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**FNDN 102 Personal Application Assignment |** Mindfulness Practice

**INTRODUCTION**

We live in an age of distraction. We tend to go through life at a hectic pace, mentally juggling many balls at the same time. Mindfulness involves doing the exact opposite. It is the practice of being fully present in the moment. It includes removing distractions so that you can focus on what is happening to you, and in you, in any given moment. As a wise person once said, “Wherever you are, be all there.”

*Mindfulness practice can help in many areas of human flourishing such as:*

* *Mentally:* reducing stress, distraction and mental fatigue
* *Spiritually:* enabling us to focus on God, and potentially hear Him more clearly
* *Relationally*: being able to truly give a person your undivided attention and focus on what he/she is saying. This attentiveness makes people want to be around you and is an incredible way of showing value to another person.
* *Occupationally*: mindfulness increases productivity and quality of work
* *Physically*: mindfulness while exercising can improve technique, time efficiency, training flow and mind-muscle connections. Practicing mindfulness while eating can increase your enjoyment of food and improve digestion.

**PART 1 | Choose OPTION 1 or 2 below.** NOTE: Under Option 2 there are several practices to choose from. Follow ALL related instructions for your chosen option for *five days* this week. Track your activities in the log below and copy and paste on a separate page with your reflection.

 **OPTION 1: Mindfulness Practice**

If you are new to mindfulness, treat it like a skill and practice it. Set aside 10 minutes to practice mindfulness meditation each day. You can use an app like *Insight Timer* or simply set your phone for 10 minutes. Pick a focus point (the sensation of breathing, a guided session on the app, a verse or quality of God) and every time you notice your mind has wandered simply bring it back to your point of attention (without judgement or criticism). *Do this practice for five consecutive days and be sure to track / log your activities.*

**OPTION 2: Mindfulness Application**

If you already have some practice with mindfulness, you can also try applying mindfulness to your daily life. Below are some suggestions. Keep track of when you practiced mindfulness, for how long, and how it went.

1. **Scripture Meditation**

Meditation has been a long-standing tradition in Christianity, with strong biblical support. In some traditions or contexts the focus of meditation is on emptying one’s mind. By contrast, the biblical text teaches us to saturate our minds (Ps. 119). To do this, take a meaningful verse, phrase or truth from scripture. *Sit quietly, take slow, deep breaths and focus on your selected verse, phrase or teaching for at least 10 minutes*. Go slowly, and take time to pause and reflect on what you notice. Record your observations in the activity log below.

1. **Conversations**

Try practicing mindfulness during at least two conversations each day. When someone is talking to you, try to think only about what he/she is saying. Don’t think about your next task, or what happened previously that day. Don’t think about what you want to say next. Just focus on listening intently to the person and hearing what he/she has to say. Apply this for at least 10 minutes of conversation each day.

1. **Classes**

Practice a distraction-free class / Zoom session each day. Keep your phone off. Use paper and a pen to take notes. Avoid daydreaming and try to focus on what your professor and fellow-classmates are saying. Participate in class discussions, as you are able. Be totally there the whole class!

1. **School Work**

Practice mindfulness when doing your homework. Find a quiet place where you can be alone and free from distractions. Turn off your phone, close email and all applications you don’t need. Focus only on completing one task at a time. *Minimum time: 15 minutes / day*

1. **Eating**

Practice eating with mindfulness. Eat slowly, and savour eat bite. Focus on the taste, texture and aroma of your food. Put your utensil down between each bite and trying counting to ten after finishing chewing and swallowing. Then pick up the utensil for the next bite.

1. **Your Passion & Gifting**

Practice mindfulness with an activity that you love doing. This might be writing, singing, drawing, practicing a sports skill, etc. *Minimum time: 15 minutes / day*

1. **Pay attention to your body**

Stop five times a day for at least five minutes and pay attention to your body. Where is there tightness? Discomfort? Where are you most sensitive? Tired? **Keep notes.**

**STEP 2 |Write a one-page reflection**

After completing five days of mindfulness practice and/or application as outlined above, and recording your activities on the log sheet (see below), write a one-page reflection. This reflection, along with your activity log sheet, is due at the start of class on the date specified in your syllabus. Describe the effects of your mindfulness practice by responding to the following questions:

1. Which option did you choose and why?
2. What challenges did you encounter? What benefits resulted?
3. What did you learn about yourself in the process?

**Formatting** Your reflection should be one page in length and in APA format (typed, 12 point font size, New Roman Times font, double-spaced with one-inch margins). Include a title page (there is a template on the Moodle site) and save your file as "First Name\_Last Name\_Mindfulness." Submit in Word™ or .pdf format.

**RELATED READING**

Cope, Stephen. (1999) *Yoga and the Quest for the True Self.* New York, NY: Bantam Books.

Ford, Leighton. (2008) *The Attentive Life*. Downer’s Grove, Ill.: IVP.

Polizzi, C. P., Baltman, J., & Lynn, S. J. (2019). Brief meditation interventions: Mindfulness,
implementation instructions, and lovingkindness. *Psychology of Consciousness: Theory, Research, and Practice*.

Stoneham, Donna. (2015). Excerpt from *The Thriver’s Edge: Seven Keys to Transform the Way You Live, Love, and Lead*. She Writes Press (131-134) Retrieved from <https://trainingmag.com/living-above-waterline-model-mindful-leadership-challenging-times/>

**Mindfulness Practice Log Sheet**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Mindfulness practice/application** | **Duration (mins)** | **Notes: effect, experience, etc.**  |
| Monday |  |  |  |
| Tuesday |  |  |  |
| Wednesday |  |  |  |
| Thursday |  |  |  |
| Friday |  |  |  |
| Saturday |  |  |  |
| Sunday |  |  |  |

**MARKING RUBRIC**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **ACTIVITY LOG** |  | **Value (10)** | **MARK (10)** |
| Log submitted (10) | 2 pts / day  | **10** | 10 |
|  |  | **10** | 10 |
|  |  |  |  |
| **REFLECTION** |  | **Value (35)** | **MARK (35)** |
| Questions answered | (3x1 pts each) | 3 | 3 |
| Length (full page) | 1 – half or less / 1.5 – three quarters / 2 - full | 2 | 2 |
| 1. Degree of engagement | 5 – Basic response, undeveloped / 7.5 – Adequate detail, thoughtful / 10 – Detailed, thoughtful, articulate (these numbers are reference guides) | 10 | 10 |
| 2. Degree of engagement | 5 – Basic response, undeveloped / 7.5 – Adequate detail, thoughtful / 10 – Detailed, thoughtful, articulate (these numbers are reference guides) | 10 | 10 |
| 3. Degree of engagement | 5 – Basic response, undeveloped / 7.5 – Adequate detail, thoughtful / 10 – Detailed, thoughtful, articulate (these numbers are reference guides) | 10 | 10 |
|  |  | **35** | **35** |
|  |  |  |  |
| **PROFESSIONALISM / FORMATTING** |  | **Value (5)** | **MARK(5)** |
| Title Page | 0 – not included / 1 – not APA complete / 2 – APA complete | 2 | 2 |
| Grammar / Formatting | 1 = 4+ errors / 2 = 2-3 errors / 3 = no errors | 3 | 3 |
|  |  | **5** | **5** |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  | **50** | **50** |
|  |  | **5** | **5** |
|  | DEDUCTIONS (if applicable) |  |  |
| **COMMENTS** |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |