

PSY 513 - MINDFULNESS, MEDITATION, & PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH (1/4 credit)

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www.cornellcollege.edu/chaplain-and-spiritual-life/index.shtml

This 7 week course is offered twice a year—once each semester.

Required learning sessions meet once a week on Mondays over two consecutive blocks.

Students take either the 1st semester or the 2nd semester class.

Given the cumulative learning of this class, registered students must be present at Class Session 1 in order to remain in the course. Any waitlisted students will take the place of registered students not present on Day 1. Attendance at all class sessions—as well as keeping up with the daily 10 min. practice, practice logs, etc. (see below)—is required. Anyone on a waitlist for this course should attend the first class in order to potentially fill an opening.

This class integrates the Duke University based 4 Week Koru Mindfulness Basic Program. If you have a smart phone/ipad, you will need to download the free Koru Mindfulness app *prior* to class. Please bring your *silenced* device with you to the first class.

Here is a summary of when classes meet:

First Semester ¼ credit class:

Mondays 3:30-4:45p.m.

Blocks 1 – 2: Aug. 27th – Oct. 8th, 2018

(The first seven consecutive Monday afternoons of the school year)

Location: Durham, Thomas Commons

Second Semester ¼ credit class:

Mondays 3:30 – 4:45 p.m.

Blocks 5 – 6: Jan 14th – Feb. 25th, 2019

(The first seven consecutive Monday afternoons of second semester)

Location: Durham, Thomas Commons

COURSE DESCRIPTION& REQUIREMENTS:

This class involves the learning and practice of meditation as well as other forms of mindfulness. The seven required once a week class sessions are an hour and fifteen minutes in length and occur over two consecutive terms. On non-class days throughout this seven week course, students maintain a personal mindfulness meditation practice lasting a minimum of 10 minutes a day; in the final weeks of the class, at least 2 of the individual meditation practice sessions will be expanded to 15 to 20 minutes. Students also keep a brief daily log. In the brief log they record their meditation practice experience, their experience of mindfully doing an

everyday activity such as walking to class, and also a gratitude. Students read one easily accessible book on the application of mindfulness meditation for everyday life. Students will also read one journal article on the psychological and/or psycho-physical benefits of meditation and mindfulness. During each class check-in reflection time, students will share a meaningful quotation, concept, or data drawn from the reading and explain why they find it personally relevant. There are no quizzes, tests, papers, or prerequisites.

Given limited space and need for mindfulness training among the student body, please only register for this class if you are seriously committing to the daily practice, practice logs, other assignments named above, and the course learning objectives (see below).

READING ASSIGNMENTS: Complete the assigned reading prior to class so that you will understand the material presented in class and can contribute to the discussion.

REQUIRED READING: *The Mindful Twenty-Something: Life skills to handle stress...& everything else* by Holly B. Rogers, MD.

This book is available in the Cornell bookstore and elsewhere. An ebook version of the text is available. There are 3 copies of this book on reserve in the library, however this is one of those books you will likely want to have as part of your personal library.

NOTE: Though chock full of wisdom, this book is not dense or heavy reading.

Approach the reading with the intention of personal enrichment. Underscore/note what speaks to you personally. Remember you will need to share a meaningful quote each week during class check in including why you find it personally relevant.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- Knowledge of mindfulness stress reduction from a theory and evidence based perspective.
- Knowledge of how meditation and related mindfulness techniques reduce negative thought patterns, improve the ability to self-regulate difficult emotions, and promote relaxation.
- General understanding of the mind-body connection, the purpose or usefulness of the stress reaction within the body, its psychophysical impact, and the innate human ability to counter stress through techniques which elicit a psychophysical relaxation response.
- Exposure to a variety of evidence based, stress reducing meditation and mindfulness practices.
- Application of meditation, as well as other mindfulness skills and strategies, toward well being amid every day life.

- Engagement in seated meditation or one of the other “formal” mindfulness practice skills daily in order to strengthen present-moment, nonjudgmental awareness; cultivate the ability to elicit the relaxation response, thus deriving psycho-physical benefits; and increase skillfulness with, compassion for, and acceptance of, difficult thoughts and emotions.
- Ability to distinguish between active acceptance of distress vs. giving in or emotional resignation (i.e., staying in hopelessness or resentment). Increase understanding of how this distinction is relevant for personal insight, healing, and transformation.
- Establish an "informal" ongoing awareness practice which occurs amid everyday life activities and encounters in order to promote and maintain the ability to correct maladaptive thinking, and make room for potentially healthier thought patterns and choices.

