Permeating Presence: Examining the Effects of Mindfulness-Trained Supervisors on Employee Performance

Pearl Marquez

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PERMEATING PRESENCE: EXAMINING THE EFFECTS OF MINDFULNESS-TRAINED SUPERVISORS ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE

A Thesis/Capstone Project
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment for Graduation with Honors Distinction and the Degree of Bachelor of Arts

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MAY 2018
EFFECTS OF MINDFUL SUPERVISORS ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE

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# Table of Contents

Abstract ............................................................................................................................................. 5-6

Introduction ........................................................................................................................................ 7-9

Research Question .......................................................................................................................... 9

Review of Related Literature ........................................................................................................... 10-16

Benefits of Mindfulness .................................................................................................................. 10-13

Attention .......................................................................................................................................... 10-12

Stress .............................................................................................................................................. 12-13

Mindfulness Based Interventions in the Workplace ......................................................................... 13-17

Additional Thoughts & Critiques .................................................................................................... 17-19

Method ............................................................................................................................................ 19-22

Participants ..................................................................................................................................... 20

Data Collection Materials .............................................................................................................. 21-22

Results ........................................................................................................................................... 23-25

Mindfulness Measures .................................................................................................................. 23-24

Job Performance Measures ........................................................................................................... 24-25

General Discussion ......................................................................................................................... 25-27

Future Directions ............................................................................................................................ 26-27

References ...................................................................................................................................... 28-31

IRB Application ............................................................................................................................... 32-65

Appendix A – Recruitment Script ................................................................................................. 37

Appendix B – Consent form for Supervisors .................................................................................. 38-39
Appendix C – Consent form for selected employees .......................................................... 40-41
Appendix D – Debriefing Statement .............................................................................. 42-43
Appendix E – Mindfulness Attention Awareness Scale ................................................. 44-45
Appendix F – Overall Performance Scale for Supervisors ............................................ 46
Appendix G – Overall Performance Scale for Employees .............................................. 47
Appendix H – Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction Outline ......................................... 48-56
  Appendix I – Pleasant Charts Document (Session 2) .................................................. 57
  Appendix J – Lying down yoga sequence (Session 3) .................................................. 58-61
  Appendix K – Unpleasant Chart for (Session 3) .......................................................... 62
  Appendix L – Midway Assessment (Session 3) ............................................................. 63
  Appendix M – Standing Yoga Sequence (Session 4) ..................................................... 64
  Appendix N – Stress Response Cycle (Session 4) ......................................................... 65
  Appendix O – Difficult Communications Calendar (Session 5) ....................................... 66
Abstract

Mindfulness is a process that uses sustained attention (Bishop et al., 2004) to be aware of the surrounding environment (Langer & Moldoveanu, 2000) while holding a non-judgmental orientation towards one’s self and others (Bergomi et al., 2012). Mindfulness Based Interventions (MBIs) teach skills through breathing techniques to increase mindfulness. MBIs are becoming of interest to organizations due to the possibility of increasing job performance amongst employees (Shonin et al., 2014). MBIs have also been used to demonstrate the effects of trained mindfulness on intrapersonal relationships; however, these possible effects on interpersonal relationships have not been examined in an occupational setting. This present study assessed the effects of mindfulness-trained supervisors from a four-year university on the performance of their employees. Supervisors received a low-dose 6-week Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) program. Supervisors were asked to randomly select three employees they directly oversaw, with one supervisor only directly overseeing two. Employee performance was assessed by both supervisors and employees through a self-report scale (Scotter & Motowidlo, 1996) during the first week of the program, the final week of the program, and a week following the program’s end. Supervisors were also given mindfulness measures (Mindfulness Attention Awareness Scale; Brown & Ryan 2003) to identify changes in mindfulness throughout the program. There was a (non-significant) linear trend in employee performance, with performance increasing steadily across the three time-points. However, the evaluation patterns varied between employees and employers. Supervisors rated employee job performance best one-week post intervention while employees saw the greatest benefit during the final week of the program. Thus,
MBSR training is a potentially useful way to improve interpersonal relationships in an occupational setting in addition to improving job performance.
Introduction

Mindfulness is a topic that has traveled from Eastern Buddhist philosophy to Western society. Mindfulness has recently become a topic of interest to researchers in light of empirical studies demonstrating its positive impacts on stress (Mackenzie, Poulin, & Carlson, 2006; Taylor & Millear, 2015). The results of the research have been clear but defining the construct itself has proven difficult. Langer and Moldoveanu (2000) discussed different dimensions that comprise mindfulness; their primary dimension focuses on creating new distinctions from the surrounding environment. This dimension involves one being in the present moment while noticing novel details whether it be the feeling of temperature on one’s skin or the brightness of the sky. This definition of mindfulness is simple, but one that proves difficult to measure. Bishop and colleagues (2004) go beyond the definition proposed by Langer and Moldoveanu (2000); they conceptualized a two-component model of mindfulness including self-regulation and orientation to experience. Self-regulation is defined as a meta-cognitive process including sustained attention and orientation to experience, or “a sense of curiosity, experiential openness, and acceptance” (Bishop et al., 2013. p. 233). At face value, the two-component model also seems simple, but each component contains multiple dimensions that further define mindfulness as a cognitive process involving a handful of skills such as attention and openness (Bishop et al., 2004).

Mindfulness is a process that uses sustained attention (Bishop et al., 2004) to be aware of the surrounding environment (Langer & Moldoveanu, 2000) while holding an orientation that is non-judgmental to one’s self and others (Bergomi et al., 2012). Therefore, mindfulness is a meta-cognitive system (Bishop et al. 2004) that requires the
reflection of one’s own experiences with an open mind (Bergomi et al., 2012) in addition to being observant and aware (Langer & Moldoveanu, 2000). Mindfulness has become the foundation of different trainings that provide resources on sharpening dimensions of the construct such as present-moment orientation and awareness. Trainings of this nature are called Mindfulness Based Interventions (MBIs).

Researchers have examined the effects MBIs have on participants from an intrapersonal perspective (Jo et al., 2015; Leroy, Anselel, Dimitrove, & Sels, 2013; Semple, 2010; Shonin et al., 2014; Zolniercyz-Zerda, Sanderson, & Bedynska, 2016); however, the effects of trained mindfulness have yet to be examined in interpersonal relationships. A key interpersonal relationship within the workplace is that between supervisors and employees. Supervisors communicate goals and direction to employees that influences efficiency of employees. Since this relationship proves crucial in many work settings, organizations look to incorporate trainings that can create an efficient relationship. Mindfulness is a possible technique in improving the functioning of leaders and their relationship among employees, consequently increasing job performance.

In this study, I am interested in exploring how training supervisors in mindfulness through the implementation of a Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction Program (MBSR) affects their subordinate’s job performance. The MBSR program is a MBI utilized among clinicians that incorporates discussions on mindfulness integrated through different meditation practices (Zolniercyz-Zerda et al., 2016). Important aspects of the workplace such as work engagement, or how invested an individual is with their work, (Leroy et al., 2013) and job performance (Shonin et al., 2014) have shown improvement in previous implementations of MBIs. While these results are positive, the overall literature does not
examine whether trained in mindfulness in supervisors affect subordinates’ work engagement and job performance. The reviewed literature additionally does not examine generally how individuals who participate in mindfulness training affect others. Due to the positive results of performance among individuals trained in mindfulness (Shonin et al., 2014), it may be predicted that a more mindful leader elicits better job performance.

Research Question

Due to how heavily employees consider the supervisor in job satisfaction (Rad & Yarmohammadian, 2006) and how mindfulness has improved work engagement (Leroy et al., 2013) and job performance (Shonin et al., 2014), supervisors trained in mindfulness could not only influence job satisfaction but elicit higher work engagement and improved job performance. Consequently, the research question and hypothesis for this study is:

RQ1: What is the relationship between mindfulness-trained supervisors and job performance amongst their employees?

H1: Employees of those who receive the MBSR will show increased job performance ratings

By exploring the relationship between supervisor and employee, this study proceeds to fill the gap of literature discussing mindful interpersonal relationships. The supervisors-and-employee relationships serves as a vehicle many organizations utilize to communicate crucial information from one source to another. Strengthening this relationship would be useful in creating clearer communication between the two and perhaps better performance, which would benefit entire organizations. Furthermore, positive results from this study could encourage organizations to offer mindfulness training to their supervisors.
Review of Related Literature

Successful organizations provide techniques and processes to ensure that their employees are performing efficiently. Specifically, the relationship between supervisors and employees is a key element in employee performance and thus can be examined as a likely place where organizations can deliver techniques for improving employee performance. Supervision type is an important factor in job satisfaction of employees compared to other factors like salaries, benefits, and work conditions (Rad & Yarmohammadian, 2006). Thus, it would seem crucial to make sure that supervisors are being mindful of their relationships with their employees due to their impact on employees work satisfaction. Consequently, employees may feel more committed to the job and exert extra effort into their work. Yet, the reviewed literature has not thoroughly examined interpersonal relationships pertaining to mindfulness in the workplace, specifically between supervisor and employee. Since performance improves with more mindfulness (Shonin et al., 2014), a mindful leader’s may influence employees to perform productively. Therefore, mindfulness is a component that organizations should consider implementing in leadership development and employee training. More specifically, organizations should consider implementing MBIs to deliver mindfulness techniques (i.e., meditation) to employees, supervisors and subordinates alike.

