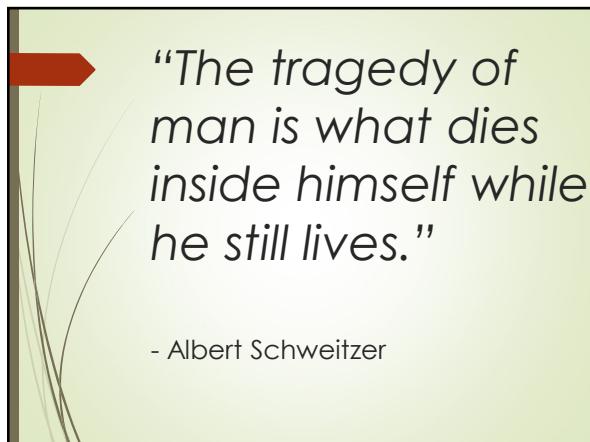


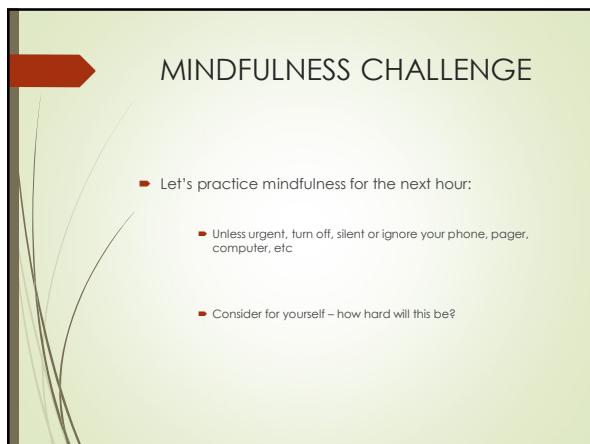
Non-Pharmaceutical
End of Life Comfort
Measures

27th Annual Caring for the Frail Elderly Conference
August 19 2017
Christi Lero, LMSW, Social Worker, Hospice
Compassus
Liz Klug, Certified Yoga Teacher, Yoga Sol
Kevin Craig, MD, MSPH, FAAFP, University of Missouri



“The tragedy of man is what dies inside himself while he still lives.”

- Albert Schweitzer



MINDFULNESS CHALLENGE

- ▶ Let's practice mindfulness for the next hour:
 - ▶ Unless urgent, turn off, silent or ignore your phone, pager, computer, etc
 - ▶ Consider for yourself – how hard will this be?

Mindfulness

- ▶ the practice of being fully aware of the present moment and your thoughts...
- ▶ without casting judgment or trying to qualify those thoughts as "positive" or "negative".
- ▶ i.e. engagement – with your work, your family, your life

"Don't panic, don't struggle. Relax and accept it. It is what it is."

- ▶ "I'll tell you what my 92-year-old mentor told me. This is going to be a war for me. David versus cancer. A battle. And that would have been a terrific waste of time," Oliver said. "Instead, he said, 'Don't panic, don't struggle. Relax and accept it. It is what it is. You know none of us gets out of this alive.'

— David Oliver, speaking of Fred Zwig

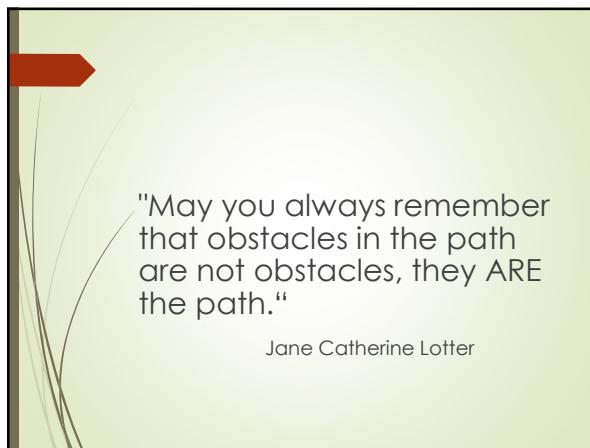
Engagement

"Burnout is the opposite of engagement with your work."

