

Work-Life Balance



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Wikipedia:

"Work-life balance is a concept including proper prioritizing between "work" (career and ambition) and "lifestyle" (health, pleasure, leisure, family and spiritual development/meditation)."



Top 10 Impediments to Academic Achievement

According to the American College Health Association (ACHA), students reported the following factors affected their individual academic performance. Please note: 9 of the 10 factors are mental health and/or coping skills related, and areas where Student Counseling Services can help.

<u>Factors</u>	<u>Percentage of Students Affected</u>
Stress	30.6%
Anxiety	24.2%
Sleep Trouble	19.7%
Depression	15.9%
Cold / Flu /Sore Throat	14.6%
Work	13.0%
Concern for Troubled Friend or Family Member	10.3%
Extracurricular Activities	9.7%
Internet/Computer Games	9.6%
Relationship Difficulties	9.1%

Today's workshop



- Pillars of a balanced life style
 - Health (sleeping, eating, exercising)
 - Social life (friends, family)
 - Stress-relieving practices (e.g., meditation and yoga)
- Group discussion, Q&A

Take-away message



- Healthy food, sleep, exercise, nature, social connections, meditation and yoga...
 - = more productive and creative work & happier and healthier life!

My invitation to you: Just try it! Be your own experiment!

Confidentiality!



- **What you can share** with others after this workshop
 - Anything that I said
 - Anything that you learned
 - Your own experience
- **What you cannot share** with others after this workshop
 - Anything anyone else said
- Important to create safe container here



Disclaimer!



- I am not an expert in anything that we will talk about today
- Not my area of research
- Based on my experiences and practices
- You have to find out what works for you
- We are here together as human beings
(and not the roles we play at work)

My journey



- As a college student...meditation
- Moving to the US...personal growth
- Trying to run a marathon...stretching/Yoga
- As a teacher...work-life balance
- Pre-diabetes blood sugar...nutrition
- Students' break downs...share
- To be continued...



How about you?



- What is challenging in your life?
- What is helpful for you in dealing with these challenges?

We are all Physicists!



- (Some) Important traits of a Physicist and researcher:
 - Curiosity
 - Openness
 - Observant
 - Reflection
 - Commitment
 - Discipline
 - Patience
 - Persistence
- Also important for meditation, personal growth and finding a healthy work-life balance

As researchers...



- ...we study everything on the outside.
- But who studies the researcher?
- Meditation: “the science of the inner”