Benefits of Mindfulness

Before explaining the essence of what a MBI entails, it is crucial to understand the value of having mindfulness.

Attention. Since mindfulness includes using sustained attention, those withholding higher levels of mindfulness would expect to have higher attention spans.
Research has demonstrated that mindfulness improves attention (Jo et al., 2015), but attempts to relate mindfulness to professional performance have yielded results that are more ambiguous. Students enrolled in an MBA program were participants of a study that examined if self-reported mindfulness on the Mindfulness Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS) was related to academic performance (Shao & Skarlicki, 2009). The results showed that mindfulness neither hindered nor improved performance. In contrast, a group of undergraduate students who completed a two-week meditation class saw an improvement in performance on the GRE reading comprehension test (Mrazek, Franklin, Phillips, Baird, & Schooler, 2013); those who completed the meditation class also performed better on a working memory task (letter span). Meditation techniques may then further skills on the academic level.

Researchers have examined the relationship between mindfulness and attention through the practice of meditation (e.g., Quickel, Johnson, & David, 2014; Schmertz, Anderson, & Robins, 2008). Participants in these studies with either no meditation experience (Quickel et al., 2014) or little to no experience (Schmertz et al., 2008) filled out mindfulness surveys and then performed attention-focused tasks. Quickel et al. (2014) used various self-report surveys to ensure validity of measurement, which included the Freiburg Mindfulness Inventory, the MAAS, the Revised Cognitive and Affective Mindfulness Scale (CAMS-R), the Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire and the Toronto Mindfulness Scale. Schmertz et al. (2008) only used three: the MAAS, the Kentucky Inventory of Mindfulness Skills, and the CAMS-R. Both studies found that individuals who reported higher levels of mindfulness had either lapses of attention (Schmertz et al., 2008) or lower levels of attention (Quickel et al., 2014). A complication
in these studies is that despite the valid surveys used, participants may not be fully aware of the meaning of mindfulness.

Furthermore, both researchers were measuring dispositional or trait mindfulness (Quickel et al., 2014; Schmertz et al., 2014). An individual who is naturally mindful may not actually be aware of what mindfulness entails. Meditation practice addresses the concern of validly measuring mindfulness as well as demonstrating what mindfulness includes. Attention levels have shown to increase with meditation practice. Among a group of long-term meditators and non-meditators, meditators showed less errors on the Attention Network Test (Jo et al., 2015). It appears that skills like attention increase through the practice of meditation, which could be attributed to MBIs. Attention is strengthened in a MBI through breathing techniques and mindfulness meditations where the focus remains on the present moment. Ultimately, meditation addresses the concern of attention in addition to measuring mindfulness operationally.

**Stress.** Attention is a useful skill to enhance, but situations may arise when an employee may feel personally stressed about work (Taylor & Millear, 2015). Furthermore, if stress is not addressed properly, it could result in burnout. Stress is a physiological response to stimuli that involves the release of cortisol. When stressed, an individual’s immune system shuts down due to the body allocating its resources towards the stress. Furthermore, a stressed individual is more likely to get sick. Organizations lose a potential amount of workdays to sick days attributed to stress. Mindfulness serves as way to handle those stressful moments. Taylor and Millear (2015) looked to identify if mindfulness could be a potential technique to mitigate stress among workers in Australia. More specifically, they investigated whether each of the five facets from the FFMQ
(Observing, Describing, Acting with Awareness, Nonjudging, and Nonreactivity) predicted burnout. After gathering employed participants through social media and personal invitations, participants were asked to complete the FFMQ as well as to answer questions revolving around workplace resources and demands, and burnout. The results showed that each facet of the FFMQ related to lower amounts of burnout. Overall, mindfulness partially predicted components of burnout such as loss of professional efficacy, cynicism, and emotional exhaustion (Taylor & Millear, 2015). Studies such as this illustrates that organizations could lessen the number of workdays lost to work-related stress through the means of mindfulness. If workers high in mindfulness identify that stress is present, they can take steps to avoid burnout (Taylor & Millear, 2015). Consequently, their work efficiency can then see improvement since work related stress dissipates through mindful thinking.

**Mindfulness Based Interventions in the Workplace**

As mentioned earlier, mindfulness practices have been shown to enhance attention. Semple (2010) conducted a study that involved implementing a mindfulness meditation training, a relaxation group, and a control group to examine if attention could improve with mindfulness training. After being involved in the program for four weeks, participants engaged in a signal detection task called the Continuous Performance Test. Participants were required to press a button when they saw the target (letter X) and a red button when they saw non-targets (Semple 2010). Those who participated in the mindfulness training performed better than those in the relaxation groups and control groups. Semple’s (2010) meditation training is a prime example of a MBI.
Jon Kabat-Zinn’s (2000) Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) is a well-known MBI. Other MBIs model themselves around the MBSR due to its popularity and positive results. Leroy et al. (2013) modeled an MBI after the MBSR to determine if a positive relationship exists between mindfulness and work engagement. Authentic functioning, or the ability to manage one’s self in accords with how one feels, was a third variable measured to examine if it mediated the relationship between mindfulness and work engagement. The ability to manage one’s self means that a person can regulate feelings that may be inappropriate for the workplace.

The program involved an eight-week commitment that included weekly three-hour sessions. Voluntary participants recruited from surrounding businesses learned meditation techniques such as mindful body scan, mindful yoga, and mindful breathing meditation during the weekly sessions. Instructors also encouraged types of informal mindfulness practices including mindful conversations that encouraged participants to be present and attentive in conversations outside of the training. After the eight-week period, results showed that participants’ experienced higher mindfulness according to the MAAS, as well as increased authentic functioning, which mediated work engagement. Through increased authentic functioning, participants experienced enhanced work engagement measured through a three-component scale focused on vigor, dedication, and absorption. Those participants higher in mindfulness are more likely to be actively engaged in their work environment, which leads to better performance (Leroy et al., 2013).

The effects of mindfulness in the workplace have gone beyond work engagement and job performance to general well-being. A randomized control study conducted in the
UK modeled a MBI after the MBSR to discover if it could decrease stress among middle managers (Zolniercyz-Zerda, et al., 2016). A certified MBSR trainer instructed a group of participants gathered from companies over an eight-week period. Various meditation techniques were explained (sitting meditation, body scanning, and mindful bodywork such as stretching to bring awareness to the body) and then practiced during the weekly 180-minute sessions. Daily homework consisted of guided meditations in addition to practicing meditation 20 minutes, six days a week. Middle managers who finished the MBSR program noted a decrease in their sick days and perceived stress (Zolniercyz-Zerda et al., 2016). Participants also recorded an increase in self-esteem and well-being. In turn, less stress lowers the allostatic load, which means the body is no longer utilizing all of its resources to tackle stress. Ultimately, through employees practicing meditation, organizations will see less sick days that would have cost them.

The Meditation Awareness Training (MAT), another type of MBI, allows trainees to adopt their own meditation practice with the help of additional supplies like guided meditations throughout an eight-week program (Shonin et al., 2014). If it does not seem like eight-weeks is long enough, participants are required to attend seven out of eight 90-minute sessions held in those eight weeks. Despite the heavy time commitment, the benefits are notable. Going through a program oriented to develop one’s own practice creates autonomy and participants may feel more motivated to keep pursuing mindfulness practices.

A MAT was implemented with a randomized control group, male and female middle management employees to identify the effects of meditation training on job performance and work-related well-being. Participants in the MAT saw strong increases
of work related well-being and job satisfaction, with decreases in psychological distress. The employer rated job performance also improved for those participating in the MAT (Shonin et al., 2014) in comparison to a control group who learned the same material but did not practice meditation. A follow up three months later using a Stress Indicator tool to measure stress and the Role-Based Performance scale to measure job performance concluded that participants’ gains in work-related well-being and performance were maintained (Shonin, et al., 2014). The interventions demonstrate that trained mindfulness can improve job skills among participants.

The implementation of MBIs in the workplace is also a way to address the problem of stress among employees. Malarkey, Jarjoura, and Klatt (2012) created a low-dose MBI for faculty and staff at The Ohio State University to see if a MBI could lower levels of stress and inflammation. Researchers adjusted their MBI to have weekly 30-minute meetings along with daily 20-minute practice with the use of pre-recorded meditations. The shortened meetings were to compensate for the longer weekly 180-minute sessions found in the MBSR. Those participating did not show significant stress reduction in their cortisol levels, but recorded higher levels of mindfulness on their surveys (Malarkey et al., 2012). Yet, nurses and nurse aides experienced a reduction in stress after participating in a brief two-week MBI. The MBI included only four 30-minute group sessions that contained exercises and homework revolving around activities like mindful eating and stretching (Mackenzie et al., 2006). The results may differ due to differences in work setting. Nurses have tedious work schedules that require them to work prolonged shifts that may have developed a deeper motivation to alleviate any possible work stress. Adjusting the MBSR’s time could preclude participants from
experiencing the full benefits despite the fact that adjusting the time constraint to ensure that working hours are not lost is a cost-efficient idea. Although the study on nurses suggest short is best, results show that implementing a full course MBSR implies ample benefits. A previous study used an 8-week MBSR course with full-length weekly sessions (Zolniercyz-Zerda et al., 2016) saw a significant decrease in stress. The elimination of workdays lost to work-related stress counteracts the few hours lost for training.

