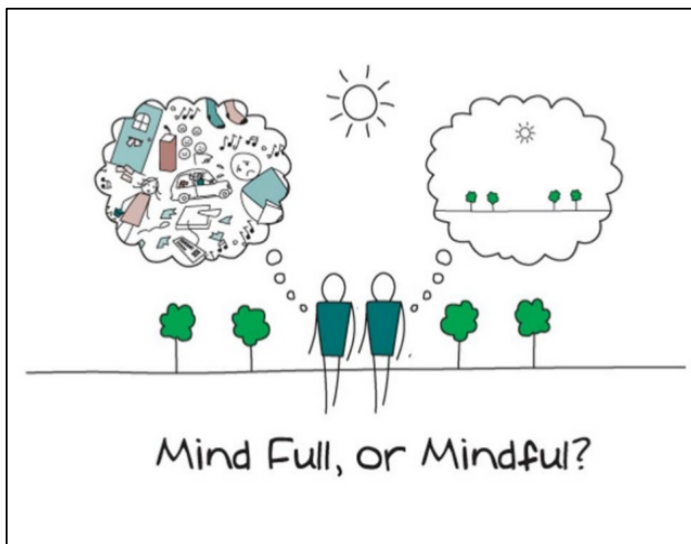


Practice the Art of Mindfulness

This project plan is intended to create a web-based platform which allows people to create individualized and customizable small movie clips to practice the art of mindfulness. Before diving in to the project, it is important to understand the meaning of **Mindfulness**. In simplest terms, it is a psychological process which requires you to train your mind to focus on the present without dwelling about past events or getting overwhelmed and anxious about future plans. Mindfulness is an innate human quality to just become aware of our present surroundings, actions, thoughts, fleeting emotions. But this innate quality needs to be nurtured everyday so that it can be used our day-to-day living. Through the use of the web-based platform, users can indulge in this practice on a daily basis which will be helpful for them to utilize these skills in everyday life.



Need for this Concept:

Mindfulness is not a new concept or technique. In fact, it was very familiar to the ancient civilizations who have thrived by using this practice in their daily lives. But somehow due to the ongoing hustle-bustle of life, eventually people have forgotten about it. They are always rushing from one thing to another that they have forgotten the importance of living one moment at a time. When people hear about Mindfulness, Meditations, Yoga and the like, they first reaction is that it's too hard or they don't have the time for it. But the reality is that our minds are already primed to be mindful, we just have to re-train our mind to bring mindfulness in our day-to-day activities.

Mindfulness is a simple concept which means that we have to focus our attention on the present moment, without making any judgements about the past and future. It is based on the Buddhist philosophy that the past can't be changed and there is no way to control your future. But, present is something that every individual can control by awakening our awareness and consciousness to the experiences, emotions and

thoughts passing our minds in that moment. When one starts focusing just on the present, that is when that person can be said that he/she is being mindful.

The recent surveys conducted in the past few years by the American Psychological Association have shown that on a global level, stress levels are increasing each year, with about four in five adults reported that they have at least one physical symptom of stress. The reports also found that mental health-related symptoms of stress are on the rise with increasing self-reports of depression, anxiety, anger, irritability, and sadness due to stress. It also leads to poor eating habits, disturbed sleeping patterns, chronic illness and frustration (Segal, Williams, & Teasdale, 2002)

Over 30 years of research now solidly supports the claim that practicing mindfulness can significantly lower our levels of stress, depression, and anxiety. Brain imaging studies have shown that continued mindfulness practice can alter the way distressing emotions are processed in the brain. There's growing research showing that when by training our brain to be mindful, we're actually remodeling the physical structure of our brain. Additional studies have proven that mindfulness meditation can lower blood pressure, strengthen the body's immune system, and improve the quality of sleep, all of which impact, or are impacted by, our levels of stress (Salmon, Lush, Jablonski & Sephton, 2009).

Therefore, it is the need of the hour that we change our approach of life by shifting our perception and focusing our attention just on the present moment to be able to live it fully. The most important benefit that one can reap from practicing this skill is that it will help de-clutter your mind and rejuvenate your inner being. The aim of this product is to facilitate this process for people so that they can create a conducive environment for themselves to practice mindfulness meditation depending on their individual needs and requirements.

Target Audience:

This web-based platform can be used for people of any age group looking for resources to create an individualized and customizable solution to create a conducive environment for practicing mindfulness. It is for people who want to understand the basic human tendency of how to be fully present in the moment, irrespective of their demographic profile, religion, culture, age, profession, etc.

The only technical skills required to use this platform should be the basics of navigating a website. Other than that, no prior technical experience is needed since the platform will provide step-by-step instructions to guide the process. Therefore, there is no need for the users to stress about anything.

