

Where Does Mindfulness Fit in the Risk Management and Compliance Resilience Toolkit?

Laura Peters

MA, PHR, Qualified Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Instructor

Friends Services Alliance 8th Annual Compliance and Risk Management Conference
Virtual Format
September 24, 2021





Practice: Contact Points

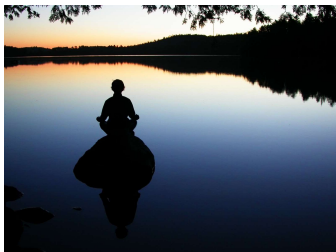


Goals of Risk Management and Corporate Compliance

- Ensure safety of those in our communities
- Build systems that help prevent accident, injury, legal liability
- Through careful, attentive work such as mock surveys, identify and close gaps
- Conduct root cause analysis and create plans of correction to prevent recurrence

Critical skill for doing this work:

Awareness



QUIZ

What % of visits to the doctor are related to stress?

90%

(Source: Centers for Disease Control)

Pandemic as a traumatic event

STRESS:

Significantly expanded workload for Risk Managers and Corporate Compliance personnel

Functioning in an environment of increased personal risk, risks to family safety, as well as workplace risk

TRAUMA:

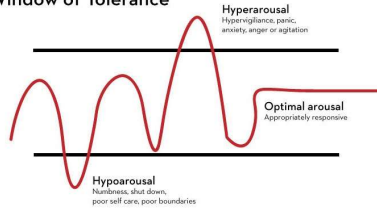
Unpredictability: constant change of conditions, regulations

Lack of control

Overwhelm, sense of powerlessness

Can traumatize, and/or trigger earlier (childhood) experiences of trauma

Window of Tolerance



Source: <https://q4-consulting.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/window-of-tolerance.jpg>

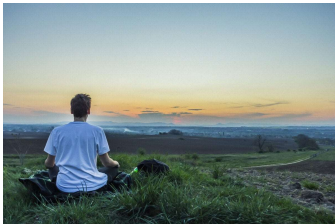
Normal reaction to stress and trauma: Our window of tolerance shrinks

Automatic reactions: anger, criticism, blame, judgment, fear, self-criticism, withdrawal/isolation, self-soothing behaviors (drinking, eating, smoking, workaholism)

Decision-making: chaos or rigidity

With a childhood history of trauma, current events can re-activate the experience of powerlessness and trigger automatic reactions

Practice: Body Scan



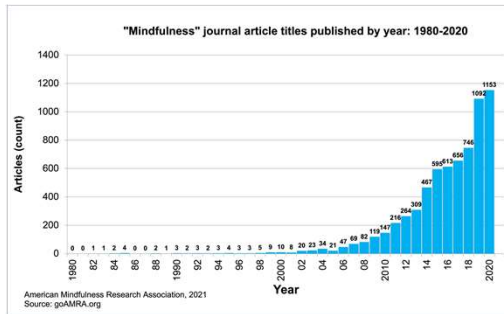
Credit: pexels.com

Mindfulness Definition

The practice of paying attention
in the present moment
without judgment



Dr. Jon Kabat-Zinn
Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)
founded 1979 <https://www.mindfulnesscds.com/>



How mindfulness can expand our window of tolerance



Mindfulness benefits for risk management:

- Fall prevention
- When an elder is able to accept declining spouse's condition, it can reduce family member agitation, improve trust with staff, potentially reduce legal liability
- Staff alertness: catch near-misses (med errors), prevent slips and falls
- Reduce alarm fatigue
- Focused attention results in better customer service
- Mindfulness is a trauma-informed approach
 - Shifts the lens: we're more aware of the backstory
(Adverse Childhood Experiences study)

Practice: Mindful self-compassion



Dr. Kristin Neff

Associate Professor, Educational Psychology
University of Texas-Austin

How it works:

Self-criticism triggers fight-or-flight response, as our system perceives a threat
Self-compassion downregulates the threat response, engages Mammalian caring system

Neuroscience demonstrates link between self-compassion and career success
--Forbes June 2021

Self-Compassion scales translated into 20 languages

Mindfulness-Based Mind Fitness Training (MMFT) Free to First Responders



Dr. Elizabeth Stanley

9th generation Army veteran
Assoc. Prof. of Security Studies, Georgetown U.
<https://elizabeth-stanley.com/>

Research Outcomes

Documented benefits among Marines:

- improved cognitive performance
- better sleep
- better immune functioning
- greater pain tolerance
- better impulse control

Neuroscience insights related to risk management:

- The brain activates the same pain distress network for physical pain, emotional pain and social pain.
- When we suppress emotion, we exacerbate our physical pain. Emotional suppression can result in somatization (physical pain like gastrointestinal problems, back pain).
- People working in high stress environments may somatize [express emotional pain through physical symptoms] because they perceive less stigma getting help for physical rather than emotional concerns.

