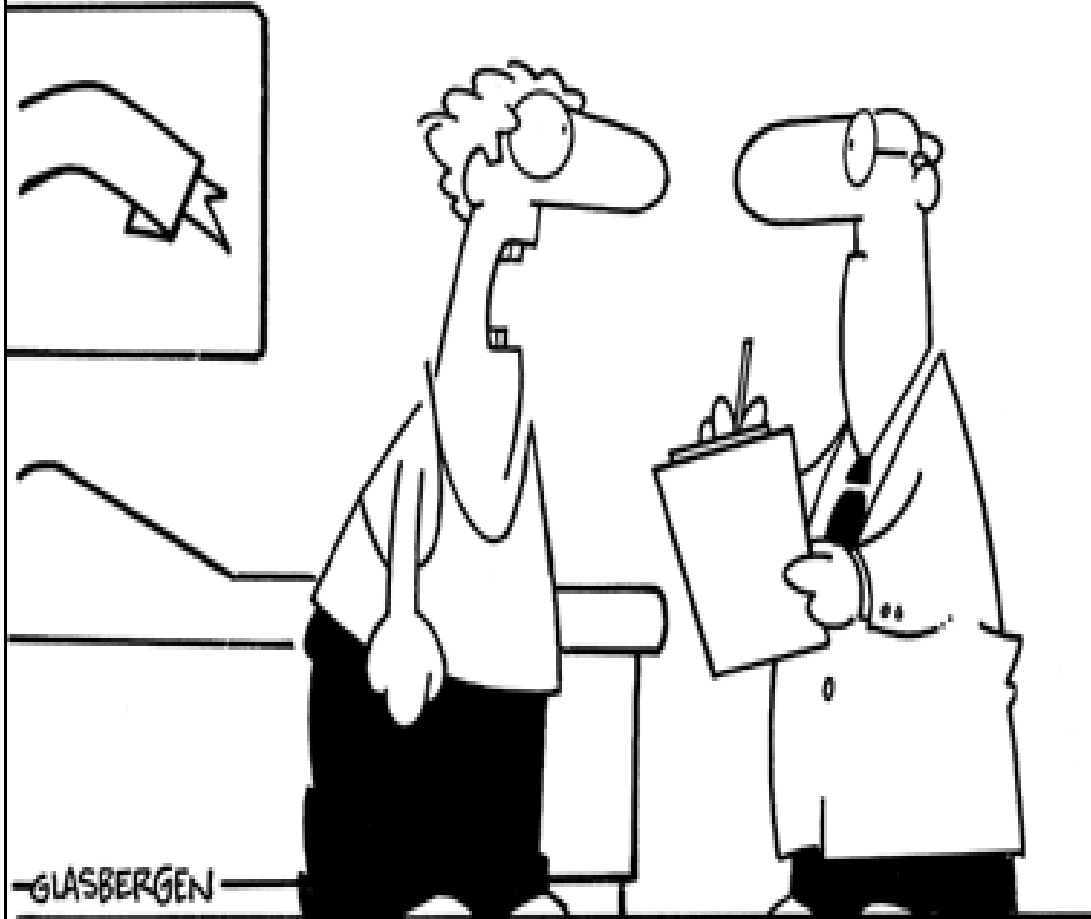


Mindfulness, Emotions and Pain Treatment

**Mel Pohl, M.D.
Medical Director
Las Vegas Recovery Center**

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**"I'm learning how to relax, doctor —
but I want to relax *better and faster!*
*I want to be on the cutting edge of relaxation!"***

www.DoctorFunnyBone.com

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Objectives

- Review nature of suffering
- Identify holding and attachment
- Describe mindfulness as it pertains to chronic pain
- Experience meditation practices first-hand
 - Body scan – Jon Kabot-Zinn, Ph.D.
 - Forgiveness Meditation
 - Tonglen
- Not be too scientific or serious!!



SUFFERING =
Pain X Resistance

“...When touched with a feeling of pain, the ordinary uninstructed person sorrows, grieves, and laments, beats his breast, becomes distraught.

So he feels **two pains, physical and mental.**

Just as if they were to shoot a man with an arrow and, right afterward, were to shoot him with another one, so that he would feel the pains of two arrows...”