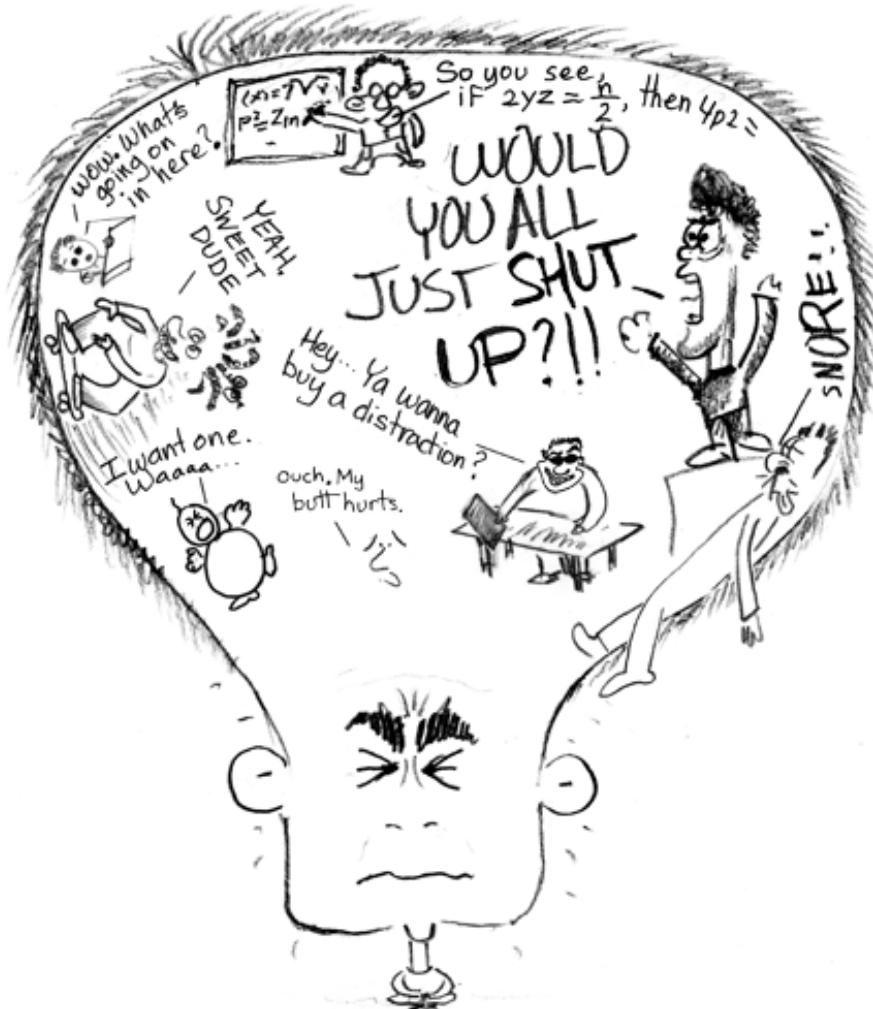
Meditation



- Meditation: a state of deep peace that occurs when the mind is calm and silent, a state of no-mind



Often, in reality...



What you practice grows stronger



- Are you practicing meditation or judgement & frustration?

Mindfulness



- Mindfulness: paying attention with loving kindness, practicing awareness in a non-judgemental way



Meditation & Mindfulness



- Many different techniques!
- E.g., silent sitting
- Guided meditations
- Watching or counting the breath
- Walking meditation
- Active meditations (e.g. first dancing or shaking or jumping, then silent sitting)
- Body scan
- ...
- Everything can become a meditation (washing dishes, driving car, exercising etc.)!

Myths about Meditation



- You can't meditate because you think too much.



Myths about Meditation



- You can't meditate because you don't have time.



Myths about Meditation



- Meditation has to be religious or spiritual.



Myths about Meditation



- You must sit in an uncomfortable cross-legged position in order to meditate.



Myths about Meditation



- Meditation takes years to learn.





- Thousands of research studies show that mindfulness works!
- Mind:
 - Increases mental strength & focus
 - Increases memory retention & recall
 - Better cognitive skills & creative thinking
 - Better decision making & problem solving
 - Better information processing
 - Helps ignore distractions
 - Helps manage ADHD



- Thousands of research studies show that mindfulness works!
- Emotional Well-being:
 - Lessens worry, anxiety & impulsivity
 - Lessens stress, fear, loneliness & depression
 - Enhances self-esteem & self-acceptance
 - Improves resilience against pain & adversity
 - Increases optimism, relaxation & adversity
 - Helps prevent emotional eating & smoking
 - Helps develop positive social connections
 - Improves your mood & emotional intelligence



- Thousands of research studies show that mindfulness works!
- Healthier Body:
 - Improves immune system & energy level
 - Improves breathing & heart rates
 - Helps sleep better
 - Reduces blood pressure
 - More longevity
 - Plus many other benefits



- Yoga is designed to
 - raise level of consciousness through natural effects of yoga postures
 - harmonize body, mind, and soul
- Yoga includes:
 - *Asana* (yoga postures)
 - *Pranayama* (breathing and energy-control techniques)
 - Meditation
 - Applied yoga philosophy
- Emphasis on relaxation and adaptation
- Rather a “Work-in” than a Work-out





- Benefits of yoga:
 - Increases flexibility, muscle strength and tone
 - Improves respiration, energy and vitality
 - Helps maintaining a balanced metabolism
 - Helps with weight reduction
 - Can lessen chronic pain such as lower back pain, arthritis, headaches and carpal tunnel syndrome
 - Can lower blood pressure and reduce insomnia
 - Reduces stress

Pillars of a balanced life style



- Health:
 - Sleep
 - Exercise
 - Nutrition

Pillars of a balanced life style



- Sleep:
- Improves learning & problem-solving skills
- Helps pay attention, make decisions & be creative
- Strengthens immune system
- **Recommended range for adults (age 18-65): 7–9 hours**

Pillars of a balanced life style



- Sleep deficiency:
- Increases risk of heart disease, kidney disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, stroke, obesity
- Has negative effects on emotions
- Can lead to microsleep – brief moments of sleep when you are normally awake
- Harms driving abilities as much or more than being drunk

Pillars of a balanced life style



- Exercise:
- Improves muscular & cardiorespiratory fitness
- Improves bone health
- Reduces risk of high blood pressure, stroke, type-2 diabetes and some forms of cancer
- Helps prevent & treat mental health problems such as anxiety, depression & dementia
- Improves mood by stimulating production of endorphins
- **Recommended 30 min/day**
- E.g. jogging, walking briskly, bicycling, swimming, taking the stairs, yardwork, housework...

