



science, skills, scale

well-being skills that can be learned

AWARENESS Science suggests awareness and attention can improve with intentional training. Center researchers found that **two months** of meditation training sharpened participants' attention in a variety of tasks in the lab and long-term meditators showed heightened activity in circuits of the brain associated with attention.



CONNECTION By being generous to others, you benefit them and yourself. Work from our Center suggests that as little as **two weeks** of compassion training — in which one generates positive wishes for another being — primes a person's ability to empathize with others and leads to prosocial behavior aimed at decreasing others' suffering.



INSIGHT Insight helps us understand how our minds work and can help influence the narrative we all hold about ourselves. Having a flexible sense of self from long-term meditation practice helps develop **resilience**, improves well-being and strengthens healthy emotion regulation.



PURPOSE is what motivates, inspires and drives us in life. One study in older participants found that if you have greater purpose in life, you're less likely to be dead 10 years later. Whether you're older versus younger or if you have a chronic condition or disease, cultivating a deep sense of purpose and meaning in life has been shown to have far reaching **benefits** to our physical and mental well-being.



well-being at work

NEW PROGRAM LAUNCHES
PILOTS IN WORKPLACES



How can we bring well-being into a place where the vast majority of us spend the most of our waking hours — at work?

A new program offered by Healthy Minds Innovations, the nonprofit affiliated with the Center for Healthy Minds, is bringing well-being skills to a variety of workplaces.

Primarily accessed through a smartphone app, the program focuses on core components of well-being inspired by decades of research at the Center for Healthy Minds and others in the field.

Drawing on core skills of awareness, connection, insight and purpose, the program gives users feedback on their well-being and includes embedded measures and surveys to assess different aspects of their minds.

“We think of the Healthy Minds Program as more than mindfulness,” says Kelly Gatzke, Chief Product Officer for Healthy Minds Innovations. “There’s a larger framework at play based on decades of science, and one of our goals is to learn more about what works in real-life settings to improve our scientific understanding of well-being.”

So far, the program has been piloted at five companies and organizations across the United States.

A recent five-week pilot among educators at the Madison Metropolitan School District highlights how the program's skill-based content may help people handle daily stress on the job.

“The program made me more open-minded about where people might be coming from,” says Amy Hefty, a support teacher for student services with the school district. “Sometimes I would be quick to judge, and through mindfulness, I would be more thoughtful about where people are coming from or how I can use mindful practices to stay calm in a situation that might normally get me a little ramped up.”

Another participant shared that “this course of practice brought me back to what I actually love about teaching.”

Researchers believe the program is helpful, though additional work is required before drawing firm conclusions.

Next steps for the program include tailoring it to different professions — exploring whether it's helpful across age groups — and translating it into other languages to scale these practices globally.

To find out more, visit go.hminnovations.org/limited-release.

helping social changemakers THROUGH A CULTURE OF WELL-BEING

The Wellbeing Project, a global initiative focusing on cultures of well-being for social change institutions, visited the Center for Healthy Minds to launch a collaboration to understand well-being and organizational culture. Project Lead Aaron Pereira, Organizational Exploratory Program Co-Lead Alana Cookman and Principal Consultant/Researcher Sadie King from the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations shared their thoughts on how workplaces view health and happiness.

What is the Wellbeing Project?

Aaron Pereira: The Wellbeing Project is working to catalyze a culture of well-being for all changemakers — anyone in a profession that's focused on caring or helping. We aim to help everyone from social entrepreneurs to caregivers to peacekeepers and teachers find ways to incorporate well-being into their organizational culture. When people have their inner needs met, feel supported and have confidence to ask for help in their organizations, they are better able to serve the causes they seek to improve.



What do you see in common, across organizations?

Alana Cookman: Some of the things that come up consistently is that when you develop your inner well-being, lots of things start shifting and changing within a work context too. Collaboration and relationships become easier as people develop more space within themselves and are able to see a wider range of perspectives. It's easier for people to have more meaningful relationships within the organization and to work with external stakeholders. A culture of openness develops a sense of celebrating the whole person at work, and enabling more compassionate and empathetic relations with colleagues.