Additional Thoughts and Critiques

Beyond employee well-being, employees’ job performance benefits when they have mindful leaders. Participants recruited by university students have especially seen an increase in performance when their immediate supervisors have higher reported levels of mindfulness on the MAAS (Reb, Narayanan, & Chaturvedi, 2012). However, the supervisors did not receive mindfulness training; mindfulness was primarily measured through self-report. The positive results of this study illuminate the benefits that organizations could experience when leader roles are more mindful. These results contrast compared to that of the study including MBA students (Shao & Skarlicki, 2009). MBA students face a different environment than supervisor and employees. MBA students may not put emphasis on interpersonal relationships since their primary goal to get a degree does not rely on that. However, supervisors who are more mindful could benefit. They interact with their employees often in attempts to inspire, guide, delegate, etc. If they are mindful, they may see more benefit than compared to MBA students.

Supervisors will also profit when employees are mindful. Turnover intention rates are lower among more mindful employees (Dane & Brummel, 2013). In relationship to
turnover intention, employees with significant levels of reported mindfulness according to the MAAS tend to receive higher job performance ratings than those reporting lower (Dane & Brummel, 2013). With both employees and supervisors ample in mindfulness levels, the interpersonal relationship could thrive and prosper within the organization.

Thus, the literature suggests that MBIs within the workplace can benefit employees’ well-being (Taylor & Millear, 2015), job performance (Shonin et al., 2014) and work engagement (Leroy et al., 2013). Many programs require a lengthy time commitment; yet the results of past implementations of programs are all the reason to develop the interventions through organizations.

The lack of agreeing literature and literature in general pertaining to the use low dose MBIs in the workplace (Mackenzie et al., 2006; Malarkey et al., 2012) does not provide enough information to determine if the shortening of an MBI could be useful for organizations. Organizations might see two months of 180-minute weekly sessions as taking away productivity hours and would not bother to implement such sessions. Consequently, workers do not see the benefits aforementioned about enacting a MBI. Assigned homework of meditation lasting up to 20 minutes may be a difficulty. Further, depending on the schedule of the participants, 20 minutes may not fit into their day.

More specifically, it is important to identify that mindfulness meditation serves as a way to examine mindfulness. Researchers have had difficulty creating a construct definition. The process of mindfulness meditation involves the use of sustained attention, a concept involved in the construct. Using tools like meditation mindfulness could further validate surveys as well as better identify mindfulness in others. Studies using self-report surveys (Quickel et al., 2014; Schmertz et al., 2008) rely on participants to fill out such
surveys. Participants may lack a full understanding of what mindfulness is. Teaching mindfulness meditation illuminates what mindfulness is and how to practice it. Furthermore, measuring mindfulness could involve identifying meditators or teaching mindful meditation in addition to self-report surveys. This strengthens validity of measuring the complex mindfulness construct. This study plans to use a MBI to teach mindfulness meditation as well as use self-report surveys to close a gap in literature.

Importantly, a present gap in the literature is whether trained mindfulness among supervisors through a MBI affects employee job performance. Mindfulness has benefits for those who have a deeper sense of mindfulness. Relationships between mindful people and others is an important dimension to examine. This is especially so in businesses where employees engage with colleagues and supervisors regularly. A key interpersonal relationship within the workplace is that of the supervisor and the employee. The position of the supervisor entails the duty of managing employees and ensuring efficient performance amongst those employees. If mindful managers can influence their employees to be more mindful in their work, businesses could experience an increase in job performance (Shonin et al., 2014), lower stress (Mackenzie et al., 2006; Zolnierczyz-Zerda et al., 2016), and increased employment duration (Dane & Brummel, 2013). I am interested in how supervisors trained in mindfulness through the implementation of a MBSR affects employees’ job performance.

Method

This study utilized a popular MBI, the Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction Program (MBSR). The intervention was a 6-week program comprising of weekly sessions that included mindfulness techniques, formal and non-formal. The focus is to
learn how remain in the present moment and in the now which aims to assist participants to respond to stress instead of react to stress. The researcher assigned homework that included the learned techniques from that particular session to encourage participants to incorporate mindfulness throughout their life. The sample size of the experimental included two participants. The original project design intended to have three groups: an experimental group, an active control group, and a control group. With those three groups, intentions were to recruit a minimum of thirty participants. However, due to the difficulty of recruitment, the sample size ended up being two participants.

Participants

The study included two participants with five employees who also provided performance measures. For supervisors, inclusion criteria required that participants hold a supervisory position that oversaw and interacted with employees and had not received any prior mindfulness training. The specificity of targeted participants determined that the sample did not use participants from any vulnerable populations. Supervisors were recruited through emails entailing details of the study.

During the first week of the session, supervisors were asked to select three employees of their choice to rate on job performance before and after. One participant only directly oversaw two employees, requiring that the research adjust this criterion. The inclusion of randomly selecting employees eliminated any bias that may evolve after supervisors participate in a mindfulness intervention.

For both supervisors and employees, consent forms were given prior to their participation where both groups were told that their participation was voluntary and they
could leave the study at any time if they chose to participate. At the study’s conclusion, participants received a debriefing form describing the purpose of the study.

**Data Collection Materials**

Supervisors participating in the MBSR received both a mindfulness measure and a job performance scale. The randomly selected employees received only a job performance scale.

**Self-Report Measures**

**Leader Mindfulness Measures.** The mindfulness questionnaire used in this study was the Mindfulness Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS) created by Brown and Ryan (2003). The 15-item scale consists of items focused on the concept of mindfulness with items such as “I find it difficult to stay focused on what’s happening in the present.” and “I forget a person’s name almost as soon as I’ve been told it for the first time.” Participants answered items on a 1-6 Likert scale, from *almost always* (1) to *almost never* (6). Recruited supervisors filled out the survey prior to the intervention that established a baseline of mindfulness. The researcher administered the survey immediately after the intervention ended. Then a week after the intervention ended, the research administered the last survey, which determined any lingering effects.

**Job Performance Measures.** Participants also rated the job performance of the staff they oversee using Van Scotter and Motowidlo’s (1996) three-item, seven-point (1-7) job performance scale. Items include the overall job performance, performance compared to others, and the contribution to the unit in comparison to others. Supervisors conducted these ratings both before and twice after the implementation of the MBSR to identify if job performance had improved after leader mindfulness training. The
employees chosen by supervisors also used this scale when evaluating their own performance during the same points of the intervention. Dr. Motowidlo gave permission to use this non-published scale.

**Experimental Groups Programs**

Since the core of the project is to identify trained-mindful leaders influence on employees, the researcher implemented a mindfulness intervention. The primary researcher received training from Sounds True, an online library revolved around mindful podcasts and resources for the public; it is also affiliated with the University of Massachusetts where Kabat-Zinn formally teaches MBSR. The primary researcher participated in their online MBSR course and scripted each session. Therefore, the manifested program is not directly a full MBSR, but the most important themes and reoccurring exercises are included.

**Mindfulness based stress reduction.** The implemented intervention was modeled after Kabat-Zinn’s (2003) MBSR program. Sessions began with heavily guided meditations such as a body scan where awareness is focused on bodily sensations. As the program progressed, meditations became less guided from the researcher and participants were invited to utilize their skills to keep themselves oriented to the present moment. This was mostly done through longer sitting meditations. Homework was also assigned each week and required allocated time for formal mindfulness and informal mindfulness practices such as awareness of the breath or mindful eating. The researcher-adjusted material from the online course to fit into a six-week intervention. Sessions were held weekly for 60 minutes.
Results

Mindfulness Measures

Total scores were calculated for each of the three-time points by averaging responses across the 15 items on the MAAS (see Figure 1.1). Since there were only two supervisors in the study only descriptive statistics are reported here.

![Mindfulness measures graph](image)

According to the MAAS (Brown & Ryan, 2003), mindfulness appears to improve following the mindfulness training. The dip in mindfulness could be potentially attributed to a two-week lapse in training. Mid-way through the training both participants could not attend the session where the experimenter decided to resume the training the following week. Participants may not have remembered to practice as often due to missing the class session that would remind them to practice the skills taught in class. However, as may be seen in the graph, there was an increase from the beginning of the program ($M = 4.3$) to the end ($M = 4.6$). A second possibility may be because training takes a while to show effect on mindfulness. Additionally, the training is low-dose, where the effects may have been more immediate with the longer session where with the low dose, effects seemed to have permeated after the training ended. Moving forward, post-tests should be
administered weeks following the program to remove any latency effects of the last program session.

**Job Performance Measures**

Total scores were calculated for each of the three-time points by averaging responses across the 3-item job performance measure (see Appendix F & G; Scotter & Motowidlo, 1996). The scores were then analyzed with a mixed-factorial ANOVA including the between-subjects independent variable of rater (supervisor vs. subordinate) and the within-subject independent variable of assessment time (pre-intervention, immediate post-intervention, one-week post-intervention). The dependent variable is the

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**Figure 1.2**

Employee Ratings

- Supervisor 1 Employees
- Supervisor 2 Employees
- Mean of both

**Figure 1.3**

Supervisor ratings

- Supervisor 1
- Supervisor 2
- Mean of both
rating on the job performance scale. There was not a significant difference in job performance ratings between supervisors and employees, $F < 1$. Overall, the main effect of assessment time was also non-significant, $F < 1$. However, a non-significant linear trend illustrated that job performance increased steadily across the three assessment time points (see Figure 1.2 & Figure 1.3).

