



Incorporating Mindfulness Practice

a Tool to Navigate Discomfort as a
Weight-Inclusive Clinician

Paige Smathers, RDN, CD

ABOUT ME

- + Private practice in Salt Lake City called Positive Nutrition®
- + Host of Nutrition Matters Podcast
- + Specialize in helping individuals, communities and experts create positive relationships with food
- + Follow me: @paigesmathersrd



WEBINAR OUTLINE

- + CORE CONCEPTS OF MINDFULNESS
- + HOW IT HELPS IN SESSION
- + HOW IT HELPS PROFESSIONALLY
- + CONCLUSIONS



WHAT IS MINDFULNESS?

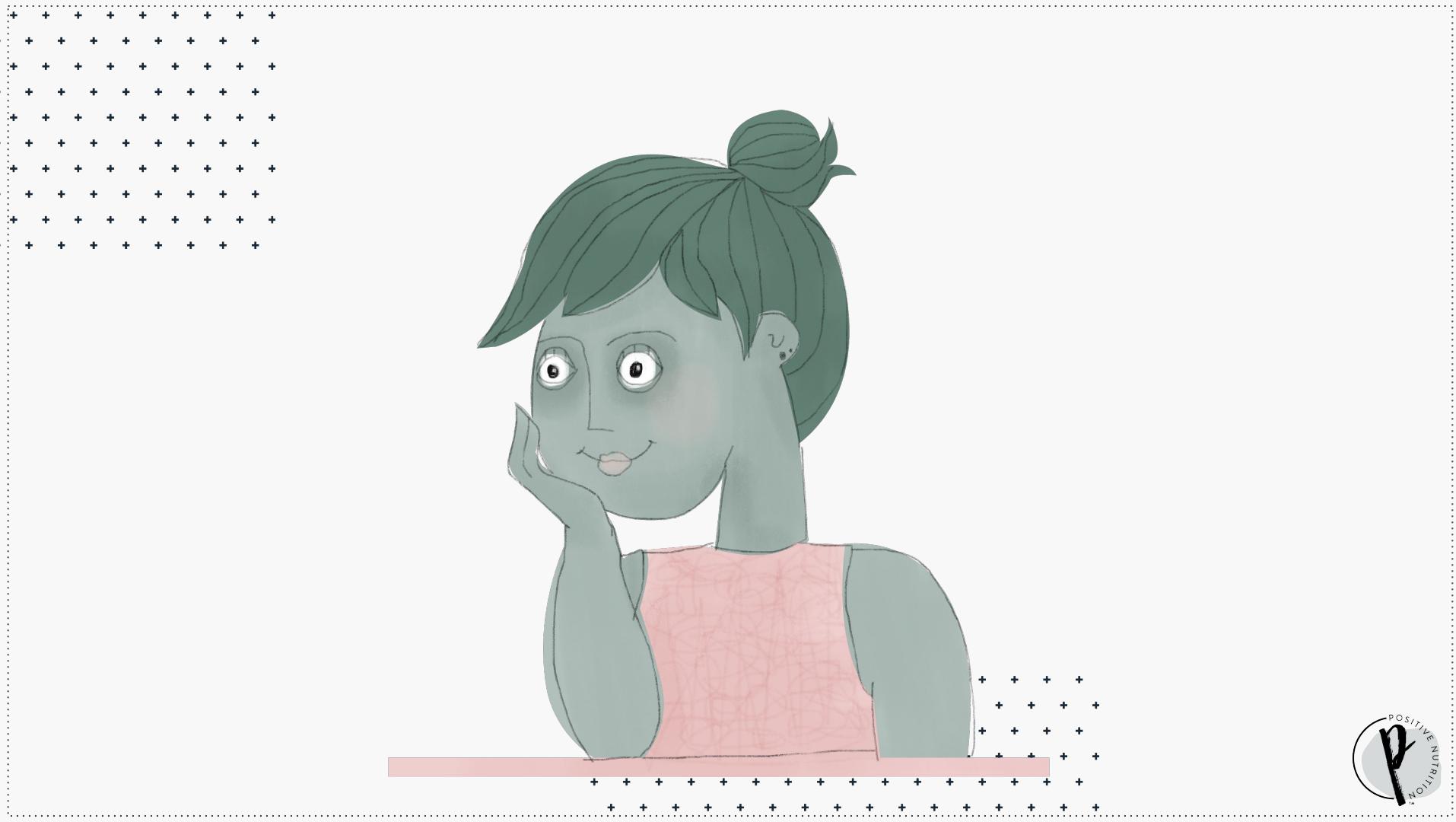


Mindfulness

In the literature, mindfulness is defined as:

