Value Education through Mindfulness

P L Dhar
Synopsis

• Why VE?
• Objective
• Paradigms of VE - discovering our ‘innate goodness’
• Egoic Identity
• How mindfulness helps .. ?
• Cultivating Mindfulness
• Mindfulness in Education
• Mindful Teaching and Teaching of Mindfulness
• Concluding Remarks
Why VE?
Current State of Humanity

• Most challenges of 21st Century have ethical roots
  – Global warming
  – Energy Crisis { oil depletion}
  – Increasing inequity, crime and violence
  – Handling diversity - increasing conflicts

• Greed, fear and desire for power ➔ Self-centeredness

  Ignorance – Egoic identity
Need for a Revolution in Consciousness –
seeing through the illusion of Egoic identity

Spiritual Education
Objective of VE

To empower a person so that his actions (bodily, vocal, mental) neither hurt nor harm him nor any body else

seeing through the suffering resulting from ego
Paradigms of Value-Education

- **Deep Ecology Paradigm**: focus on understanding the web of interconnectedness -- person’s relationship / interaction with the world

- **Depth Psychology Paradigm**: focus on understanding the mind – how the notion of identity arises and how it gives rise to self-centered behaviour & suffering

Mindfulness
Basic Premise

You do not become good by trying to be good, but by finding the goodness that is already within you ..... allowing that goodness to emerge
What is the basis of the concept of ‘innate goodness’

• All human beings want to be happy, peaceful

• What makes us happy, peaceful?
  – Anger or kindness
  – Cruelty or Compassion
  – Jealousy or joy at the success of others
  – Agitation or equanimity
  – Deception of helpfulness
What is concealing the innate ‘goodness’?

- Wanting ±
- Self-centeredness
- Egoic-Identity

Negative Emotions
Latent tendencies
How Ego Arises?
Egoic Identity

• When a child is born …. (s)he is conscious … but no egoic identity

• Modern psychology – egoic identity develops after about 2 years...
  – Identity is a ‘construct’ – based on conditioning done by the caregivers
  – Till that age the child’s behaviour is governed entirely by instincts, i.e. Pleasure Pain principle [survival mechanism]

• Ego is a ‘construct’ – psychological, social, linguistic
  – Helpful in interaction in conventional world
  – But harmful if taken to be the absolute Truth

• As the infant grows the behaviour is governed by attachment to Identity and the PPP
Egoic Identity

Identification with:

• Body

• Mind: cognition, feelings, perception, conation
  – I am seeing, hearing, .............. Thinking ..... I am feeling pain .... I just don’t like it .... He is an arrogant fool ... I gave it back to him ......

• Taking everything we do personally
  – without bothering to find who the person is.
Investigating Egoic Identity

• Investigate the ‘science’ of seeing, hearing ....
  – No “I” involved ... cognition happens when certain conditions are fulfilled.

• Am “I” breathing .. digesting the food.. Circulating blood ..Regulating the body temperature?..

• It is just happening ... even in coma !! ..... just because ‘I' am alive !!

• Consciousness is a characteristic of all sentient beings ... In human beings it manifest through various senses [ including ’mind’ ... thinking ]
Understanding Consciousness

• Sensory cognition – consciousness operating through senses

• Human beings also have the ability to be aware of sensory cognition – self awareness or mindfulness

• Mindfulness – non-reactive awareness of whatever is happening in the body-mind complex: ध्यान

• Meta-awareness – awareness of awareness - deconstruction of ‘self’
How Mindfulness helps in attenuating Latent unwholesome tendencies?
Cognition to Action- a simplified analysis

Sensory Input → Cognition → Various factors like perception → Feeling /Sensation

Feeling /Sensation:
- P (Tendency to prolong pleasure)
- uP (Tendency to minimize pain)
- N (Tendency to ignore neutral feelings)

Mental training can create space for wisdom to act

(re) Action

Suffering

Role of underlying tendencies:
- Survival instinct ...
- ...attachment to body, mind ....PPP advertisements

….. Usually
Mental training can create space for wisdom to act

**Calming the mind** + **Mindfulness** of whatever is happening in the body and Mind:

Sensations, feelings, tendency to react, Thoughts / emotions or other reactions that arise, intention behind these reactions, perception

Reveals ... latent tendencies, their impermanence

Innate goodness manifests
tendency to react falls down ....wisdom of impermanence