- Eric Widera, MD, University of California, San Francisco

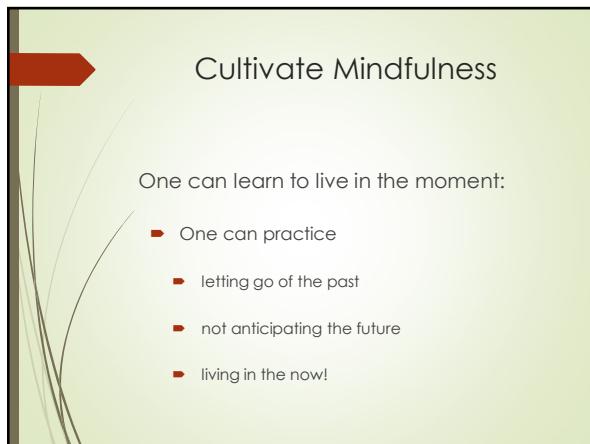
"Suffering is the opposite of engagement with your life."

- Kevin Craig, Columbia, MO



"May you always remember
that obstacles in the path
are not obstacles, they ARE
the path."

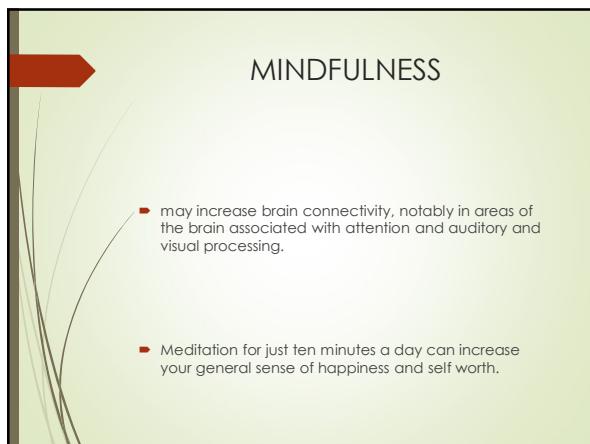
Jane Catherine Lotter



Cultivate Mindfulness

One can learn to live in the moment:

- One can practice
 - letting go of the past
 - not anticipating the future
 - living in the now!



MINDFULNESS

- may increase brain connectivity, notably in areas of the brain associated with attention and auditory and visual processing.
- Meditation for just ten minutes a day can increase your general sense of happiness and self worth.

Studies of functional MRIs of Buddhist monks:

- ▶ Compassion meditation of monks found to **modulate their amygdala**
- ▶ Involved in perception, control and evaluation of emotions
- ▶ Related to aggression, fear, anxiety and alcoholism

Benefits of Meditation and Yoga

- ▶ Better sleep
- ▶ Decreased risk of heart disease
- ▶ Manage mood
- ▶ Increase self-confidence
- ▶ Improve job satisfaction
- ▶ Increase life satisfaction

Alternatives to Medications

- ▶ Stress is always present – it's how we react to it that matters
- ▶ Get yourself/patients outdoors, exercise regularly (walk, Tai Chi, passive movement in a patient who can't move themselves)
- ▶ Laughter, play
- ▶ Avoidance/limitation of simple sugars and caffeine
- ▶ Consumption of plant-based, whole foods
- ▶ Getting ample quality, restorative sleep
- ▶ Bonding/reconnecting with supportive friends and family
- ▶ Simplification of life, de-clutter (including the mind – finding closure)
- ▶ Yoga, meditation, mindfulness

Let's Get Non- Pharmaceutical!

Non-Pharmaceutical Comfort Measures for End-of-Life Care

Christi Lero, MSW, LMSW

What are we comforting?

- ▶ Physical comfort: pain, shortness of breath, gastrointestinal issues, heart rate, temperature
- ▶ Emotional comfort: anger, sadness, stress
- ▶ Psychological comfort: depression, anxiety, fear, guilt, self-care

Non-Pharmaceutical Comfort

- ▶ Social support of family/friends/organizations
- ▶ Tactile support: massage, holding hands, running hands through hair, etc.
- ▶ Scent: aromatherapy, essential oils, lavender, chamomile, etc.
- ▶ Pets: therapy pets, non-judgemental presence
- ▶ Music
- ▶ Yoga
- ▶ Mindfulness: guided imagery, guided meditation
 - ▶ Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)

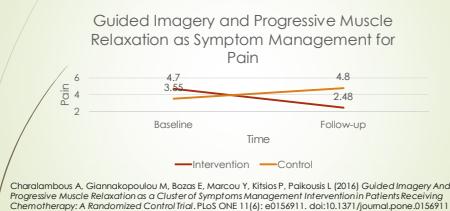
Guided Imagery

- A mindful relaxation technique using breathing, focus, and imagery to address common challenges.
- Addresses physical, emotional, and psychological comfort. Patients with cancer have been found to have fewer symptoms from chemotherapy as well.
- Researchers have identified benefits of guided imagery for older adults, including pain and other symptom management, mobility, and quality of life including addressing issues of anxiety and depression.