Learning Goals:

- Help people experience the benefits of practicing the art of Mindfulness
- Provide resources to people so that they can create their individualized and customizable small movie clips to practice this technique

- Empower them an important skill to help de-stress themselves and improve their quality of life.

Concept Description:

This web-based platform has been created with an intention to allow users to create an individualized and conducive environment to practice the art of Mindfulness. Although there are many ready-made videos and tools available to practice this technique, but the drawback with them is that one type of clip may not be as effective for all kinds of people since everybody has different sets of personality traits. Hence, through this platform, users can customize and create small video clips depending on their preferences, moods, requirements, thoughts, conflicts, struggles, stressors, etc. The concept of the product can be described by using the following **persona**:

Ms. A, a 23-year-old female working in a bank has a very hectic job and has been experiencing a couple of physical symptoms of chronic stress along with mental fatigue. Due to her work commitments and financial responsibilities, she is not able to plan very frequent vacations which is making her feel all the more miserable. One fine day, she is searching on the internet on ways to de-stress herself. There she comes across an article on how the practice of mindfulness can help to reduce her stress levels. She gets intrigued by the term and starts reading more about the practice. Then she comes across this web-based platform where she will be able to create individualized and customizable small video clips that can help her getting started with the Mindfulness practice. She follows the link and goes through these steps:

Step 1: Select pictures or sceneries that you would like to see during the mindfulness practice.

Step 2: Pick a song or audio sounds that you would like to hear during the mindfulness practice.

Step 3: Click on the icon “Create My Video”. This will automatically connect with Adobe Premiere where users can edit the video by re-arranging and re-ordering the images, modifying the bass, treble and other audio settings to suit your needs and requirements.

The users needn't have any prior experience with video editing to use this function; there will be pop-ups that will guide the process and make it easier for anybody to create a small video clip and practice mindfulness meditation.

Step 4: Download the video clip and enjoy the experience of a mesmerizing journey.

Please visit the following link to see the storyboards for the above described concept of the web-based platform: https://drive.google.com/a/nyu.edu/file/d/0B-GAeGIJb_WucVVDxBd6em1fTnc/view?usp=sharing

Learning Theories that support this Lesson Plan:

➤ **Universal Design for Learning**

This theory focuses on designing experiences that fits the learning needs of all due to which I think this is a highly suitable and relevant theory for this lesson design. The platform is adaptive enough the suit the needs

and requirements of individual users which will allow them to customize their learning experience in accordance with their preferences.

➤ **Generative Learning Theory**

This is based on the idea that learners can actively integrate new ideas into their memory to enhance their learning experience. In essence, the users create individualized experience for themselves by creating small video clips that they would like to use for their Mindfulness practice.

➤ **Affective Theory**

This theory is highly relevant for this project plan since the users can choose images and audio sound according to their individual moods and not follow the specific, standard format. This will allow users to create an individualized experience for themselves depending on the status of their emotional health.

My Video Clip:

Please click on the following link to view the video created by me in Adobe Premiere:

https://drive.google.com/a/nyu.edu/file/d/0B-GAeGIJb_WuUGxGa25HajdHT0U/view?usp=sharing

Process Documentation:

- I got inspired to create a project on this topic because I am working on creating a Virtual Reality game for Cognitive Skills Training for Mindfulness for my DMDL Thesis project. I intend to use this as a base for the ideation phase of my project.
- I created a persona and then designed a prototype for the web-based platform that I would like to like to build in the future.
- Thereafter, I created a sample video using Adobe Premiere that the users can create through the use of this web-based platform. At the moment, the images and sound track used in the storyboards and sample video has been downloaded from internet, but eventually this platform will be able to let users add their own media files or use the in-built files.
- If I had more time, then I would have considered the UX design factors for creating the platform and iterated more on its design.

References:

- Segal ZV, Williams JMG, Teasdale JD. Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy for Depression: A New Approach to Preventing Relapse. Guilford Press; New York: 2002.
- Salmon P, Lush E, Jablonski M, Sephton SE. Yoga and mindfulness: Clinical aspects of an ancient mind/body practice. Cognitive and Behavioral Practice. 2009;16:59–72.
- <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mindfulness>
- <https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/mindfulness/definition>
- <https://www.mindful.org/meditation/mindfulness-getting-started/>

- <https://www.psychologytoday.com/basics/mindfulness>
- <https://www.mindful.org/what-is-mindfulness/>
- <https://hbr.org/2015/01/mindfulness-can-literally-change-your-brain>
- <http://leftbrainbuddha.com/3-reasons-need-mindfulness/>

Note:

In case there is any problem with the above two links, then please use the following to access the Google Drive folder where both the storyboards and video clip are added:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0B-GAeGIJb_WuSWdQdy15M0JVQWM?usp=sharing