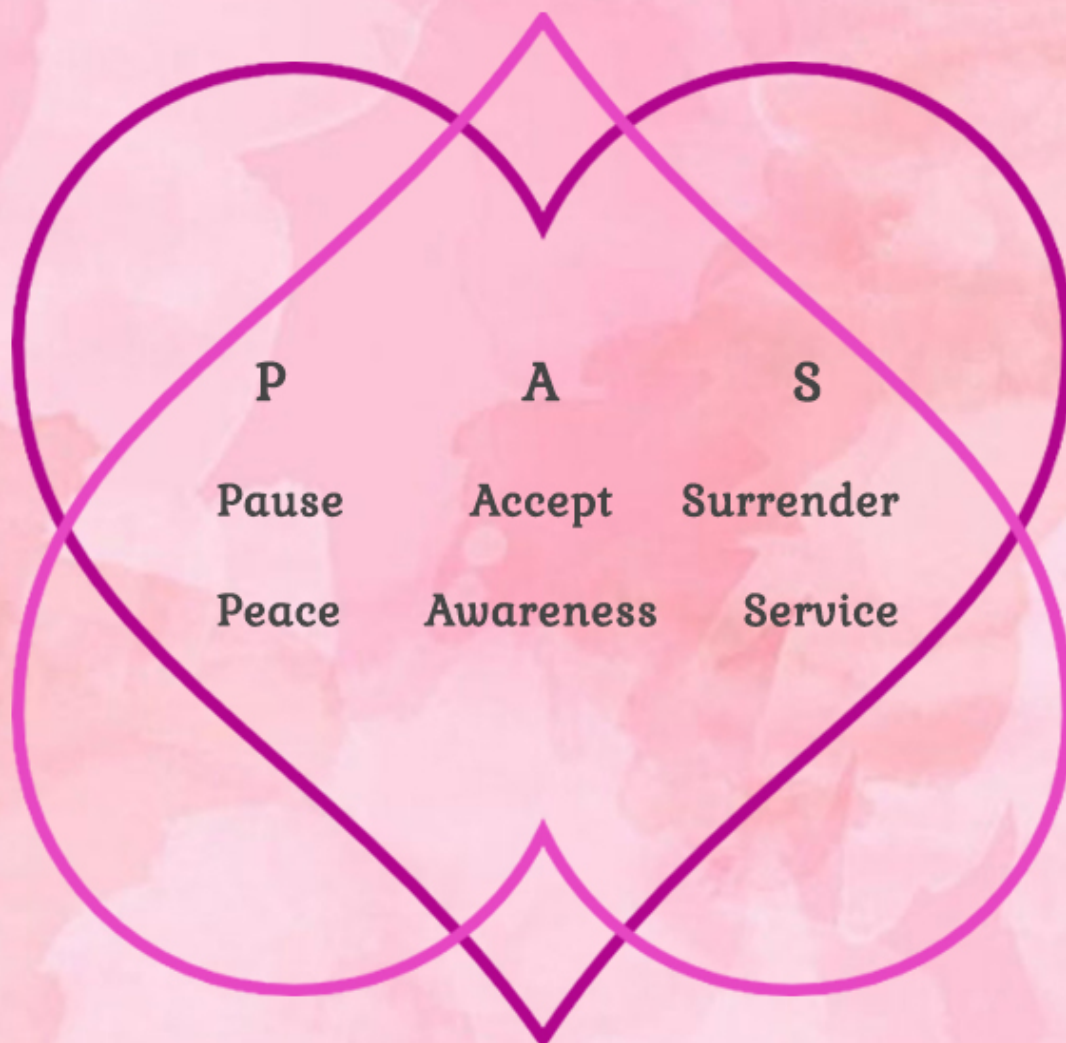


P.A.S 4 Peace



Companion Workbook

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Mindfulness means being consciously aware of what is happening inside us and around us in the present moment.

Mindfulness also means being accepting of what we experience without picking or choosing, without judging right or wrong, good or bad.

In meditative traditions, mindfulness is a method used to obtain insight, which means seeing things as they really are, and not cloaking our immediate experiences in reactive thought and emotions.