Sample of what class looks like on a given week:

MONDAY class session:	TUESDAY – SUNDAY individual practice, reading, & reflecting:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Opening meditation. 2. Sharing. 3. Brief lecture and instruction. 4. Skill training. 5. Recap what we learned. 6. Closing meditation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Belly Breathing for 10 min. minimum. • In daily log write a sentence re: your experience/observations with: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The formal meditation practice. 2. Doing a daily life activity mindfully (i.e. brushing your teeth). 3. A time when you caught yourself on auto-pilot with an unpleasant thought while in the midst of daily life activities and interactions. Then applied the mindfulness, compassion, and other skills we are cultivating through our daily meditation practice. • Record a gratitude in your log each day. • Read for personal insight from <i>Mindful Twenty Something</i>. Select a quote which spoke to you personally to share during class check-in.

CLASS SCHEDULE (subject to adjustments)

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic/Activity</u>
Fall Class / 2 nd Sem Class	
Aug. 27 / Jan. 14 (M)	Overview of class and the benefits of mindfulness and meditation practice. Skill building basics. Activity: Intro. to Belly Breathing, Dynamic Breathing, and Body Scan Meditations.
Sept. 3 / Jan. 21 (M)	More on the benefits of mindfulness and meditation. Skill building: Relating to monkey mind & difficult thoughts. Reducing suffering. Activity: Gatha, Walking, and/or Tai-chi Meditations.
	<u>Homework due:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Practice 10 minutes a day using 1 or more of taught so far.• At start of class, turn in Daily Practice Log.• Read Parts 1 & 2 of <i>Mindful Twenty-Something</i> (pp. 10-27; 41-71). Share a meaningful quote from this reading & why it spoke to you. <p>[Guided versions of practices used during the first four weeks of class are available on the KORU Mindfulness app and at KORUMindfulness.org. They are also described throughout the book].</p>
Sept. 10 / Jan. 28 (M)	Brief intro to neuroplasticity, mindfulness & the brain; relating to aversions; reducing suffering, as well as what acceptance does and doesn't mean. Skill building: Labeling thoughts. Activity: Guided Imagery Meditation.
	<u>Homework due:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Practice 10 min. daily using 1 or more exercises taught so far.• At start of class, turn in Daily Practice Log.• Read Part 3 of <i>Mindful Twenty-Something</i> (pp. 83-107). Share a meaningful quote from this reading & why it spoke to you.
Sept. 17 / Feb. 4 (M)	The skill of happiness. Psychophysiology/mind-body connection including fight-or-flight response and ability to elicit the relaxation response. Skill building: Labeling feelings; increased ability to self-regulate and work with difficult emotions. Activity: Progressive muscle relaxation technique; mindful eating; labeling feelings.

Note: Guided progressive muscle relaxation technique with belly breathing is available via CQE recording through Moodle.

Homework due:

- Practice 10 min. a day using 1 or more exercises taught so far.
- At start of class, turn in Daily Practice Log.
- Read Part 4 of *Mindful Twenty-Something* (pp. 121-154). Share a meaningful quote from this reading & why it spoke to you.

Sept. 24 / Feb. 11 (M) More pranayama (breath work); Energy based practices; and Heart Focused Meditation (evidence based research on the psychological, physical, and psycho-social benefits of heart-focused meditation. Uses of this practice with sports teams, corporations, emergency responders, etc.). Skill building: Greater compassion, sense of oneness, and “coherence.”

Activities:

Nadi Shodana (alternate nostril breathing);
Simple Heart-focused meditation;
Heart-focused Compassion Meditation;
Qigong meditation (Lower Dantian).
If time: Energy medicine movement practice (i.e. “9 hearts”).

Homework due:

- Practice 10 min. a day using 1 or more exercises taught so far.
- At start of class, turn in Daily Practice Log.
- Read Part 5, Chp. 18 of *Mindful Twenty-Something* (pp.165-181). Share a meaningful quote from this reading & why it spoke to you.

Oct. 1 / Feb. 18 (M) YOGA & YOGA NIDRA

Homework due:

- Practice 10 min. a day using 1 or more exercises taught so far.
- At start of class, turn in Daily Practice Log.
- Start looking for what *you will present next week* for your 2-3 min. presentation (no more—no less). You will present a summary of science informed research which has been done by others on the use of meditation and/or mindfulness for psychological, psycho-physical, or psycho-social wellness. See Moodle for possible topics and web resources.

Your presentation next week will include these 3 components:

1. Focus of the research study (include researcher, date, and very brief summary of how it was conducted).
2. What was the finding?
3. How might this research finding be relevant for you/others?