Pillars of a balanced life style



- Food:
- [www.berkeleywellness.com/healthy-eating/food/slideshow/
14-keys-healthy-diet](http://www.berkeleywellness.com/healthy-eating/food/slideshow/14-keys-healthy-diet)
- Careful: fish has toxins like mercury that accumulate in bigger fish
- Also: dairy not a good source of calcium
- In addition: buy local and organic, e.g. farmers market
- Drink a lot of water!
- Benefits of a healthy diet very similar to all those mentioned before

Pillars of a balanced life style



- Social:
 - Family
 - Friends
- Humans are social creatures: “We are wired for connection.”
- Connection through vulnerability...
- Social connection important for mental health, improves mood by keeping the serotonin levels balanced; also keeps mind active
- Closely related to well-being and personal happiness
- Find your tribe



- Benefits of spending more time outside:
 - Improved short-term memory
 - Restored mental energy
 - Stress relief
 - Better vision
 - Improved concentration
 - Sharper thinking & creativity
 - Immune system boost
 - Improved mental health



Many other possibilities



- Singing or playing a musical instrument
- Dancing
- Tai Chi or QiGong
- Massage
- ...
- You can also combine these pillars – e.g. go for a hike in nature with your friends (= exercise + nature + social)
- Find out what works for you!
- Maybe you need more time alone!
- **But try to limit time spent online...**

What is your relationship to your cell phone?



- How much time do you spent online or on your cell phone per day?
- What is the longest you have ever gone without using your cell phone?
- Do you spent more time online than originally planned?
- Do you put the screen first and neglect yourself and other people?
- Do you check your cell phone at night or fall asleep while still online?
- How many push notifications/messages/emails do you get per day?
- Do you text while you walk/ride-your-bike/drive?
- Do you eat while on your cell phone?
- What is your preferred form of communication?
- Is your life negatively affected by spending too much time on a screen?

What is your relationship to your cell phone?



“Your life is what you pay attention to. If you want to spend it on video games or on Twitter, that is your business. But it should be a conscious choice.”

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/23/business/cell-phone-addiction.html>

What about work?



- Find something you are passionate about, or that brings joy and/or meaning to your life
- Think about ways to work more effectively
- Work as a team – increases creativity
- If you work, work (and don't surf online)
- Don't procrastinate
- Take “healthy” breaks (move body, get fresh air, drink water)
- You are most productive when working 40 hours a week (and not 50-60 or more...)
- Learn to say no
- Learn time management

Take-away message



- Healthy food, sleep, exercise, nature, social connections, meditation and yoga...
 - = more productive and creative work & happier and healthier life!

My invitation to you: Just try it! Be your own experiment!



Patient: Doctor,
I don't feel well and
I'm not sure why.

David Avocado Wolfe

Doctor: I want you to meditate for 20 minutes, twice a day, exercise for at least 30 minutes a day, avoid processed foods, eat plenty of organic fruit and veg, spend more time in nature and less indoors, stop worrying about things you can't control and ditch your TV. Come back in 3 weeks.

Challenges



- Even if we are aware of what nourishes us, we often do not make room for that in our daily lives. Why not? What is keeping us?
 - (Bad) Habits
 - Convenience/easy life style
 - Going for short term gratification
 - Social setting/expectations
 - Culture/upbringing
 - Lack of role models
 - Rebellion
 - Unconscious beliefs: “I have to do XYZ in order to be loved.” “I feel like belonging when I am stressed out.” “It seems egocentric if I nourish myself and put myself before others.” “I am young and invincible.” “If I am not stressed out it means I am not working enough.”





Challenges & Solutions





- Take responsibility for your life
- Choose your battle, start with something small that is reasonable and that you can commit yourself to
- Don't beat yourself up if you "fail", just try again
- If you are stuck, ask for help

IT takes
Courage
TO SAY YES TO
REST AND Play
IN A CULTURE WHERE EXHAUSTION
IS SEEN AS A STATUS SYMBOL.

- BRENE BROWN

Resources



- See website:
- <https://web.calpoly.edu/~vbennert/workshop/>



Discussion/Q&A



-
- Questions/Comments/Feedback?

Feedback



- Please take a minute ***now*** to complete anonymous survey:
- <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2JM3FJ7>