Mental space for wisdom to act
Training in Mindfulness

• Traditionally in 10- day intensive retreats in a meditation center

• Concept of Extensive retreats : MBSR at Univ of Massachusetts Medical School – Jon Kabat Zinn [1979]
  – combines meditation and Hatha yoga,..... to help patients cope with stress, pain, and illness by using what is called "moment-to-moment awareness." .. 8 weeks program : total 26 hours class room interaction
  – Now taught in over 200 hospitals

• Introductory 1-day workshops
• 5 day [9-5pm ] workshops
• Course in IITD : 1 credit course ,21 hours interaction spread over 5 weeks
Mindfulness Applications

- **MBI [Mindfulness based Interventions]**
  - Healthcare
  - Counselling
  - Education
    - Social emotional learning, Cultivation of Compassion and Empathy
  - Business
  - Prisons
  - Law
  - Police and Military [PTSD] [Mindfulness-based Mind Fitness Training (MMFT)]
  - Leadership and Governance
  - Elder care
  - Childbirth and parenting
  - Sports
Mindfulness in Education
Mindfulness in Education

• Mindful Schools USA
  • Mindfulness Teacher training Programme- 3 level courses [participants from 60 countries]

• Association for Mindfulness in education

• Mindfulness in Schools project, UK
  – Europe, USA, Africa, South East Asia
  – UK Network for Mindfulness-Based Teacher Training Organisations

• Mindfulness in Education Network - Conference

• Centrum voor Mindfulness - NL
Mindfulness in Colleges and Universities

- Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction - Mindful Living Programs Umass
- University of Minnesota Mindfulness club
- Oxford Mindfulness Centre
- Center for Mindfulness - the University of Massachusetts Medical ...
- UCLA Mindful Awareness Research Center
- Mindfulness Meditation Course - Stanford Hospital & Clinics ...
- Mindfulness Programs - University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics
- Center for Mindfulness at UC San Diego Health System
- Guided Mindfulness Practices - University of Missouri System
- UVA Mindfulness Center - School of Medicine - University of Virginia
- Mindfulness Research and Practice Initiative - University of Miami

http://www.mindfulnet.org/page7.htm
Mindfulness in Colleges and Universities

- Antioch University Mindfulness programme
  Antioch University
  New England
- Mindfulness at UEA, UK
  The University of East Anglia, UK
- Manchester University: Introduction to Mindfulness Meditation
- Mindfulness Programs - Monash University
- Centre for Mindfulness Research and Practice, Bangor University
- 2014 Mindfulness Workshop Series - Psychology - University of Exeter
- Mindfulness | Brown University Health Education
- Applied Mindfulness Meditation - Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social...

http://www.mindfulnet.org/page7.htm
Mindfulness in Colleges and Universities

- Mindfulness Meditation Exercises - Counselling - The University of Sydney...
- Mindfulness - University of Surrey
- Mindfulness Meditation - University of Strathclyde
- First International Conference on Mindfulness
- May 8-12, 2013 Sapienza – Universita di Roma in Rome, Italy
- Applied Mindfulness Conference - West Chester University
- Mindfulness in Education Conference 2009 - Association for ...
- Institute for Mindfulness based approaches
- European Associations of Mindfulness based Approaches

http://www.mindfulnet.org/page7.htm
Mindful awareness can be defined as paying attention to present moment experiences with openness, curiosity, and a willingness to be with what is. It is an excellent antidote to the stresses of modern times. It invites us to stop, breathe, observe, and connect with one's inner experience. Learn more.

Developing Greater Mind Body Awareness

Free Drop-in Meditation Sessions

Mindfulness, Sustainability, and Climate Change
This workshop is an invitation to explore our relationship with the planet, with compassionate awareness as our guide. We will learn how mindfulness can heal and transform our relationship with the self, with one another, and with the world at large.

Saturday, September 28. Learn more.

Certification in Mindfulness Facilitation (CMF) 2014
The year-long program provides training, support, and supervision to those wishing to incorporate mindfulness into their occupation or to share mindfulness with individuals, groups, communities, or institutions.
Application Deadline: October 14. Learn more.

Online Mindfulness Class
Learn meditation online. This 6-week class lays the foundation for a daily meditation practice and provides insights into the art, science, and practice of mindfulness.

NEW TO MEDITATION?

Introduction to Mindful Meditation
Drop-in Meditation Program
Resources
FAQs

Visit us on Facebook
• Developed a Compassion Cultivation Training (CCT) protocol and subsequently tested it. A centerpiece in the protocol is meditation, and the study found that “the amount of formal meditation practiced during CCT was associated with increased compassion for others.”