Evaluation patterns appeared to have some differences, however. Employers gave the highest scores one-week post-intervention ($M = 6.15$), implying potential long-term effects of mindfulness and that they continued to practice the tools shared with them in the training. In contrast, employees provided the highest scores immediately post-intervention ($M = 5.78$), indicating an immediate effect on performance due to their newly mindful supervisor. Overall, low-dose MBSR training is a potentially useful way to increase job performance in addition to improving interpersonal relationships in an occupational setting.

**General Discussion**

Mindfulness is a meta-cognitive process that involves sustained attention (Bishop et al., 2004) while attending to the surrounding environment with a non-judgmental orientation (Langer & Moldoveanu, 2000). Mindfulness Based Interventions are training programs aimed at increasing participants’ mindfulness through teaching skills like mindful breathing. Those who partook in a MBI have seen benefits such as a heightened sense of well-being (Shonin et al., 2014), sharper attention (Jo et al., 2015), and decreases in psychological distress (Shonin et al., 2014). Organizations have become especially interested in implementing MBIs due to their potential in sharpening attention (Semple, 2010) and improving job performance (Shonin et al., 2014). Much of the research
conducted on MBIs in the workplace have been primarily focused on intrapersonal benefits, benefits for the individual. However, the effects of mindfulness-trained individuals on their counterparts have not been investigated in an occupational setting.

The pilot experimental study aimed to close the gap in current research on the effects of mindfulness on interpersonal relationships. Specifically, this study aimed to identify any changes in relationship of supervisor and employee after administering a low-dose MBI. This study included a low-dose MBI due to the time constraints that high-pace organizations face. Current studies that include low-dose MBIs have been ambiguous on its effects (Mackenzie et al., 2006; Malarkey et al., 2012). Time is money in organizations. Therefore, if a low-dose MBI can demonstrate the same positive effects of a standard MBI, organizations could fully invest in implementing them. Overall, the pilot experimental study provides as a stepping stone in the literature pertaining to low-dose MBIs conducted in the workplace in attempts to identify effects on interpersonal relationships.

Future Directions

The data collected in the pilot experimental study illustrates (non-significant) increases in job performance of employees whose supervisors received a MBSR. Further research needs to be conducted to support this claim for organizations to better determine MBI’s usefulness. The supervisor/employee relationship is ubiquitous to organizations, and the training could benefit the interpersonal relationships within them. The data also are unclear as to whether a low-dose MBI could be useful illustrated by the different evaluation patterns found in this study. Past studies have also shown varied results in supporting a shortened MBI (Mackenzie et al., 2006; Malarkey et al., 2012). Identifying
the effectiveness of shortened MBIs is crucial due to the time commitment typical MBIs entail. The 180-minutes used in an orientation session is time organizations could be using for work. If results signify that low-dose MBIs are effective, organizations may become more intrigued to administer mindfulness trainings.

Mindfulness did not substantially increase. However, participants did not meet with the experimenter for a week due to conflicting schedules. Participants may have forgotten to practice the tools taught in past sessions since sessions served reminders. In the future, I would recommend utilizing a combination of mindfulness measures to support each scale. Brown and Ryan’s (2003) MAAS scale is validated and often used, but since the mindfulness construct itself has shown to be difficult to operationalize, including more than one measure could supplement one another.

Overall, the present study serves as a stepping stone for the experimenter’s future research pursuits as well as the current research literature pertaining to the effects of mindfulness training in supervisors. Despite the lack of significant results, the non-significant linear trend is optimistic for how mindfulness-trained individuals affect others. Higher mindfulness may then lead to better interpersonal relationships within an occupational setting. The supervisor-employee relationship is an important relationship to examine considering supervisor type is a crucial contributing factor to employees’ job satisfaction (Rad & Yarmohammadian, 2006). Improvement of job performance could then increase if employees are satisfied with their work through the influence of their supervisor; they may then consequently feel motivated resulting in improved job performance. Ultimately, the MBSR is a technique to utilize for enhancing interpersonal relationships as well as improving job performance in an occupational setting.
References


IRB Application

Title: Mindful Leaders and Employee Performance

A. Purpose

1. Statement of Purpose

In most workplaces, employees conduct a variety of different tasks throughout the day, each of which demands their attention. A normal day may require employees to perform multiple tasks that may not be completed within a day’s time. Consequently, employees may start executing multiple tasks at once, thereby lessening the quality of each task, and not put forth their full attention. Their attention becomes scattered and performance becomes sub-optimal.

Mindfulness is a concept developed through the Buddhist religion that different disciplines throughout western civilization are now beginning to research further. Mindfulness can be seen as a process that uses sustained attention (Bishop et al., 2004) to be aware of the surrounding environment (Langer & Moldoveanu, 2000) while holding an orientation that is non-judgmental to one’s self and others (Bergomi et al., 2012). Therefore, mindfulness is a meta-cognitive system (Bishop et al., 2004) that requires the reflection of one’s own experiences with an open mind (Bergomi et al., 2012) in addition to being observant and aware (Langer & Molodoveanu, 2000).

The construct of mindfulness has been integrated into Mindfulness Based Interventions (MBIs) such as the Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) program (Kabat-Zinn, 2000) and Mindfulness Awareness Training (MAT) (Shonin et al., 2014). These specific MBIs and others have been delivered in the workplace have been shown to enhance attention (Jo et al., 2015; Semple, 2010) and job performance (Shonin et al., 2014). Much of the research examines the effects of trained mindfulness from an intrapersonal perspective or mindfulness within one’s self (Jo et al., 2015; Leroy et al., 2013; Semple, 2010; Shonin et al., 2014; Zolnierczyz-Zerda, Sanderson, & Bedynska, 2016); however, the effects of trained mindfulness have yet to be examined in interpersonal workplace relationships. A key interpersonal relationship within the workplace is between supervisor and employees. Supervisors hold power by ensuring that employees are doing their work effectively and efficiently. MBIs may be a possible technique in improving the functioning of leaders and their relationship to employees, consequently increasing job performance. This proposed study’s focus is to examine the effect of training supervisors to be mindful via MBSR on the job performance of their subordinates.

The study utilizes MBSR, which incorporates sessions revolving around discussions about mindfulness integrated with the practice of meditation (Zolnierczyz-Zerda et al., 2016). Important measures of worker productivity, such as work engagement (Leroy et al., 2013) and job performance (Shonin et al., 2014), have shown improvement in previous implementations of MBIs. Qualities pertinent to the workplace and the field of psychology such as attention (Semple, 2010) and psychological well-being may improve after an MBI implementation (Zolnierczyz-
Zerda et al., 2016). The improvement of these aspects are noteworthy and different fields of psychology and business may find it useful. This study will serve as an addition to the many MBIs implemented among workplaces; the aim of this project is to serve as a stepping-stone in identifying whether or not workers (and people in general) trained in mindfulness influence those around them.

2. Research Category

The design of the proposed research aligns with the criteria for EXEMPT category 2. Data shall be collected through the use of surveys (See Appendices F-H) along with the implementation of some sort of relaxation technique. Researchers will code participants in such a way that keeps participants’ identities confidential; information collected from surveys will also kept confidential. Ultimately, participation will not put those participating in any economic, legal, physical, or psychological risks.

Method

1. Participants

The proposed research will use a sample of at least 9 supervisors from offices at the University of Northern Colorado, as well as 3 employees per supervisor, for a total of 36 participants (9 supervisors, 27 employees). Specific offices include, but are not limited to: Dean of Students, Admissions, Student Activities, Cultural Center, and Residence Halls. For supervisors, inclusion criteria require that participants hold a supervisory position that oversees and interacts with employees, and has not received any prior mindfulness training. The specificity of targeted participants determines that the sample would not use participants from vulnerable populations. Recruitment of supervisor for this study will be achieved via e-mail (see Appendix A).

Each supervisor will be asked to select three employees who they believe perform at a below average level, an average level, and an above average level.

For both supervisors and employees, a consent form (see Appendix B & C) will be given prior to their participation. At the study’s conclusion, participants will receive a debriefing form describing the purpose of the study (see Appendix D). Each participant will be treated in agreement to the ethical guidelines of the University of Northern Colorado.

2. Data Collection Materials

Leader Mindfulness Measures

The questionnaire used in the present study to measure mindfulness is the Mindfulness Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS) created by Brown and Ryan (2003). The 15-item scale consists of items focused on the concept of mindfulness
with items such as “I find it difficult to stay focused on what’s happening in the present.” and “I forget a person’s name almost as soon as I’ve been told it for the first time.” Participants answer items on a 1-6 Likert scale, from almost always (1) to almost never (6). (See Appendix E.)

**Job Performance Measures**

Participants will also rate the job performance of the staff they oversee using Van Scotter and Motowidlo’s (1996) three-item, seven-point (1-7) job performance scale. Items include the overall job performance, performance compared to others, and the contribution to the unit in comparison to others. Supervisors will conduct these ratings both before and after the implementation of the MBSR to identify if job performance has improved after leader mindfulness training. Subordinates chosen by supervisors will also use this scale when evaluating their own performance. This scale is not published but was given permission for use by Dr. Motowidlo. (See Appendices F and G.)

**Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction**

The proposed intervention, modeled after Kabat-Zinn’s (2003) MBSR program, has not been formulated yet since the researcher has not yet received training. Kabat-Zinn’s (2003) eight-week program involves practicing formal meditation: body scan meditation, Gentle Hatha Yoga which is the practice of yoga while being aware of the body, sitting meditation and walking meditation. Homework is given that requires allocated time for formal mindfulness and informal mindfulness practice such as awareness of the breath or being aware of how the weather feels on one’s body. These techniques are taught during 90-minute weekly sessions. For the purpose of this study, sessions will be adjusted to fit into a 6-week intervention that includes six weekly 60-minute sessions.

An outline of the weekly sessions is included in Appendix H.

**Matched Active Control**

The active control intervention will be an outline of weekly sessions carefully matched to the MBSR. After participating in the MBSR, the researcher went through each session and manifested activities similar but not identical to the mindfulness group. This aligns with the purpose of an active control to compare changes with the experimental group.

An outline of the weekly sessions is included in Appendix P.

**Procedure**

The proposed study follows a quantitative approach.
Quantitative data will be obtained by measuring mindfulness using the MAAS prior to and following the implementation of the intervention; the pre-test serves as a baseline measure of mindfulness. Office supervisors will also rate the job performance of their subordinates before and after the intervention. Upon recruitment, supervisors are to select three employees who they believe have poor, moderate, and above average job performance. Selected subordinates will be given a consent form (Appendix D) and then asked to rate themselves using Van Scotter and Motowidlo’s (1996) job performance scale to eliminate any potential bias from the supervisor. Employees will also identify the influence supervisors have on their job performance by answering the question, “Do I believe that my supervisor influences my overall performance at work?” a question of this nature identifies the strength of the supervisor/employee relationship. Random assignment will place participants in either the experimental group (MBSR), the active control group (Somatic Practices) or the inactive control group.

Participants will receive a consent form (Appendix C) prior to any data collection; participants will be provided a few details of the study and informed that their participation is voluntary and they may withdraw at any time. A debriefing session with participating supervisors and subordinates discussing the purpose of the study will fall at the end of the project to ensure that there is no bias from the supervisors in the job performance ratings or mindfulness training. The researcher will enact a coding system that ensures that answers given on mindfulness surveys will stay confidential as well as the job performance ratings. The identity of those rated on job performance will be anonymous, thus, their employment is not at risk. The data collection methods used will not require identification from the participants either. Granted there will be a demographics questionnaire, but this will only ask questions regarding to gender, race and age to develop an understanding about the collected sample.

Design

The proposed study will use a matched sample design to randomly assign supervisors who score similarly on the MAAS (Brown & Ryan, 2003) to intervention conditions in order to eliminate diffusion among groups. The data will be analyzed with a mixed-factorial ANOVA. The independent variables include intervention condition (MBSR, active control, control), rater (supervisor vs. subordinate), and assessment time (pre-intervention, immediate post-intervention, one-week post-intervention). The dependent variable is the rating on the job performance scale. Cronbach’s alpha will measure the internal consistency reliability of the data collected from the survey.

Risks, Discomforts, and Benefits

1. Risks
The proposed study does not involve risks of any nature, whether it be economic, legal, physical, social, or psychological. Consent forms (Appendix C) include details of the study and inform participants that their participation is voluntary and they may withdraw at any time.

2. Discomforts
   The MBSR program has a large time commitment that may disrupt the schedule of the participants’ daily lives. Yet the advertisement of the program will promote benefits to compensate for this commitment.

3. Benefits
   Scientific benefits are involved in the proposed research. Potential positive results have implications for organizations looking to improve leader development programs and job performance. This research will investigate the possibility of improved job performance from implementing a well-used Mindfulness Based Intervention, therefore, emphasizing use of MBI’s in leadership development. Participants involved in the MBSR and Somatic practice interventions may also see individual benefits such as: reduced stress, enhanced attention, and improvement in job performance. These benefits within the workplace are substantial, therefore the benefits outweigh any possible rise.
Appendix A

Recruitment Script

Hello (name),

I am Pearl Marquez, an undergraduate student at the University of Northern Colorado. I hope you are having a delightful day thus far.

I am currently conducting research examining the job performance of employees. As a supervisor like yourself, you understand the importance of efficient job performance from employees. Organizations would then therefore be interested in techniques that provide an opportunity for the improvement of job performance due to the value of efficient job performance. Techniques developing a stronger sense of self-awareness have started to be taught throughout the workplace due to their results in improving traits like attention and work engagement.

This email serves as an invitation for you to participate in learning some of these techniques. If you are interested, you may be selected to partake in a 6-week long intervention starting (anticipated starting date). Hour weekly sessions provide as a chance to discuss and learn self-awareness techniques. Assignments are given throughout to serve as an opportunity to transfer these techniques into your everyday life. While the intervention entails a lengthy time commitment, the benefits are notable. Your attention may improve, which could improve your conversations amongst other employees and friends. Work related stress could also see a significant decrease due to your involvement. I would hope you see the benefits to outweigh the program’s length.

I have practiced being self-aware for a couple of years now through meditation and staying present. I cannot express how I have further developed into who I believe I am supposed to be because of these techniques. My focus in academic settings has improved as well as simple conversations. Adopting a present moment orientation has guided me to pay attention to detail which aids me in finding the most pragmatic way to accomplish my goals. My life continuously shows me the benefits of being aware of myself and others.

Thank you for reading my email. I look forward to your response and hope that I can show and teach you how to adopt a present moment orientation too.

Pearl Marquez
Appendix B

CONSENT FORM FOR HUMAN PARTICIPANTS IN RESEARCH

College of Education and Behavioral Sciences
School of Psychological Sciences

Informed Consent for Participation in Research
University of Northern Colorado
Project Title: Mindful Leaders and Employee Performance
Researcher: Pearl A. Marquez
School of Psychological Sciences
Phone: (307)679-8652 Email: marq5599@bears.unco.edu

The purpose of this study is to examine the implementation of a Mindfulness Based Intervention on supervisors and job performance amongst employees of mindfulness-trained supervisors. This study entails responding to survey questions, rating employees’ job performance, and potentially partaking in a six-week program. This study consists of potentially six, 1-hour weekly sessions where you will be taught certain techniques and one approximately 20 minute session a week after your sixth session. The first and last two sessions will involve rating employees’ job performance using a selected scale and responding to a survey measuring mindfulness.

All of your responses will be strictly confidential. Researchers will enact a coding system that keeps your identity confidential and the employees you rate confidential and anonymous. You will be asked to select employees who perform their job below average, average, and above average. Then you will be asked to give each employee a code therefore only giving you knowledge of the employees’ identities. Yet, your survey will be associated to your identity due to the possibility of involvement in an intervention taught by the researcher. To keep confidentiality of your identity, researchers will keep your survey responses and job performance ratings, and all other results from the study locked in offices on campus. The researcher strongly seeks to protect the privacy of your information.

Page 1 of 2 please initial
Your decision to participate in this study is completely voluntary. The possible intervention has a large time commitment that may disrupt the schedule of your daily life. Your participation in this study though may result in benefits seen in your leadership skills and daily life. Researchers also have the chance to identify mindfulness as a leadership tool to improve job performance amongst employees through your participation. This is potential for adding to the gap of research about interactions amongst mindful supervisors and non-mindful employees, therefore the benefits justify the potential risks.

Participation is voluntary. You may decide not to participate in this study, and if you begin participation you may still decide to stop and withdraw at any time. Your decision will be respected and will not result in loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. Your completion and return of this questionnaire indicates consent to participate in the study. This form will be given to you to retain for future reference. If you have any concerns about your selection or treatment as a research participant, please contact Sherry May, IRB Administrator, in the Office of Sponsored Programs, Kepner Hall, University of Northern Colorado Greeley, CO 80639: 970.351.1910.

Subject’s Signature  Date

Researcher’s Signature  Date
Appendix C

Consent form for selected subordinates

CONSENT FORM FOR HUMAN PARTICIPANTS IN RESEARCH

College of Education and Behavioral Sciences
School of Psychological Sciences

Informed Consent for Participation in Research
University of Northern Colorado
Project Title: Mindful Leaders and Employee Performance
Researcher: Pearl A. Marquez
School of Psychological Sciences
Phone: (307)679-8652 Email: marq5599@bears.unco.edu

The purpose of this study is examining potential techniques of mindfulness training on supervisors and the job performance of employees. This study entails responding to a simple survey asking questions regarding supervisor influence on job performance and rating your own job performance. There will be two sessions spaced six weeks apart and a third session a week following the second session. Responding to this survey is expected to take approximately ten minutes maximum.

All of your responses will be anonymous and strictly confidential. Please refrain from writing any identifying information such as your name. The study will present its results in averages, therefore there will be no exclusion of certain individual’s responses. These measures are to ensure your anonymity, in addition to the storage of all results and paper work in locked offices on campus.

Self-report job performance evaluation is completely voluntary. Individually, there are no foreseen benefits through participation; however, your participation will aid in closing the gap in research identifying if mindfulness-trained individuals effect general others. You face no economic, legal, physical, psychological, or social risks of any immediate or long-range nature by participating. This study has created reasonable safeguards to minimize any known, potential, and unknown risks.

Page 1 of 2 _______please initial
Participation is voluntary. You may decide not to participate in this study, and if you begin participation you may still decide to stop and withdraw at any time. Your decision will be respected and will not result in loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. Your completion and return of this questionnaire indicates consent to participate in the study. This form will be given to you to retain for future reference. If you have any concerns about your selection or treatment as a research participant, please contact Sherry May, IRB Administrator, in the Office of Sponsored Programs, Kepner Hall, University of Northern Colorado Greeley, CO 80639: 970.351.1910.

Subject’s Signature    Date

Researcher’s Signature    Date
Appendix D

Debriefing Statement

Researcher: Pearl A. Marquez
Phone: (307)679-8652 Email: marq5599@bears.unco.edu

Faculty Advisor: Dr. James Kole
Email: james.kole@unco.edu

This study examined the relationship between mindfulness-trained supervisors and employee job performance. Past research has explored the benefits of mindfulness training within individuals, but a lack of research identifies how mindfulness-trained individuals affect those surrounding them.

How was this tested?
The study included supervisors either partaking in a six-week Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) program, a six-week Somatic Practice program, or no program at all. Prior to any training, supervisors were given a survey (MAAS) to identify their mindfulness levels. Supervisors were then instructed to choose three employees they oversee with low, moderate, and high job performance. After selecting employees, supervisors were asked to rate them using the given performance scale. This identified the baseline performance of selected employees. Employees also provided job performance ratings to compare throughout the interventions. Training began with weekly sessions where either meditation techniques or somatic stretches were taught. Homework assignments were given corresponding with techniques taught in session, unless supervisors were part of the control group. By participating in these programs, a newfound knowledge was obtained through the learning of these techniques. It was the use of this newfound knowledge in daily life that researchers identified when supervisors were asked to rate employees following the training.

Hypotheses and main questions:
Researchers expected to find employees of those who received the MBSR to show increased job performance ratings; employees of those who receive somatic training to show a more modest increase in job performance, and those in the control with no change in job performance.

Participation ultimately provides as a stepping stone in understanding the effects mindfulness-trained supervisors have on employees. The results of this study could progress the literature of techniques that further improve the skills of leaders, consequently increasing their employees’ job performance. Organizations may also reference to the results to further develop leadership training programs. The researchers give thanks to those who participated.
If anyone would like more details about the data provided or about the research in general, please ask the experimenter, Pearl Marquez, or faculty advisor, Dr. James Kole, both of whose information is listed at the top of the debriefing statement.
## Appendix E

Mindfulness Attention Awareness Scale

### Day-to-Day Experiences

Instructions: Below is a collection of statements about your everyday experience. Using the 1-6 scale below, please indicate how frequently or infrequently you currently have each experience. Please answer according to what really reflects your experience rather than what you think your experience should be. Please treat each item separately from every other item.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Almost</th>
<th>Very</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>Very</th>
<th>Almost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Always</td>
<td>Frequently</td>
<td>Frequently</td>
<td>Infrequently</td>
<td>Never</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I could be experiencing some emotion and not be conscious of it until some time later.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I break or spill things because of carelessness, not paying attention, or thinking of something else.</td>
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<td>I find it difficult to stay focused on what's happening in the present.</td>
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<td>I tend to walk quickly to get where I'm going without paying attention to what I experience along the way.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I tend not to notice feelings of physical tension or discomfort until they really grab my attention.</td>
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<td>I forget a person's name almost as soon as I've been told it for the first time.</td>
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<td>It seems I am &quot;running on automatic,&quot; without much awareness of what I'm doing.</td>
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<td>I rush through activities without being really attactive to them.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I get so focused on the goal I want to achieve that I lose touch with what I'm doing right now to get there.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I do jobs or tasks automatically, without being aware of what I'm doing.</td>
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<td>I find myself listening to someone with one ear, doing something else at the same time.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Almost Always</td>
<td>Very Frequently</td>
<td>Somewhat Frequently</td>
<td>Somewhat Infrequently</td>
<td>Very Infrequently</td>
<td>Almost Never</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- I drive places on 'automatic pilot' and then wonder why I went there.  
- 1 2 3 4 5 6
- I find myself preoccupied with the future or the past.  
- 1 2 3 4 5 6
- I find myself doing things without paying attention.  
- 1 2 3 4 5 6
- I snack without being aware that I'm eating.  
- 1 2 3 4 5 6
Appendix F (Job Performance Scale for the use of Supervisors)

Overall Performance Scale
Modified language to fit context
Van Scotter & Motowidlo (1996)

Employee Code: __

1. Does the employee, exceed, meet, or do not meet standards for job performance?

1……..2……..3……..4……..5……..6……..7
(1 not meeting standards, 4 meets standards, and 7 exceeds standards)

2. Does the employee perform at a low, average or high level in comparison to others of the same rank?

1……..2……..3……..4……..5……..6……..7
(1 low performance, 4 average performance, and 7 high level)

3. Does the employee contribute a less amount, an average amount, or more to unit effectiveness than others in the work unit?

1……..2……..3……..4……..5……..6……..7
(1 low contribution, 4 average contribution, and 7 high contribution)

4. Do I believe as supervisor, I directly influence employees’ job performance?

1……..2……..3……..4……..5……..6……..7
(1 low influence, 4 average influence, and 7 high influence)
Appendix G (Job Performance Scale for use of Employees)

Overall Performance Scale
Modified language to fit context & additional question
Van Scotter & Motowidlo (1996)

1. Do I, exceed, meet, or do not meet standards for job performance?

1……..2……..3……..4……..5……..6……..7
(1 not meeting standards, 4 meets standards, and 7 exceeds standards)

2. Do I perform at a low, average or high level in comparison to others of the same rank?

1……..2……..3……..4……..5……..6……..7
(1 low performance, 4 average performance, and 7 high level)

3. Do I contribute a less amount, an average amount, or more to unit effectiveness than others in the work unit?

1……..2……..3……..4……..5……..6……..7
(1 low contribution, 4 average contribution, and 7 high contribution)

4. Do I believe that my supervisor influences my overall performance at work?

1……..2……..3……..4……..5……..6……..7
(1 low influence, 4 average influence, and 7 high influence)
Appendix H

Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction Outline
Formulated to fit within a 6-week program involving hourly sessions

| Sessions 1-3 focus on stabilizing the mind and becoming more aware of the mind and body connection. |
| Sessions 4-6 will focus on becoming more aware of stressors and how to react to them in more mindful ways |

Session 1:

**Eating Meditation (15 minutes)**

Participants will go through a meditation that puts their full awareness on eating three raisins or any dried fruit individually. The meditation involves asking participants to direct their conscious attention on how they see the raisin and acknowledging any past experiences or memories. They are then encouraged to approach the raisin as if it is a new object they have never seen before. This ignites an exploration of the raisin. Throughout the meditation, they may begin to feel their mind wander and this is normal. The meditation asks participants to notice the thought non-judgmentally and to bring their focus back to the object. Then after careful exploration of the raisin, participants raise the raisin to their lips. In this moment, participants feel the sensations in their belly, their lips and any other bodily sensations. Finally, the meditation brings the participants to begin the process of eating the raisin. Participants consciously think about the process of eating: how it came to the mouth and how moves around in the mouth before chewing. Then it proceeds to invite participants to chew the raisin while being present in distinguishing the tastes. In this moment, the meditation asks the participants to inquire about the feelings of their body in that moment in a non-critical way. The meditation repeats for each raisin, but with less guidance each time.

*Questions to spark discussion include:*

What was your experience of eating with such focused attention on a single object?

Were there elements of this practice that you found challenging, difficult, or easy?

**Awareness of Breathing Lying Down: First Formal Meditation (10 minutes)**

Participants then transition into the investigation of a common behavior, breathing. This meditation allows participants to be lying down on a mat. It begins with participants placing their hands on their torsos, bringing their focus to this point and feeling of breath. Participants center their attention on the feelings of the abdomen as they breathe.
Acknowledgment of possible feelings arising during this breathing exercised is encouraged. Participants may feel how their muscles and skin expand as they continue breathing. The breath is a familiar act, similar to eating, but this meditation serves to bring a new curiosity to such a normal behavior that continues to happen in the present moment. The mind is known to wander so when this happens, they are encouraged to acknowledge the thought and come back to the breath. As they come back to their breath, the meditation directs them to put their attention on how the body responds to breath, receiving and releasing.

**Body Scan Meditation: Formal Mindfulness Meditation (Traditionally 30 minutes, but shortened to 15 minutes for beginners)**

This meditation transitions from awareness of the breath to awareness of the body. Participants direct attention to various parts of the body. They begin lying down on a mat and first put their focus on their breath. Then after a few moments, they are asked to put their attention first on their toes of the left foot. This is another act of exploration; participants are encouraged to explore the feelings of their toes with a sense of curiosity. With an in breath, they will move their attention to their ankles and calves. This process continues beginning with the feet and moving up to the head. All the while, they are intermittently asked to notice how they are being supported, feeling the contact between their body and the floor. It could be possible to fall asleep, but this meditation is a revitalizing one and should be done with curiosity of the body. Body scan meditation allows participants to cultivate the skills to notice and be present with how their body feels and what may be occurring.