Mindfulness also refers to awareness of one's emotions and mind states, as well as to one's environment and relationship to others. When operationally defined, a two component model of mindfulness includes:

Self regulation of attention to present moment experience,
and
Approaching present moment experience with a sense of
curiosity, openness, and acceptance.

All of that makes mindfulness sound quite complex; however, it is very simple and direct in practice. The concept of mindfulness has been around for a very long time.

Countless religious and meditative disciplines have made use of this principle of "Experiencing the present moment" as a way of training the mind.

The type of mindfulness widely used today arose around 2,500 years ago with Theravada Buddhism. The concept of mindfulness was central to the teachings of Siddhartha, known better as the Buddha.

He once said:

You are what you think.
All that you are arises with your thoughts.
With your thoughts, - You make the world.

In its Buddhist context, mindfulness meditation has three overarching purposes:

Knowing the Mind
Training the Mind
Freeing the Mind

Mindfulness depends on being aware, and awareness is a state of mind that requires training and cultivation. A good place to start when trying to understand mindfulness, is to come to an understanding of Awareness as a state of mind.

Mindfulness has been defined as nonjudgmental awareness of the present moment. Nonjudgmental is adopting a genuinely warm and accepting attitude of “Loving Kindness” toward everything. It’s really about not making emotional judgments.

Meditation has been the focus of thousands of peer-reviewed studies over the past several decades. It is now widely accepted as a standard therapeutic tool employed in medicine, psychology, education, and self-development purporting far-reaching claims such as stress reduction, pain control, and even enlightenment.

The practice of meditation has been referred to as “a consistent attempt to maintain a specific attention set.”

Types of Meditation:

There are many differing and competing schools of meditation around the world, both religious and secular, however, if broken down to their basic constituent practices, there are only two types of meditation:

Concentration and Mindfulness, (and various combinations thereof).

Concentration: In this method, the mediator fixes focus on a single object or precept (an image, a candle flame, a word or phrase), and constantly brings the wandering mind back to this still point.

Mindfulness: This practice pays attention to each successive moment in a stream of conscious that is “The Now.” It relies on the cultivation of clear, stable, and non-judgmental awareness of the moment.

Mindfulness may focus attention on any number of things, such as one’s bodily sensations, feelings, mind states, or the environment.

Mindfulness is an essential practice of Buddhism, a system of moral and ethical principles dating back 25 centuries. It is one of the main tools used by adherents of Buddhism to “train the mind” to stop the chatter and “clear the mind” of unhealthy mental factors in order to gain insight.

Buddhism also possesses a deep and complex system of “spiritual psychology” that predates Western psychology by about 1,400 years.

The goal of psychological development is mediation is to increase the number of healthy mind states, and correspondingly decrease the number of unhealthy ones.

At the very peak of mental health, no unhealthy factors arise in the person’s mind at all. This is the ideal that each person is urged to realize.

Rather than focusing on spiritual growth, secular meditation emphasizes stress reduction, pain relief, relaxation and self-improvement.

Stress may be defined as a biological and psychological response experienced when encountering a threat we do not have the resources to deal with.

Every species on earth has its own defensive mechanisms that are triggered by reaction to adverse environmental stimuli.

Our automatic, involuntary responses to stress have been naturally selected over the long course of human evolution.

These responses represent adaptive changes that were essential for the survival of our ancestors when faced with life-threatening physical dangers, and the only alternatives were fighting or fleeing.

A critical feature of the stress response is that it terminates itself when the perceived threat has passed, allowing the body to return to homeostasis.

Hans Selye once said:

“It is not stress that kills us but our reaction to it.”

Long-term or “chronic” stress is a major contributing factor in the development of a wide range of physical and psychological health problems.

So, as you can see, unmanaged chronic stress can have some disastrous consequences for your health and well-being.

-Quaker Prayer-

In the face of strong winds, let me be a blade of grass
In the face of strong walls, let me be a gale of wind

In the face of everyday adversity, we need to be flexible and resilient — but, most of all, we need to learn to pick our battles.

Sometimes coping with stress means bending like a blade of grass or a willow in the wind; other times it's huffing puffing and blowing down a few wall. Whatever works!

Probably the only time we are ever truly aware of everything going on around us is when the Fight-or-Flight stress reaction is triggered.