• **CCT Teacher training:**
• Deepen your ability to share the science, philosophy and pedagogy of compassion and get certified as a Compassion Cultivation Training (CCT) Teacher
Research results on Mindfulness in Education


• All outcome measures showed significant improvement, with participants who completed the program demonstrating decreased state and trait anxiety, enhanced social skills, and improved academic performance.
• Common characteristics of students who engage in **bullying**: lack of empathy and emotional control.

• A group of five fifth graders in Cleveland County Schools were referred by teachers, counsellors, and administrators to participate in a small group using a modified version of the MindUP curriculum.

• After the intervention group, students indicated more awareness of their own behaviour, an **increase in empathy, and in increase in emotional control**.

This study evaluated the effectiveness of an 8-week mindfulness training for children aged 8–12 with ADHD and parallel mindful parenting training for their parents.

- Parents (*N* = 22) completed questionnaires on their child’s ADHD and ODD symptoms, their own ADHD symptoms, parenting stress, parental over-reactivity, permissiveness and mindful awareness before, immediately after the 8-week training and at 8-week follow-up.

- Teachers reported on ADHD and ODD behaviour of the child.

- A within-group waitlist was used to control for the effects of time and repeated measurement. Training was delivered in group format.

- There were no significant changes between wait-list and pre-test, except on the increase of teacher-rated ODD behaviour.

- There was a significant reduction of parent-rated ADHD behaviour of themselves and their child from pre-to post test and from pre- to follow-up test.

- Further, there was a significant increase of mindful awareness from pre-to post test and a significant reduction of parental stress and over-reactivity from pre-to follow-up test.
Teachers randomized to MT showed greater mindfulness, focused attention and working memory capacity, and occupational self-compassion, as well as lower levels of occupational stress and burnout at post-program and follow-up, than did those in the control condition.

Mediation analyses showed that group differences in mindfulness and self-compassion at post-program mediated reductions in stress and burnout as well as symptoms of anxiety and depression at follow-up.
Contemplative Practices in Higher Education

POWDER METHODS TO TRANSFORM TEACHING AND LEARNING

Chapter
Global Innovation of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education
Volume 11 of the series Professional Learning and Development in Schools and Higher Education pp 317-340
Date: 19 November 2014

Contemplation & Mindfulness in Higher Education
Iddo Goberski, Sue Murray, Joe Goldbatt, Chris DePace

Abstract
This chapter presents initial observations of a pilot that introduces mindfulness meditation into teaching and university life. Short meditations were offered at the start of Year 1 and 2 lectures, besides weekly drop-in sessions. The purpose was to enhance the student experience through the affective domain, identified by Thomas 2012 as a key factor in improving retention. Contemplative practices (CPs) consist of enhancing awareness of the ‘here’ and ‘now’, characterised by the foregrounding of being and living, rather than doing or knowing. Thus, it could be argued that CPs have the potential to enhance the affective dimensions of the student experience and thus, indirectly, impact positively on retention. Students and staff perceived benefits that applied to learning and teaching specifically, but also to broader dimensions of their personal life. Overall there was enthusiasm from both students and staff for the innovation and a request to continue and expand current provision.
Mindfulness in Higher Education Symposium, Oxford Mindfulness Centre

Posted on February 19, 2013 by admindfulness

We have now run 4 very successful one day symposiums held at the Oxford Mindfulness Centre and in London. The events were led and facilitated by Ariana Faris, Chris Cullen, Steven Stanley and Kate Malleson and in the last three events we have been joined by Ruth Collins, Slobhan Lynch and Kitty Wheeler. Over 120 participants from a wide range of universities and colleges have now attended these days. Some were based in their institutions counselling services, others were administrators and academics. All shared their knowledge and experience about what makes a successful mindfulness course in higher education. The symposiums have been oversubscribed and we feel this signals the interest in bringing mindfulness to students and academic staff. For more information contact: info@mindfulnessforstudents.co.uk or Oxford Mindfulness Centre.

Here are some of the photos and participants comments from a fascinating and enriching day:

A way of managing stress in self and with others.
Meditation in the Higher-Education Classroom: Meditation Training Improves Student Knowledge Retention during Lectures

Jared T. Ramsburg • Robert J. Younans

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© Springer Science+Business Media New York 2013

Abstract The cognitive skills required for successful knowledge retention may be influenced by meditation training. The current studies examined the effects of meditation on the knowledge retention of students. In three experimental studies, participants from three introductory psychology courses randomly received either brief meditation training or rest, listened to a class lecture, then took a post-lecture quiz that assessed students’ knowledge of the lecture material. The results indicated that meditation improved students’ retention of the information conveyed during the lecture in each of the three experiments. Mood, relaxation, and class interest were not affected by the meditation training. Limitations and implications are discussed.