**Moment-to-moment awareness of one's
experience without judgment**





EMPIRICALLY SUPPORTED BENEFITS

- + Decreased rumination (Chambers et al., 2008)
- + Improved cognitive flexibility (Moore and Malinowski, 2009)
- + Increased focus (Moore and Malinowski, 2009)
- + Boost in memory (Jha et al., 2010)
- + Reduced stress (Hoffman et al., 2010)
- + Health benefits: increased immune functioning, improvement to wellbeing and reduction in psychological stress (Davidson et al., 2003)
(Carmody & Baer, 2008)
(Farb et al., 2010)
- + Less emotional reactivity (Ortner et al., 2007)
- + Enhanced self-insight, morality, intuition and fear modulation (all functions associated with the brain's middle and prefrontal lobe area) (Keng et al., 2011)
- + Enhanced information processing speed (Moore and Malinowski, 2009)



MINDFULNESS

is what arises through the non-judgmental
awareness of the present moment



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Mindfulness isn't about
feeling good; it's about
getting good at feeling
whatever is present.

+ Noah Rasheta



Mindfulness

Is an exercise that helps us to become more skillful with our

REACTIVITY and PERSPECTIVE



STIMULUS

RESPONSE

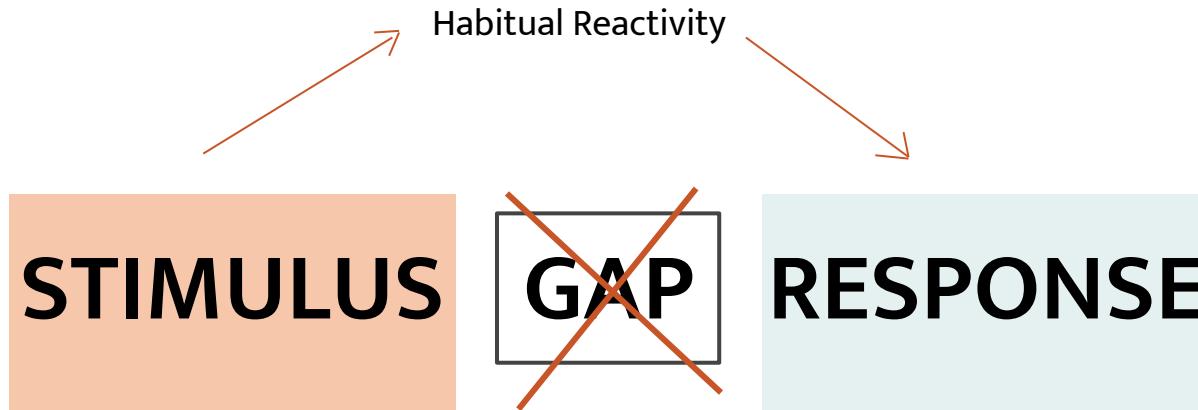


STIMULUS

GAP

RESPONSE





MINDFULNESS

= freedom from
habitual reactivity



WHY THIS MATTERS

- + Mindfulness allows us to get to know ourselves better
- + Increased awareness helps us meet our needs better
- + Seeing yourself, others and the world through this lens can improve mental and physical wellbeing
- + Understanding how your mind works helps you work *smarter, not harder*



THIS IS ABOUT YOU

- + Obviously, there is so much to say about how to incorporate mindfulness interventions into your sessions
- + The scope of this talk is about how mindfulness can help you as the clinician
 - + How it can help you navigate discomfort in session
 - + How it can help you navigate discomfort professionally (i.e. social media, networking, communities online, etc.)