Participants are then assigned their homework for the week.

For formal practice, participants are invited to practice a body scan for 15 minutes for at least once that week.

For informal mindfulness practice, participants are asked to eat one meal mindfully, can be a few bites if a whole meal is too difficult. Homework also includes discovering how to incorporate mindfulness in daily activities such as showering or talking to a coworker.

**Session 2**

Before engaging in the practices, participants are asked if any challenges arose throughout their previous week with the practices.

**Extended Body Scan: Formal Meditation (40 minutes)**

The extended body scan is similar to the body scan introduced in session one. The extended body scan prolongs the time spent on the sensations felt throughout the body. Again, participants will lie on the floor. To begin the meditation, participants focus their attention on the ceiling transitioning that focus to their breath. They are invited to feel the association between the body and breathing. They may feel their bodies rest in the
awareness of breathing. It is reminded to relax while being present. Allow the eyes to close but if they want to keep them open, let them softly rest their eyes on the ceiling. The body scan starts with focusing on the left foot, specifically the toes and the spaces in between them. There is no need to manufacture sensations, if there is no sensation, it is okay. Listen to the sensations if there are any present. Participants are asked to explore the foot and how the air interacts with the foot. Let the left foot be as it is and transition to the left ankle. It is a process of identifying relationships between body parts such as how the foot would not be flexible without the ankle. There may be a movement of thoughts throughout the meditation. It is important to promote a friendly approach to this thoughts. To bring them back to the present moment, participants are asked to touch base with the breath. The exploration process begins again but with the right foot. If there are sensations, sit with the feelings and notice any emotions connected with them. It is encouraged to sit with sensations even if it is unpleasant. The mind and body are connected therefore it is crucial to notice any emotions associated with body parts whether it be pleasant or unpleasant. The meditation illustrates the floor as the proxy for the earth. Participants are then asked to relax into the floor. A continual reminder to relax and to notice emotions when breathing deeply. The major areas of stress are pointed out: upper back, neck and lower back. It is crucial notice any emotions while focused on these body parts. The body scan moves on to the heartbeat. The heartbeat radiates a frequency that permeates and allows the deepening of the relationship of what is. Participants are asked to pay attention to the eyes, as they allow us to embrace the world, to touch the world and letting it all be. It closes with taking the whole body in awareness. The body scan is complete with participants seeing the body as complete.

Questions to spark discussion include:

- Are you discovering anything new about your body during this practice?
- Did you notice anything new about the thoughts and emotions that arose during this practice?
- Is anything surprising you about the body, thoughts, and emotions, and your relationship to these common aspects of your experience?
- Is anything in your experience changing as you continue to practice the body scan?

Standing Yoga (7 minutes)

This section of the session is a short mindful yoga sequence. Participants start with listening to the body as they stand. It is strongly advocated to do what is possible and not to go beyond what participants may feel is exhaustive. The sequence begins with feeling feet firmly grounded which is mountain pose. This pose promotes stability and rootedness. Participants will raise and lower arms. This moves into taking left wrist with right hand. The same position is slowly conducted on the other side. The movements transition into placing the hands on hips. Participants push their backs out to make an arch, resulting in standing cat pose. Then inverting the arch and pulling their hips inward, they result in standing cow pose. Participants slowly move between the two positions a
few times through. Then they return to mountain. It ends with the thought of honoring
themselves and their life. (Sequence in appendix M)

*Sitting Meditation: Awareness of Breath (10 minutes)*

Participants will practice a formal sitting meditation on a chair or cushion. The
meditation inhibits a feeling mountain solid. Participants are reminded of the rootedness
with the earth despite the elevation created by sitting. The meditation then brings the
focus to the normal behavior of breathe. It is emphasized to feel the breath in the body.
The breath should not be controlled or manipulated, only simply become aware of breath
as it is presenting itself currently. Focus could be focusing on the belly, or the feeling of
the breath coming into the nostrils, or the rising of the chest. The breath could also be
focused on as a whole process. Whatever process of breathing feels most vivid is what is
participants is invited to focus on. This meditation is aiming the attention at the breath
and the sensations it creates. As the mind has a way of itself, it may wander off. This
meditation does not discourage thoughts wondering but honors the awareness brought
about by recognizing it. Participants are brought back to their breath if any thought
wandering occurred. Participants are told heartfulness comes forward in the way you treat
yourself in your willingness to suspend judgment. Each moment should be meet with
hospitality. Instructor will bring the meditation to close, asking participants to allow their
eyes to open. They are asked to be attentive to the environment. This attention can be
carried into daily goings. Practices or exercises are not isolated events. Curiosity is an
ongoing process. At the end of the meditation, participants are asked to notice throughout
the upcoming days and in this moment: Condition of the body? Condition of the mind?
Quality of the attention?

*Questions to spark discussion include:*

- What was one aspect of your experience with the standing yoga?
- What about your experiences with the sitting meditation - what was that like?

The homework that is assigned is as follows:

Formal practice: Practice the extended body scan presented in this session at least twice
for fifteen minutes this week. Practice the awareness of breathing meditation for ten
minutes at least once this week.

Informal practice: Fill out the Pleasant Events Calendar (See appendix I) each day this
week. Also to continue integrating mindfulness into each day

**Session Three:**

*Lying Down Yoga (30 minutes)*

Lying down yoga is an extended practice of the standing yoga, but laying down on a mat.
Participants go through a longer time period with a bit more complex movements, but
nothing extraneous. The start of the sequence has participants laying down on their backs
in what is called corpse position. They are invited to feel the support of the mat and ultimately the earth giving them balance. It is encouraged to do a scan from the head through the length of the back to the feet. This starting position begins the process of awareness in movement. From here participants move through a movement of yoga positions that places them simple stretching that carries them onto their fours. After movement on the fours, participants are asked to come back to lying down position. The exercise ends with participants moving from stretching their back on their stomach to a resting posture on their back. From here, depending on time, the instructor may lead them through a short body scan to answer the question, what is the condition of my body and mind. The exercise overall is a string of movements interweaved with the conscious awareness of possible thoughts floating into one’s mind. Throughout this yoga sequence, participants are asked to go at their own pace and to modify any positions that may feel too strenuous. (See appendix J for the movement sequence)

**Sitting Meditation: Awareness of Breath and Body (20 minutes)**

After the yoga, participants transition into another sitting meditation. This exercise is also an extension of the sitting meditation taught in session two. This meditation invites participants to use the platform of meditation to become aware of the whole body similar to the body scan and mindful yoga. Starting with the breath, participants put their focus on the sensations of breathing. The place where it is most vivid is where they should put their attention whether it be feeling the breath through the nostrils, the stretching of the abdomen or the breath as a whole. This meditation serves to demonstrate the relationship between the breath and the awareness of the body with non-judgmental awareness. The meditation pauses to encourage feeling the support of the feet and the buttocks against the chair. Participants are reminded of the mountain solid feeling from the yoga meditation in session two. More bodily sensations may also be noticed such as temperature, itching, feeling of clothing etc. When trying to focus on these sensations, the mind may wander as it has shown to from the beginning. When this occurs, participants are reminded to bring their focus back to the present moment. After feeling stable in their breath, the attention is focused on the whole of the sitting body. The meditation ends noticing the relationship between the mind and body, but acknowledging that they work together as one.

Assigned homework is as follows:

**Formal Practice:** Practice the Session 1 or Session 2 Body Scan by following one of the recordings emailed to the participants twice this week. Then to either practice lying down yoga or practice sitting with awareness of the breath for ten to fifteen minutes twice this week.

**Informal Practice:** Fill out the Unpleasant Events Calendar (see appendix K) each day this week. Participants are also to identify times during their day when they can connect with their body and breath, attending to the present sensations. Complete the midway assessment (see appendix L)
Session Four:

Sitting Meditation: Expanding Awareness (15 minutes)

Another formal sitting meditation. Participants notice if any uncomfortableness arises, to sit with that feeling for a moment. Then to continue to fall into awareness of how the body interacts with the floor and the environment itself. This moves into focusing on the familiar feeling of breathing. Focus on a certain point or on breathing as a whole, whichever is more comfortable. Again, like mentioned in previous sessions, if participants find themselves thinking about other moments, they are asked to bring themselves back to this moment. This moment is a true example of awareness because it is a purposeful to notice this moment. Instead of purely focusing on the breath, this meditation focuses on expanding this awareness into the present moment. Expanding this awareness involves becoming aware of the feelings of the entire body even if it may be uncomfortable. While this seems similar to the last sitting meditation, this meditation differs in the fact it is expanding awareness and not distinguishing the mind-body connection. It is utilizing this mind-body connection to become more aware. It also encourages the focus on an object such as hearing. Participants are asked to notice the quality of the sounds they encounter as they sit. This meditation reminds participants of curiosity, but instead of curiosity of the body, it is for sound. After spending a few moments on focusing on sound, participants are asked to come back to their breath. Participants sit breathing till the end of the meditation time.

Questions to spark discussion include:

- What did you notice in terms of pleasant and unpleasant sensations during this meditation?
- Are these sensations familiar? Surprising? Enjoyable? Aversive? Do you notice them in your everyday life when you encounter an unpleasant moment?
- What are some of the obstacles and challenges to practice you have encountered so far in the course?
- How did you meet or work with these challenges and obstacles?
- Are you learning anything new about yourself through this experience?