Source: Mindfulness-Based Mind Fitness Training, Dr. Elizabeth Stanley, Module 6: Mind Fitness, Emotions, and Pain
online course available at soundstrue.com

Planting the Seeds of Resilience

Neuroplasticity: We can rewire our brains through meditation and other practices



Resilience: Forest Communities



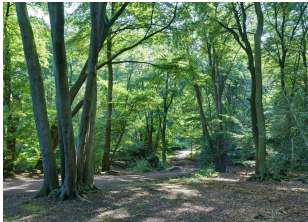
Dr. Suzanne Simard
Professor of Forest Ecology
University of British Columbia

"Trees are so much like us. We live in societies.... Trees know what their neighbors are doing. They communicate with them through these webs of fungal filaments that travel through the soil. They also communicate by sending off chemicals through the air. So they're in this constant conversation, helping each other out...."

We are so similar to forests. We can learn from the forests that they are caring societies. They look after each other. They're about their relationships. Through these relationships they're able to heal themselves, and heal their families, heal their communities, just like we do...."

(Source: website suzannesimard.com)
Tedx talk: How Trees Talk to Each Other ~5 million views

Practice: Tree Meditation





Emotional Outlet

Resilience: Connection



Resilience: Music "We Will Walk" Virtual Gospel Choir



<https://elisamusic.com/we-will-walk>

Credits: Elisa S. Keeler, composer elisamusic.com SingTrece, soloist Alec Staples, video and audio engineer



Laura Peters



ljp1111@gmail.com

607-379-2064

Practice: Contact Points

Sit or stand comfortably. Eyes open or closed as you prefer.

Bring your awareness to the soles of your feet, noticing any sensations of heat/coolness, pressure, tingling, etc., or perhaps no sensation at all

When the mind drifts away from this focus (anchor), return attention to the soles of the feet

Expand field of awareness to include contact points body is making with the chair (if you are sitting): backs of legs, back, arms, noticing any sensations

If heart begins to race, breath becomes shallow, open eyes and focus on sights and sounds in your environment

If you like, shift anchor of awareness to sensations of breath flowing in and out of the body

Practice for 3-5 minutes

Resources

APPS:

Calm

Headspace

Sanvello—using mindfulness to work with anxiety

COURSE:

MMFT Mindfulness-Based Mind Fitness Training-free to first responders

A trauma-sensitive approach to resilience and recovery in high-stress environments developed by Dr. Elizabeth Stanley

Documented benefits among Marines: improved cognitive performance, better sleep and immune functioning, greater pain tolerance, better impulse control

Course description: <https://product.soundstrue.com/mmft/?sq=1> or Google Sounds True MMFT

Application to take course free: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WRBY286>

Mindfulness Benefits for Nursing Staff-example

- Improve assessment skills
- Reduce errors when administering complex procedures
- Improve listening skills
- Enhance communication through higher level of empathy, self-awareness, and non-reactivity
- Increase resilience to stress

Source: American Nurse Today, Sept. 2015

<https://americannursetoday.com/mindful-nurse/>

Trauma-informed leadership

Adverse Childhood Experiences Study identified the impact that childhood events can have on physical and mental health throughout the lifespan. This information empowers leaders to use trauma-informed approaches with staff and clients, as well as to improve their own health outcomes.

https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/aces/about.html?CDC_AA_reVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fviolenceprevention%2Faces/about.html

ACE Questionnaire (adult version):

<https://www.acesaware.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/ACE-Questionnaire-for-Adults-identified-English.pdf>

Due Quach: Mindfulness benefits for inclusion/diversity

Cultivating harmonious communities, there is

- Better listening
- Less conflict
- Heightened awareness of internalized bias which helps us interrupt it and create more inclusive communities, reducing staff/client turnover
- May result in fewer lawsuits