HOW IT HELPS IN & OUT OF SESSIONS



SUFFERING

is what arises the moment we want life to be other than it is



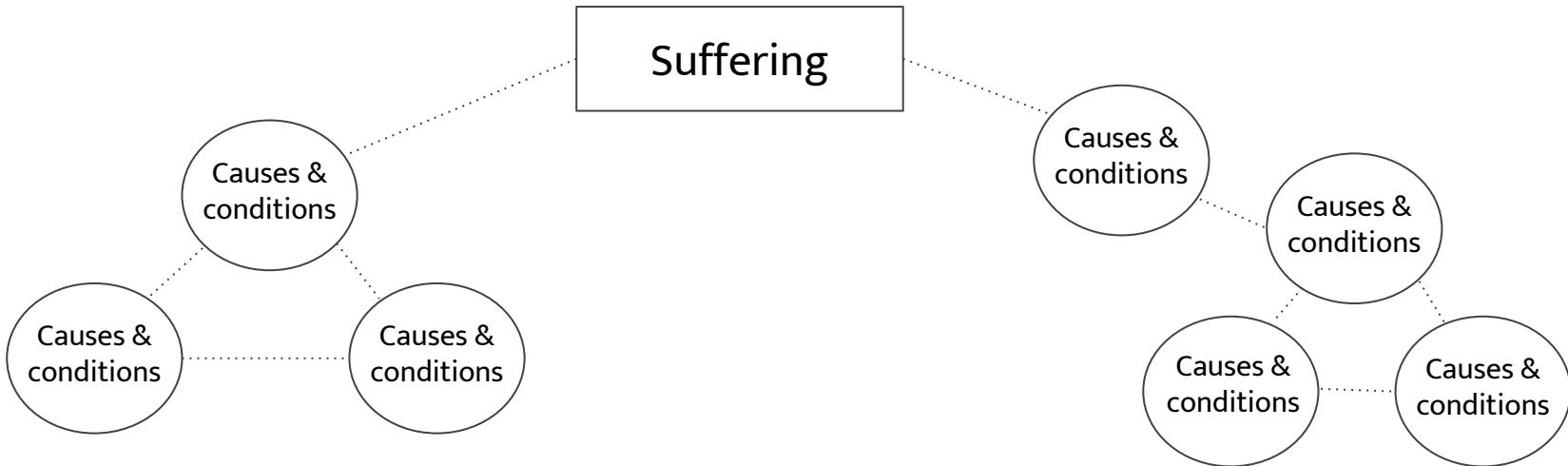
THE NATURE OF SUFFERING

- + It's universal
- + Simply acknowledging the fact that, at any given moment, we may face some type of uneasy or uncomfortable experience can start to change the way we deal with suffering



SUFFERING

has causes and conditions



Expectations

Where we
experience
suffering &
discomfort

Reality



Reality

Expectations



THERE ARE 3 KINDS OF SUFFERING

SUFFERING OF SUFFERING

This is the one we're all familiar with: the pain of birth, old age, sickness, and death.

SUFFERING OF CHANGE/ LOSS

When you do get what you want, you can't hold onto it. Even if things are going great now, it's just a matter of time. The richest, most successful person in the world will eventually lose it all.

ALL-PERVASIVE SUFFERING

This is a difficult one to see and understand. It's that lingering feeling that something isn't right, because life isn't the way I think it's supposed to be. A general sense of unsatisfactoriness. I'm not the way I'm supposed to be. You're not the way you're supposed to be. Life is not the way it's supposed to be. We experience this type of suffering because of the "conditioned mind" (ideas, concepts, beliefs).

Natural Suffering

Self-Inflicted Suffering



UNDERSTANDING SUFFERING

- + It's universal—we all experience it
- + Suffering can be natural or self-inflicted
- + Suffering has causes
- + Focus on the causes, **not the suffering itself**



INTERDEPENDENCE & IMPERMANENCE

- + The two I's of wisdom in understanding the nature of reality
- + Impermanence
 - + The nature of reality is that all things are constantly changing
 - + We suffer when we perceive/expect permanence in things that are impermanent
- + Interdependence
 - + Everything in nature depends on everything else outside of itself
 - + This helps us understand causes and conditions of suffering

REACTIVITY



STIMULUS

GAP

RESPONSE



CREATING GAP TIME

- + Approaching things (i.e. emotions, thoughts, etc.) neutrally enables the gap between stimulus and response
 - + Pausing when you notice a feeling arise in you to neutrally assess the cues your body is giving you
 - + Neutrality (and/or beginner's mind) about the feeling makes room for the gap: now there's room in the brain to ask the right questions
- + The goal is to break the chain of reactivity



DURING THE GAP

- + Observation/curiosity
- + Questioning questions
- + Change your relationship to your thoughts, not the thoughts themselves
- + Contemplate impermanence
- + Contemplating the ridiculousness of it all
- + Asking yourself: what is this really about? (i.e. core beliefs to explore)
- + Working on separating our ideas from our identity