Keywords Learning • Meditation • Cognitive functioning • Higher education • Academic performance

(James 1890, p. 424).” However, advice about how to achieve attention, even the father of psyche, was “easier to define this idea than for bringing it about.”

One hundred twenty years later, James was seeking through progress toward providing the conditions” that James was seeking through emotional and attentional regulations of well-being and emotion (2009). Generally speaking, meditation was divided into two categories. The first mediation, involves non-reactive moment-by-moment content of experience monitoring meditation is thought meta-cognitive monitoring and an cognitive and emotional interpretation.

Mindfulness, Stress, and Coping Among University Students

by Angelo Palmer, Susan Rodger

Psychology • Miscellaneous Papers

Overview

Related research

Canadian Journal of Counselling (2009)
Volume: 43, Issue: 3, Pages: 196-212
ISSN: 0828-3893
ISBN: 0828-3893, 0828-3893

Find this paper at

Abstract

A sample of 135 first-year university students living in residence completed questionnaires that measured individual differences in mindfulness, coping styles, and perceived stress. Findings revealed significant positive relationships between mindfulness and rational coping, and significant negative relationships with emotional and avoidant coping and perceived stress. Regression analyses revealed that avoidant coping and perceived stress predicted 38.2% of the variance of mindfulness scores. Findings from this study provide our understanding of how mindfulness relates to coping styles, thereby suggesting potential ways to enhance counselling services and programming for first-year university students during the often difficult transition to university.

Related

Mindfulness, stress, and coping among university students.

References

Mindful Teaching
Mindful Teaching

• Qualitative difference between Mindless and Mindful teaching with love and compassion -- effective and you feel energized rather than drained out. Classroom is alive.

• Starting the class mindfully ... how do the students appear...absentees

• Mindfully taking attendance, mindful invigilation

• Mini mindfulness breaks --walking... in the midst of a class while students ponder a question or complete a task
  – Invite students to listen to ambient sounds in the room for thirty seconds without making any sound themselves. Or feel their feet ... breath ... abdomen movement
Mindful Teaching

• Before returning the exam answer books – practice loving-kindness & ask students to do so

• Viva-voce examination ... practice of lovingkindness

• Ending the class mindfully..... not rushing through last few minutes due to the pressure of syllabus...always better to spend the last few minutes of class on recapitulation. ... Handling the time pressure, mindfully !

• Mindfulness and resilience – handle criticism from peers, student misbehaviour, admonitions and expectations....
  – Not taking these personally
  – Accepting shortcomings gracefully with humility
Teaching of Mindfulness

• Regular Personal daily practice
  – Difference between teaching something because : I think it ought to be useful... and “I know from my experience is useful”.

• Daily practice in class room

• Workshops [1-day, 5-day]

• 10-day Retreats [Vipassana Meditation]

• www.dhamma.org
Benefits of Practice
Benefits of practice

• Increase in concentration & efficiency

  reduced digressive thoughts & day dreams… practice of living in the present

• Clarity of goals and the importance of values,
  • ability to resist temptations, distinguish between ‘urgent’ and ‘important’; and say NO
Benefits of practice......2

• Self control
  – pausing before action => look before you leap ....mindfulness acts like the brakes on a car ...seize that decisive moment when the mind is still open to receive skillful directions, reduction in rash and aggressive behaviour

• Ability to face the vicissitudes of life with equanimity
  – reduction in escapist tendencies: smoking, drinking, drugs
Benefits of practice......3

- Proper self appraisal-knowledge of strengths and Weaknesses …

mindfulness is like a mirror

Increases Humility and Forgiveness
Benefits of practice......4

- Increased selfless love and compassion - improvement in relationships, working together .... mental impurities are the enemies which besiege our inner household and destroy our peace and harmony
- Mindful thinking enables differentiating between disagreeing with someone’s thoughts and judging the person as a whole

Motivation for self less service
Benefits of practice

- Manifestation of higher ‘needs’ - increased self fulfillment
- Reduces attachment to ‘self’ opens the GATEWAY to abiding peace and happiness.
Concluding Remarks

- Survival of humanity needs a revolution in human consciousness – seeing through the illusion of egoic identity and reducing self-centeredness. ---- VE

- Mindfulness paradigm of VE: uncover innate goodness ...

- The practice naturally attenuates unwholesome latent tendencies and ego

- Reduction of ego allows मैत्री करुणा मुदिता उपेक्खा, humility, gratitude, forgiveness, to manifest.

- These form the bedrock of a humane society.
What do we want?! Mindfulness!
When do we want it?! NOW!

THANK YOU!