Reflecting on Pleasant and Unpleasant Charts (10 minutes)

This part of the session will allow participants to discuss their experience with the pleasant and unpleasant charts homework. Discussion includes any pleasant bodily sensations: sweetness, softness, gentle touch, warmth, openness. Thoughts may have arose when experiencing the pleasant moment including what emotions were present during that moment. Topics also include what the tendency to focus the experience of pleasantness and this feeling creates yearning for more similar moments. Instructor and participants explore unpleasant moments in the same way. Then participants reflect on the perceptions of how they appraise these situations. Participants may be finding themselves holding on to either wanting or wanting it to be different. Mindfulness effectively regulates perception and reaction to pleasant and unpleasant moments.
Reflection time also includes focusing on the wanting and the pushing away. The topic of judgement, also discussed, how it might minimize the capacity to see things mindfully. Being in the present moment allows as a reminder of the compassion and participants learn this through the nonjudgmental orientation they take in their meditations and further. Nonjudgmental orientation is the clear lens to the world.

**Stress Reaction Cycle (10 minutes)**

Participants are taught about how humans’ responses to stress are involuntary and is adapted to our survival to ensure our safety. Instructor illustrates ‘our bodies respond in physiological ways to address the perceived threat whether it be internal or external. While these process are hardwired, if the body goes through multiple and/or chronic exposure to stressors, healthy problems may arise. People may adopt handicapping strategies: drugs, destructive behaviors, cigarettes, caffeine, and food to mask the stressful moments we may find ourselves. Continuing these practices end up exhausting coping resources and making it more difficult to cope with stress, consequently resulting in a cycle that could be detrimental health.’ Discussing this cycle helps participants become aware of what may be currently going on in their lives. The practices up to this point are made to help develop that awareness. Participants are then asked to identify potential stressors in their life and how they cope with said stressors.

**Standing Yoga (14 minutes)**

Participants will go through an extended version of mindful standing yoga. Like the previous yoga session, participants are invited to notice their solidity in their posture. Throughout the movements, they are encouraged to breathe deeply and using their strengthened awareness to notice their muscles as they move. Participants should continue to practice noticing their body sensations as they flow. Movements are encouraged to be adjusted to what is comfortable to those partaking. All the while, participants take notice to the condition of their mind and body. In addition, the quality of their attention should be adhered to, further developing their awareness. The sequence is included in appendix M.

**Sitting meditation: awareness of sensation (15 minutes)**

This meditation incorporates ideas discussed about taking notice to pleasant and unpleasant sensations. Throughout this meditation participants first bring their awareness to their breath. It transitions into noticing how the body feels supported and if there is any uncomfortableness at all. If there is, to sit with this feeling and not to be judgmental and acknowledge it. Participants are asked to look at uneasiness or any feelings associated with discomfort with nonjudgment and to know they are directing love and compassion to themselves. Noise is also incorporated to direct further attention to what may be happening outside the body. The session ends with this meditation.

Assigned homework for this session is as followed:
Formal practice: Similarly to last week, participants practice the Session One or Session Two Body Scan by following one of the recordings emailed to the participants twice this week. Mindful yoga practice is encouraged at least once this week in addition to sitting meditation for at least fifteen minutes, if not twenty.

Informal Practice: Explore what it is like to become increasingly aware reactions to stressful events and behaviors during the week, without trying to change them. Participants try bringing awareness to moments when they feel stuck, blocked, or somewhat numbed to the experiences that are arising.

Session Five

Sitting meditation: Choiceless Awareness (30 minutes)

Participants are asked to relax into their breath but not feeling like it has to be purposeful. That it is such a natural and beautiful process therefore it is encouraged to fall into the natural breathing pattern. The meditation guides participants to become closer in touch with how their bodies feel. To feel the wholeness of the body as they sit and breathe. As participants sit in this perceived wholeness of mind and body, the meditation asks them to pay attention to the noise. Noise is as constant as the breath and only in the present moment. Emotions and feelings may come up without choice or preference but further acknowledged in an open experience. This meditation serves as a medium to become intimate with what is happening in the present moment and this choiceless awareness incorporates the idea of observing thoughts and noises that are not forced.

Questions to spark discussion include:

- Please describe some elements of your experience of choiceless awareness
- What arose for you as you brought awareness to sounds, thinking and emotions?

Stress response (10 minutes)

Participants are given a review of the stress reaction cycle and then are introduced to the stress response cycle (Appendix N). This cycle introduces the integration of mindfulness into responding to stressful situations. Participants are informed about how mindfulness is a gateway to respond to stress in an efficient way instead of letting the mind become engulfed in the habitual reactions to stress. It is important to be aware of what is happening in the mind and body along with the external events. Participants are given knowledge about the physiological responses and then carried into how mindfulness can be used as a tool to respond to stress in a healthy way.

Reflecting on your journey (10 minutes)

This part of the session serves as a chance for participants to reflect on their journey in this course. To observe any difficulties or challenges. It also provides as a chance to expand on what they may be finding promising and enjoyable.
Assigned homework is as follows:

Formal Practice: Practice the sitting meditation we introduced in this session. It includes the entire sequence of awareness of the breath, body, sounds, thoughts, emotions, and choiceless awareness. Please continue this practice three times this week. On the alternate days, incorporate the guided Body Scan or the lying-down or standing yoga sequences.

Informal Practice: Fill out the Difficult Communications Calendar each day this week (see appendix O). Develop new ways to integrate mindfulness into the daily round of your life. As well, become increasingly familiar with moments of reactivity that arise throughout the course of your day.

**Final session- Session six**

**Sitting Meditation: Dwelling in Choiceless Awareness (30 minutes)**

This meditation follows quite similarly the choiceless awareness, but goes into more depth of being focused on one object whether it be an object (idea), or the breath. It is also for an extended amount of time compared to the first meditation. Participants are asked to touch the stillness of the moment. Participants receive less guidance and use the skills developed throughout this course to bring attention to the sensations of the body, any emotions that may arise, thoughts and concepts, ultimately, being fully in the moment.

**Web of Connections (10 minutes)**

Participants discuss the inquisition process throughout this journey. There is discussing towards the situation and being aware of the uncomfortable moment with a compassionate viewpoint. Respond more effectively, to take a moment in turning toward. These moments help identify what makes us uncomfortable and how we can be more responsive than reactive. This segment serves as a conversation about the connections we have with ourselves and others. Discussing the Difficult Communications Calendar filled out prior to this session.

**Closing discussion (20 minutes)**

Participants are asked to continue a formal sitting practice along with the yoga taught throughout. It is also encouraged to keep doing informal practices. In the work place, it is important to be aware of the bodily sensations during a conversation. Informal practices in daily activities if further encouraged since there may not be time for formal sitting practices all the time.
Appendix I
Pleasant Charts Document for Session 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day 1</th>
<th>What was the experience?</th>
<th>Were you aware of the pleasant feelings while the event was happening?</th>
<th>How did your body feel, in detail, during this experience?</th>
<th>What moods, feelings, and thoughts accompanied this event?</th>
<th>What thoughts are in your mind now as you write about this event?</th>
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Appendix J
Lying down yoga sequence for Session 3

Lying Down Yoga

1. Low back pressed against floor
2. Low back arched; pelvis stays on floor
3. Both sides
Adapted from *Full Catastrophe Living* by Jon Kabat-Zinn, PhD
Appendix K
Unpleasant Chart for Session 3

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>What was the experience?</th>
<th>Were you aware of the unpleasant feelings while the event was happening?</th>
<th>How did your body feel, in detail, during this experience?</th>
<th>What moods, feelings, and thoughts accompanied this event?</th>
<th>What thoughts are in your mind now as you write about this event?</th>
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Appendix L
Midway Assessment for Session 3
Participants answer questions pertaining to their journey so far in MBSR

1. What are you noticing about the integration of mindfulness into your everyday life as you move deeper into this program?
2. Are you able to make time to practice? How much?
3. Describe your experience with the practices. Is one easier or more difficult? Do you favor certain practices? Do you feel averse to others? If so, what does this aversion feel like in the body?
4. In general, how would you describe your sense of self-discipline? How is it to practice on a regular basis? Are you able to do so? If not, what barriers can you identify?
5. What, if anything, are you learning about stress reactivity and your ability to respond?
6. What, if anything, has been surprising to you?
7. What has been difficult for you and how are you working with and meeting this difficulty?
8. Is there anything about your practice schedule or routine that you might need to address or change in order to give yourself over more fully to the learning process?
Appendix M
Standing Yoga for Session 4 MBSR

1. 
2. both sides
3. both sides
4. both sides
Appendix N
Stress Response Cycle for Session 4

Modified from Figure 9 and Figure 10 of Full Catastrophe Living, 2nd edition, Random House, NY, 2013, with permission of the author.
Appendix O
Difficult Communications Calendar for Session 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day 1</th>
<th>Describe the communication. With whom? Subject?</th>
<th>How did the difficulty come about?</th>
<th>What did you really want from the person or situation? What did you actually get?</th>
<th>What did the other person(s) want? What did they actually get?</th>
<th>How did you feel during and after this time?</th>
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