

MINDFUL COMMUNICATION: ENHANCING APHASIA REHABILITATION THROUGH MINDFULNESS TECHNIQUES



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1

OBJECTIVES AND OVERVIEW

- 1) Pre-test “quiz”
- 2) Origin Story – My stroke recovery and Aphasia Journey
- 3) The Mindfulness-Based Stroke Recovery Project
- 4) Mindfulness – What is it? How can it support living with Aphasia?
- 5) Q&A, Dialogue
- 6) Post-test “quiz”
- 7) Closing Mindfulness Practice

2

OBJECTIVES AND OVERVIEW

By the end of the workshop, participants will:

1. Understand the principles of mindfulness and its application in aphasia rehabilitation.
2. Acquire specific mindfulness techniques to enhance therapeutic interventions.
3. Recognize the importance of addressing emotional health in the rehabilitation process.

3

PRE-TEST

Think/Pair/Share:

Reflect and jot down thoughts for the following questions:

1. In your own words, what do “mindfulness” and meditation mean to you?
2. How (if at all) do you incorporate these concepts in your work with clients/patients experiencing aphasia?
3. How might this integration support your professional efforts in rehabilitation?

4

ORIGIN STORY

- Let's Pause.....

5

A FEW WORDS ABOUT MINDFULNESS

Defined: Mindfulness is paying attention in a particular way, to what's actually happening in the present moment, with an attitude of non-judging" – Dr. Jon Kabat-Zinn

"Mindfulness is about being fully awake in our lives.

It is about perceiving the exquisite vividness of each moment.

We also gain immediate access to our own powerful inner resources for insight, transformation, and healing." – Dr. Jon Kabat-Zinn

6

MINDFULNESS-BASED STRESS REDUCTION (MBSR)

- University of Massachusetts Medical Center, founded by Dr. Jon Kabat-Zinn
- An 8-week curriculum designed for patients with chronic pain or experiencing a variety of health crises.
- Over 30 years of research to support its effectiveness, it is now taught in clinics and hospitals by certified MBSR teachers worldwide.

7

Mindfulness-Based Stroke Recovery Project

Purpose

- Pilot Mindfulness Based Recovery from stroke (MBRfS), a novel, conceptual intervention designed for stroke survivors by a stroke survivor (Gray, L., 2020).
- All participants experienced some degree of aphasia and other communication disorders.

Inquiry

- What are stroke survivors' experiences of resilience after participation in the MBRfS program?

Concepts

- Emotional Recovery is essential in physical rehabilitation.
- Resilience: the ability to bounce back operationally, post-stroke.

8

Mindfulness Based Recovery from Stroke

Theory

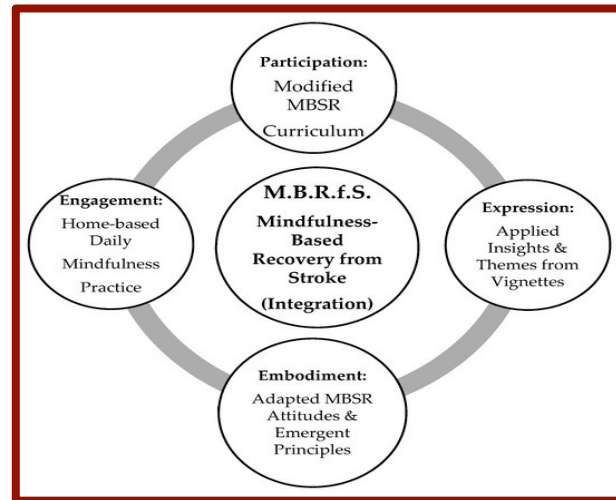
- Grounded theory framework, pilot.
- Adaptive model pictured (Gray, 2020)

Mindfulness Defined

- “Paying attention, on purpose, in the present moment, non-judgmentally.”
- Dr. Jon Kabat Zinn, founder of MBSR Program (Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction)

Focus is on "Emotional Recovery"

- Engagement
- Participation
- Expression
- Embodiment



9

Implications (officially and anecdotally).

- Positive benefit of building mindfulness skills
- Value for supportive community
- Innovation integration in rehabilitation services

"If you are going to live, you might as well be living."

"It's been valuable to listen to others and to have likeminded people that are struggling with this similar path to get upright. It's refreshing, you got support, for others who have been through the same deal."

"All your stroke recovery is based on physical but mental health is just as important. I don't think people necessarily realize they need it, but they do."

10

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11

THE "SEVEN ATTITUDES" OF MINDFULNESS PRACTICE:

The "**How**" of Mindfulness is about the accumulative cultivation of attitudes, approaches, and perceptions.

Attitudes "for now" include:

1. Non-judging (notice the inner critic)
2. Patience
3. Beginner's Mind (approaching situations with an open mind)
4. Trust
5. Non-striving (non-"shoulding")
6. Acceptance (letting things "be" as they are, for now)
7. Letting Go/Letting Be (for now)

12



MINDFULNESS – IT’S NOT WHAT YOU THINK.

Let’s Practice: “Awareness of Breath”

13



MINDFULNESS – IT’S NOT WHAT YOU THINK.

Let’s Practice: “Three-minute breath space”

14

MINDFULNESS – IT'S NOT WHAT YOU THINK.

Let's Practice: "S.T.O.P"

S. – Stop/Pause

T. – Take a Breath

O.- Observe

P. – Proceed/Repeat

15

MINDFULNESS – IT'S NOT WHAT YOU THINK.

Let's Practice: "Seated/Standing/Lying-down Body Scan"

16

SIMPLE WAYS TO INTEGRATE MINDFULNESS PRACTICE

- Begin with ourselves: **Mindfulness-Informed** Clinical Practice
 - Listen to meditations, pause to practice
 - <https://jonkabat-zinn.com>
 - Consider Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Course
- Offering to patients and clients
 - **Your presence** as the natural outcome of your personal mindfulness practice (it's about you first)
 - Short mindfulness “breaks” during client sessions
 - Sharing simple, accessible resources (STOP practice, 3-minute breath space)

17

FINAL REFLECTIONS TO TAKE AWAY- START SMALL

- Practice the **power of pausing** with your clients and finding small ways to help them access their **inner resources**.
- This is the **“Medicine of Presence”**. This creates a **shared gentle** space for **growth** and **recovery**. We are not alone in our experiences, including living the path of stroke recovery.
- “So long as we are **breathing**, there is more **right** than wrong going on with you.”
- ~ Jon Kabat-Zinn

18

QR CODE FOR RESOURCES



19

POST-TEST

Think/Pair/Share:

Reflect and jot down thoughts for the following questions:

1. Is there a shift in what “mindfulness” and meditation mean to you?
2. How (if at all) will you carry forward this workshop experience in your life?
3. How might this integration support your professional efforts in aphasia rehabilitation?

20



ALL TO BE CONTINUED.....

Thank you for your presence and attention.

Please reach out anytime for support and resources:

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Time for Q&A and Dialogue