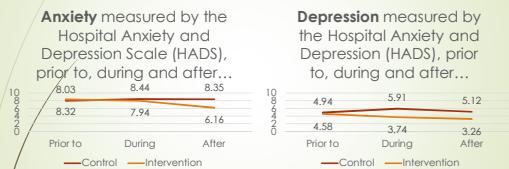
Guided Imagery

- Three Principles of Guided Imagery:
 - Mind-Body Connection:** using your mind to "connect" the senses during imagery
 - The Altered State:** gentle, focused attention on your mind and body.
 - Locus of Control:** maintaining control over your body

Supportive Evidence

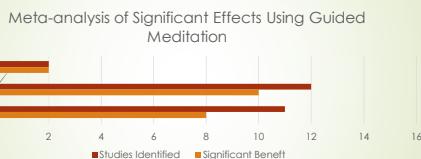


Supportive Evidence



Leon-Pizarro, C., Gich, I., Barthe, E., Rovirosa, A., Farris, B., Casas, F., Verger, E., Biete, A., Craven-Bartle, J., Sierra, J., & Arcusa, A. (2007). A randomized trial of the effect of training in relaxation and guided imagery techniques in improving psychological and quality-of-life indices for gynecologic and breast brachytherapy patients. *Psycho-Oncology* 16: 971-979.

Supportive Evidence



Lafferty, W. E., Downey, L., McCarty, R. L., Standish, L. J., & Patrick, D. L. (2006). Evaluating CAM Treatment at the End of Life: A Review of Clinical Trials for Massage and Meditation. *Complementary Therapies in Medicine*, 14, 100-112. doi: 10.1016/j.ctim.2006.01.009

Guided Imagery at End of Life

- Co-occurring illnesses and medication interactions/side effects
 - Flexible setting – can be done in-patient, community setting, or at home. Does not require the supervision of a professional. In fact, much of the technique involves a seated or supine position, which is ideal for elderly populations.
 - No significant physical requirements are needed, although consider additional hearing devices if appropriate.
 - Can be used in conjunction with other non-pharmaceutical methods like music or scent.
 - Teaching coping skills, promoting self-determination and self-care; gives control back to the individual.
 - Extremely cost effective.

Let's Give It A Try!

Tips & Tricks

- ✓ Guided Imagery works best if you relax; don't force it!
- ✓ Imagine what comes easily
- ✓ Use all your senses
- ✓ Music helps
- ✓ It's okay to let your mind wander
- ✓ Being unsure is okay, you just have to be willing to try it
- ✓ Practice, practice, practice!



Helpful Resources

- Recordings at your local library
- Apps: Insight Timer, Headspace, Buddify, The Mindfulness App, and many more!
- Books:
 - Full Catastrophe Living: Using the Wisdom of Your Body and Mind to Face Stress, Pain, and Illness by Jon Kabat-Zinn and Thich Nhat Hanh
 - A Clinician's Guide to Teaching Mindfulness: The Comprehensive Session-by-Session Program for Mental Health Professionals and Health Care Providers by Christine Wolf, MD, PhD, J. Greg Serpa, PhD
 - Attending: Medicine, Mindfulness, and Humanity by Ronald Epstein, MD
 - Presence: Bringing Your Boldest Self to Your Biggest Challenges by Amy Cuddy

Christi Lero, MSW, LMSW

- Master of Social Work, Licensed Master Social Worker
 - Graduate Minor in Gerontology
 - Graduate Certificate of Public Health
 - Bachelor of Arts in Psychology
 - Medical Social Worker at Compassus Hospice & Palliative Care
- Professional Productions
 - Washington, K. T., Lero, C. M., & Khosla, N. (2017, February). *Psychosocial issues affecting the care of seriously ill patients of South Asian origin*. Paper presented at the Social Work Hospice & Palliative Care Network General Assembly, Scottsdale, AZ.

Yoga

Liz Klug
Yoga Sol

“Whether you think you can or you think you can’t...either way, you are right.”
~Henry Ford



Finish every day and be done with it.
You have done what you could;
Some blunders and absurdities crept
in; Forget them as soon as you can.
Tomorrow is a new day;
You shall begin it serenely and with
too high a spirit to be encumbered
with your old nonsense.

- Ralph Waldo Emerson



Always we hope
someone else has the answer,
some other place will be better,
some other time it will all turn out.

This is it.



"Being myself is
enough."