Sadie King: It's about developing a workplace where your life doesn't seem to end when you come into the door. Our challenge will be to describe how organizational well-being embeds in workplaces and to measure the impact on workers and the quality of their work.

Sources: Brefczynski-Lewis J. A., Lutz, A., Schaefer, H. S., Levinson, D. B., & Davidson, R. J. (2007). Neural correlates of attentional expertise in long-term meditation practitioners. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 104(27), 11483-11488; Kral, T. R. A., Schuyler, B. S., Mumford, J. A., Rosenkranz, M. A., Lutz, A., & Davidson, R. J. (2018). Impact of short- and long-term mindfulness meditation training on amygdala reactivity to emotional stimuli. *NeuroImage*, 181, 301-313; Lutz, A., Slagter, H., Rawling, N., Francis, A., Greischar, L. L., & Davidson, R. J. (2009). Mental training enhances attentional stability: Neural and behavioral evidence. *Journal of Neuroscience*, 29(42), 13418-13427; Schaefer, S. M., Boylan J. M., van Reekum C. M., Lapate R. C., Norris C. J., Ryff C. D., & Davidson R. J. (2013). Purpose in life predicts better emotional recovery from negative stimuli. *PLoS ONE*, 8(11), e80329; Slagter, H. A., Lutz, A., Greischar, L. L., Francis, A. D., Nieuwenhuis, S., Davis, J. M., & Davidson, R. J. (2007). Mental training affects use of limited brain resources. *PLoS Biology*, 5(6), e138; Weng, H. Y., Fox, A. S., Shackman, A. J., Stodola, D. E., Caldwell, J. Z. K., Olson, M. C., Rogers, G. M., & Davidson, R. J. (2013). Compassion training alters altruism and neural responses to suffering. *Psychological Science*, 24(7), 1171-1180.

JOIN US FOR OUR ANNUAL CELEBRATION WITH JON KABAT-ZINN

We invite you to join us for *The World We Make 2019* gathering Nov. 13 to celebrate and share exciting new possibilities to create a kinder, wiser, more compassionate world, together.



Jon Kabat-Zinn, founder of the Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Program and national bestselling author, will be our featured speaker.

Donors giving \$1,000 or more annually will receive two complimentary registrations to this celebration.

Learn more at centerhealthyminds.org/twwm-2019

VETERANS MORE LIKELY TO USE HEALTH SERVICES POST 9/11

A new study examines how veterans sought treatment for certain mental health conditions following the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. The analysis,

led by Center faculty member Simon Goldberg, found that post-9/11 veterans were less likely to delay treatment for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and depression than pre-9/11 veterans and civilians. However, no differences were observed in treatment delay for alcohol use disorder.



MINDFULNESS MEDITATION HELPFUL FOR MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT, BUT SOME EVIDENCE OUTPACES OTHERS

A recent meta-analysis from the Center suggests that mindfulness meditation is useful for certain disorders like depression, anxiety, substance abuse and chronic pain. For other conditions, like bipolar disorder and schizophrenia, science is at an even earlier stage. Researchers are still exploring which aspects of these conditions, if any, might be treated by mindfulness meditation, and what adaptations might be needed for the interventions.

your life, your legacy

As a Center supporter, you are bringing exciting discoveries into the world to help people learn to be happier, cultivate healthier minds and create a kinder, wiser, more compassionate world. You can ensure the Center's research and impact continues long into the future. A planned gift, such as a bequest or trust beneficiary designation, can be a significant way to continue making a positive difference.

The University of Wisconsin Foundation Office of Gift Planning offers planned giving resources and will answer any questions you might have.

"My job is a joyful one. Every day I hear from donors how important it is for the values they cherish now to continue long into the future. People tell me they are grateful to give — and it always reminds me that I am so fortunate to be able to help. I am especially pleased to support The Center for Healthy Minds, where I previously served as Senior Director of Development. Please don't hesitate to reach out to me if I can help with your will or estate plans — I'd love to hear your story."

To discuss making a bequest or to receive assistance, please contact Molly Schmidt (molly.schmidt@supportuw.org), or the Center's Director of Donor Engagement, Lorri Houston (lhouston2@wisc.edu or 608.267.3672)



Molly Schmidt,
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