

The University of Miami issued the following news release:

### **Mindfulness helps undergraduates stay on track**

UM researchers find that mindfulness training significantly reduces mind wandering in college students, promoting learning and improving academic achievement.

Few situations present as much distraction and time pressure as the college experience. In this environment, attention can be elusive and difficult to sustain even when it is attained. This lack of concentration interferes with learning and is associated with stress, which tends to increase during the academic term. Now, a form of mental training called mindfulness training, specifically designed for undergraduate students, shows promise as a tool to train attention and improve learning during the academic semester, according to a new study by a team of University of Miami (UM) researchers.

Mindfulness is a mental state in which a person pays attention to the present experience without ruminating about the past, or worrying about the future. Mindfulness training (MT) emphasizes attention-building exercises and learning to observe the activity of the mind.

One study, explored the benefits of Mindfulness training (MT) in addressing mind wandering throughout undergraduates academic career. For the study, 58 UM undergraduate students participated in an experiment testing the effectiveness of a seven-week mental training program designed to tame the mind wandering and increase focus. The students were assigned to either the MT group or a control group, who received no training. All participants completed two testing sessions, one at the start of the semester and again at the end of the training interval, as final exams neared. Attention was measured by examining overall accuracy and other performance measures in a computer task of sustained attention. The students also self-reported the incidence of mind wandering during the task.

The results indicate that the groups did not differ at the start of the semester. However, by the end of the training interval, the control group showed diminished attention, and reported increased mind wandering, while those who participated in the program showed significant improvements in attention and no increase in reported mind wandering.

The study is titled "Taming a Wandering Attention: short-form Mindfulness Training in Student Cohorts." Co-authors are Alexandra B. Morrison, post-doctoral associate in psychology; Merissa Goolsarran, research associate in psychology; and Scott L. Rogers, director of the Mindfulness in Law Program, at UM School of Law. This research is funded by the U.S. Department of Defense, to determine how to best offer effective MT that has low time requirements, while also being highly effective in high stress cohorts.

As a result of this work, mindfulness and mindfulness training are receiving much more attention as potential avenues in addressing stress-management and aiding promoting students' academic success.

If you're interested in exploring Mindfulness feel free to stop by one of our Mindfulness Drop Groups this semester held on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of every month. Remaining dates include: March 20<sup>th</sup>, April 3<sup>rd</sup>, and April 17<sup>th</sup>.

OR! Try one of the great online resources for relaxation below.

### **Mindfulness Apps**

<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/transform-your-life-hypnosis/id429563513?mt=8>

<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/meditation-oasis-app/id335343404?mt=8>

### **Mindfulness Activities & Instructions**

[http://www.mckinley.illinois.edu/Units/Health\\_Ed/relax\\_relaxation\\_exercises.htm](http://www.mckinley.illinois.edu/Units/Health_Ed/relax_relaxation_exercises.htm)

<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/relaxation-technique/SR00007>

<http://www.uic.edu/depts/wellctr/stressfreezone.shtml>

[https://www.studentaffairs.stonybrook.edu/caps/med\\_beginning.shtml](https://www.studentaffairs.stonybrook.edu/caps/med_beginning.shtml)

<http://health.ucsd.edu/specialties/mindfulness/mbsr/Pages/audio.aspx>

[http://www.umsystem.edu/curators/wellness/wellness\\_video](http://www.umsystem.edu/curators/wellness/wellness_video)

### **Mindfulness & Relaxation Informational Videos**

<http://mindfulness-solution.com/DownloadMeditations.html>

<http://www.comh.ca/pchc/resources/audio/index.cfm>

[http://www.ted.com/talks/kelly\\_mcgonigal\\_how\\_to\\_make\\_stress\\_your\\_friend.html](http://www.ted.com/talks/kelly_mcgonigal_how_to_make_stress_your_friend.html)

[http://www.ted.com/talks/andy\\_puddicombe\\_all\\_it\\_takes\\_is\\_10\\_mindful\\_minutes.html](http://www.ted.com/talks/andy_puddicombe_all_it_takes_is_10_mindful_minutes.html)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UYfvyeZhLfk>