The Buddha

Mindfulness Meditation

- Based on Theraveda and Mahayana Buddhism – 500 BC - non religious
- Focus is on insight (vipassana)
- Goal is NOT to eliminate pain or stress
- Use intentional, focused awareness → achieve nonjudgmental, self acceptance in the *present moment*.

Mindfulness Practice

- Willful directed attention to **present moment without judgment**
- Daily practice – like tuning an instrument
- Changes the brain – neuroplasticity
- Enriches the brain's neuronal structures –
 - Enhances connections
 - Affects neurotransmitter levels – decreased cortisol and epinephrine (stimulation), increased serotonin and GABA (relaxation, antidepressant)

Mindfulness Practice

- Meta-cognitive process (vs CBT)
- Change out relationship with our thoughts without changing the thoughts themselves
- Detach from thoughts, feelings and physical sensations (attachment = suffering)
- Observer or spectator of thoughts
- Notice/recognize without acting
- Respond rather than react

Mindfulness Practice

- Utilize “beginner’s mind”
- Knowing that I don’t know
- Being open-hearted and open-minded to new possibilities
- Be kind to yourself (unconditionally loving)
- Tenderly holding and intimately knowing our suffering in any and all circumstances

Mindfulness Practice

- **Sitting still takes courage!!**
- **We don't want to feel what we feel**
- **We automatically want to cover over the pain in one way or another – identifying with VICTORY or VICTIMHOOD**
- **Look directly with compassion and humor**
- **Find meaning in the pain – use as an opportunity..**

Mindfulness Practice

- Focus on an object - usually the breath
- Thoughts ebb and flow (like bubbles)
- Bring attention back to the breath (training a puppy)
- No effort to clear thoughts or push away negatives – or hold positives
- Cravings and urges are a desire for things to be different than they are.
- No “good” meditation – no outcome

Mindfulness Practice

Bizarro Dan Piraro



Pema Chodron

- “Even after many years, many of us continue to practice harshly. We practice with guilt, as if we’re going to be excommunicated if we don’t do it right. We will discover what a ‘bad’ meditator we really are. The old joke is that a Buddhist is someone who is either meditating or feeling guilty about not meditating.

When Things Fall Apart

“I Felt Like a New Person.” The Effects of Mindfulness Meditation on Chronic Pain

- After 3 months of daily meditation in 27 older adults (>65):

- Less pain

- Improved attention

- Enhanced well-being

- Improved quality of life

Morone, N, Lynch, Cheryl et.al.

The Journal of Pain (2008) 9:9; 841-848.

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Mindfulness Practice

Suffering (Dukkah)

- Attachment to thoughts or outcomes
- Wanting physical states to be different (e.g. pain)
- Relentless mind activity (ruminating, obsessing, catastrophizing)
- Deep-seated habitual responses to the world
- Scrambling for security has never brought more than momentary relief and joy.
- Attachment to PAIN *seems* grounding – it is solid and familiar!

Tonglen

- Using poison as medicine
- Sending and receiving
- Soften boundaries between self and others
- 4 stages

Flash – open the mind and heart

Breathe in dark, hot, heavy – Breathe out light

Use an object of meditation - person

Expand – to the rest of the world

Mindfulness Practice Resistance

- Closed – minded
- Impatient – restless
- Unkind thoughts and judgments
- Cynical attitude
- Feels as foreign as walking on your hands.
- All fear – based!!

What is the fear?

Fear that if I allow the pain in:

- I'll die
- I'll be unhappy and unable to escape
- I won't be able to handle it
- I'll hurt myself
- I don't deserve this and it won't work

Jon Kabat-Zinn

- “If you move into pure awareness in the midst of pain even for the tiniest moment, *your relationship with your pain is going to shift right in that very moment.*”
- “And the shift in your relationship with the experience gives you more degrees of freedom in your attitude and in your actions in a given situation, whatever it is...even if you don't know what to do.”

BODY SCAN

- Burmese practice called sweeping
- Jon Kabat Zinn, Ph.D
- “Self Cat Scan”
- Observer’s attitude – bearing witness to the pain – **awareness of the pain is not the pain**
- Utilize Compassion and kindness towards self.