Awareness implies an ability to perceive, feel and be conscious of our environment, including all outward and inward events, objects, and stimuli.

Awareness is also a measure of how mindful we are at any given moment in time.

A moment of danger, whether real or perceived, brings about a temporary cessation in our constant stream of internal chatter.

During these moment, we get a rare taste of what it means to be present, alert, and complexly aware.

- This is Mindfulness. -

In the effort to legitimize and demystify the practice of meditation, Harvard Medical School cardiologist, Dr. Herbert Benson set up clinical studies on the effects of meditation focusing on both TM and Tibetan Buddhist meditation.

In a 1974 article published in the journal *Psychiatry*, Benson described the physiologic changes that occurred during meditation, changes that engaged the parasympathetic nervous system to counter “Fight or flight” stress symptoms which he dubbed The Relaxation Response.

TM was a stripped-down version of “Concentration Meditation” that utilized a mantra—a key word or phrase that is silently repeated. With practice, this concentration technique produces an almost trance-like state of consciousness that reduces or eliminated mind wandering, thus bringing about a relaxed state of mind.

Over time Benson impressed the medical community through rigorous studies showing that mind-body treatment mythologies could “influence the body down to the genetic level.”

Benson’s big hurdle was getting Harvard Medical School to sign off on using The Relaxation Response as a viable “complementary” medical procedure.

In the 1970’s the medical community was still firmly entrenched in a long-standing philosophical and clinical tradition of Cartesianism.

This arose during the 17th century when the French philosopher, Rene Descartes, and other, heavily influenced medicine of their time with the theory that the body and mind were separate, and that functions of the mind could not directly improve bodily health.

Stating the body was a “magnificent machine” that could be tuned up, repaired, and put aright with drugs or surgery.

This view was an abrupt departure from time-honored medical traditions, dating back to Hippocrates and beyond, that saw the mind and body as being an integrated whole.

It was Hippocrates who once wrote: “the natural healing power within each one of us is the greatest force in getting well.” This is Mind/Body Medicine in a nutshell.

These sentiments were echoed by Chinese and Ayurvedic (Indian) traditions, as well. However, researchers, medical journals, and physicians of Benson’s day routinely rejected mind-body treatments as “alternative” or “folk” medicine and not scientifically valid.

The Benson-Henry Research and development of the “Mind Body Healing Model” brought us back to the Hippocrates time honored medical traditions of Mind/Body Medicine.

The Benson-Henry “Mind Body Healing Model” is still used by Harvard Medical School and its’ teaching hospitals today.

Meditation Researcher/Psychologist Daniel Coleman said:
“Attempts to forge systematic understanding of human personality and mental health did not originate with contemporary Western psychology. Our formal psychology, about a hundred years old, is merely a recent version of an endeavor probably as old as civilization.”

To see things from our Self inside creates a deep transformation to our own wholeness. A personal journey that leads us back to remembering our true essential self.

It unites the visible and the invisible realms and reveals the reality of the interconnectedness of all things.

Many modern healthcare practitioners struggle with limitations on the quality of care they are able to offer their patients within the paradigm of the current healthcare system. This often leaves them and their patients frustrated, overwhelmed and not living up to their full potential.

Despite their deep desire to provide full health and well-being; = strict licenses, certifications, rules and guidelines keep them constantly treating symptoms and unable to get to the CORE of their client's health issues.

Our current system does not fully understand or acknowledge that mental, emotional, social, spiritual AND experiential factors directly affect a person's physical health.

It wasn't always this way.

Have you been seeking a truly integrated approach to patient care?

Focused on treating Your Patient's Whole Being with attention to Treating Your Patient from their Inside and Out.

Integrative Medicine offers highly effective, evidence-based care that utilizes methodologies gathered from various healing cultures around the world. It seeks to restore and maintain health and wellness by creating a patient-centered holistic approach to healing, = one that:

Reaffirms the relationship between practitioner and patient

Focuses on the whole person

Is informed by evidence

Makes use of all appropriate therapeutic and lifestyle approaches to achieve optimal health, well-being, and in particular cases healing.

All which is a worthwhile reason for implementing Conscious Counseling with the approach of Sollite Integrative Medicine.