PREP FOR TODAY'S YOGA & YOGA NIDRA CLASS:

1. Wear unrestrictive, yoga friendly clothes you can move in with ease. Dress in layers (ie. Sweatshirt. You will likely get cold).
2. Before class get a yoga mat, bolster & blanket from fitness room.
3. Have a personal goal (just one) you want to achieve. Be able to summarize it in a short sentence or phrase (this is private—just for you to know but you will need this for today's Yoga Nidra practice to plant like a seed within the subconscious).

Oct. 8 / Feb. 25 (M)

FOCUS: 1. Student 2-3 min. presentations on scientific research related to meditation and mindfulness.

2. Activity: Compassion meditation and 1 or more “energy medicine” based mindfulness practices (i.e. qigong).

3. Sustaining your practice and mindful living & closing.

Homework due:

- Practice 10-20 min. a day using one of the methods learned thus far in class.
- Turn in your daily log.
- Present your 2-3 min summary in the round (do NOT exceed time limit).

ONGOING PROGRAMS TO SUPPORT YOUR PRACTICE:

**These programs can count toward your daily practice.
Experience support and the power of group practice!**

MEDITATION & MINDFULNESS Fridays (except Block Breaks) 11:15 – noon in Allee Chapel.

YOGA: A breath and energy focused practice. Tuesdays (1 hr) @ 3:20 p.m. in Shaw. Wednesdays (30 min) @ 12:15 p.m. in Shaw. Arrive 5-10 min early to acquire a mat, bolster, and blanket from the fitness room.

ATTENDANCE POLICY & GRADING:

This ¼ credit adjunct class results in either a pass or fail grade based upon the student's active engagement in class and completion on time of the assignments.

In order to receive a "pass" for this class, students must:

- attend *all* seven learning sessions,
- *show up to class on time (late arrivals negatively impact the classes' opening meditation practice),*
- keep up with the daily mindfulness practices
- turning in the brief journal entries *on time,*
- present a 2-3 minute summary of science-based research on mindfulness, and
- actively participate in class including discussion of readings and practice experience.

Unexpected absences require documentation from a health care provider or—if due to a class trip—provided an email from that instructor as evidence prior to our Psy 513 session. Students who miss class without this documented evidence , or, who fail to meet the expectations listed above are encourage to remain in the class and do the daily exercises and reading, but will NOT receive ¼ credit.

Academic honesty: *Cornell College expects all members of the Cornell community to act with academic integrity. An important aspect of academic integrity is respecting the work of others. A student is expected to explicitly acknowledge ideas, claims, observations, or data of others, unless generally known. When a piece of work is submitted for credit, a student is asserting that the submission is her or his work unless there is a citation of a specific source. If there is no appropriate acknowledgement of sources, whether intended or not, this may constitute a violation of the College's requirement for honesty in academic work and may be treated as a case of academic dishonesty. The procedures regarding how the College deals with cases of academic dishonesty appear in The Compass, our student handbook, under the heading "Academic Policies – Honesty in Academic Work."*

Students with Disabilities: *Students needing accommodations for learning disabilities must provide documentation from a professional qualified to diagnose learning disabilities. See cornellcollege.edu/disabilities/documentation/index.shtml Students requesting services may schedule a meeting with the disabilities services coordinator as early as possible to discuss their needs and develop an individualized accommodation plan. Ideally, this meeting would take place well before the start of classes.*

Students must notify the instructor before, or within, the first three days of the term of any accommodations needed for the duration of the course.

Classroom behavior: Anyone demonstrating behavior that is disrespectful of other students or the instructor, or whose behavior is disruptive to the teaching enterprise, will be removed from the class and not permitted to continue to be enrolled in the class. These individuals will be immediately and permanently dropped from the class.

In addition, there are several behaviors that will absolutely not be tolerated in class:

- EATING (do not bring food to class; all food must be consumed outside of the classroom. Water bottle is permitted.);
- CRAFTS (your hands should be busy taking notes or resting in an appropriate posture for meditation or other assigned mindfulness practice.);
- CELL PHONES or any other personal electronic devices (e.g., iPods) with the exception of learning how to sync your KORU app to the instructor's email for submitting practice logs. Otherwise, BEFORE THE START OF CLASS MAKE SURE YOUR CELL PHONE IS TURNED OFF AND IN YOUR BAG/BACKPACK (not on silent mode).
- NO LAPTOP computers may be used during this class (no email checking, web surfing, FB, gaming, etc.). Note taking in this class is minimal. Invest in a pen and notebook or journal.