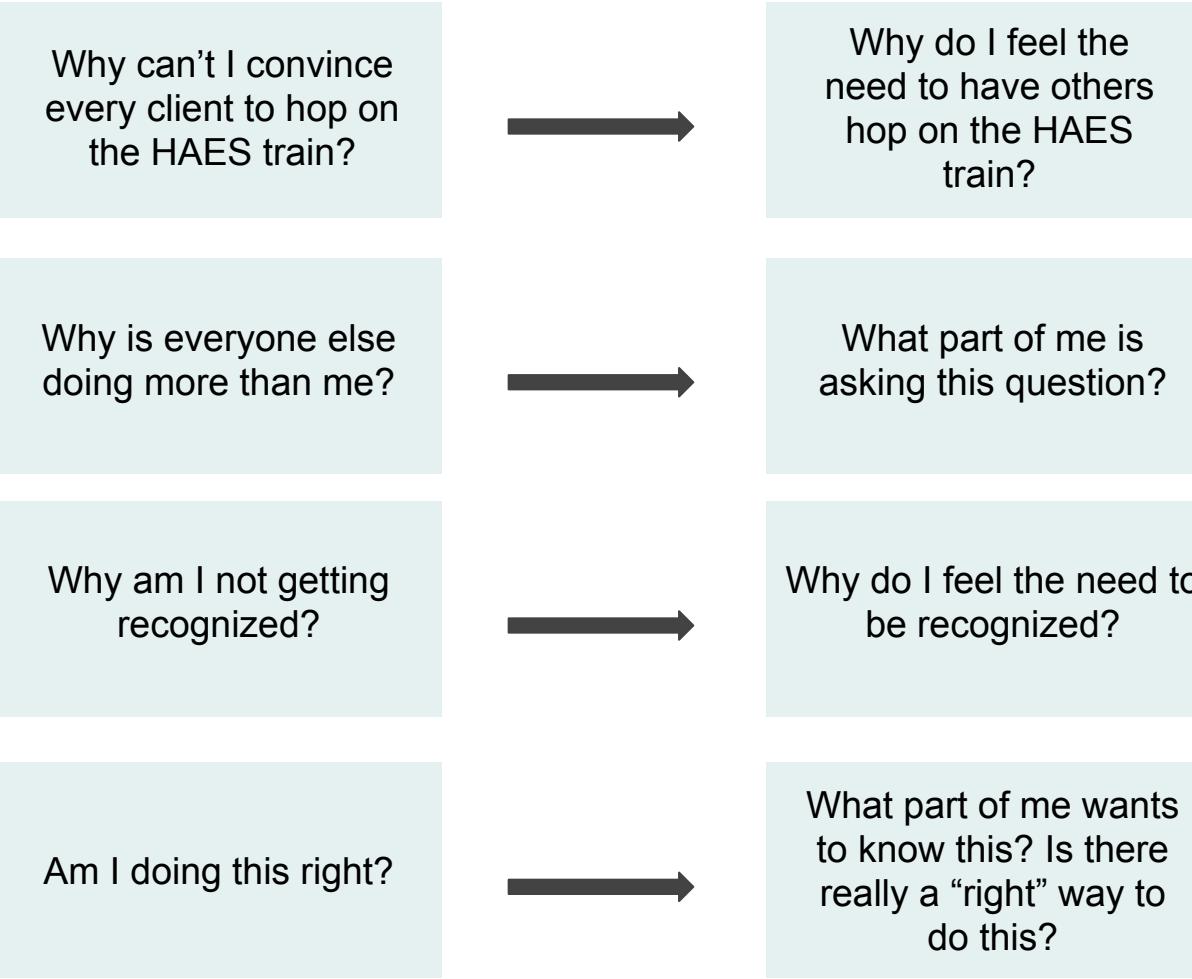
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Meditation practice isn't about trying to throw ourselves away and become something better. It's about befriending who we are already.

+ Pema Chodron



QUESTIONING QUESTIONS



WHAT IS GOOD AND WHAT IS BAD?



ACCEPTANCE

- + You don't need to change or improve yourself to be good at your job, successful, etc.
- + Change is inevitable (impermanence), so there's no need to *will* this to happen, because it will
- + Rather than trying to change [your thoughts, your emotions, your experience, etc.], accept them in this moment
- + Acceptance is the vehicle to skillfully navigate changes



Self-esteem vs. Self-compassion



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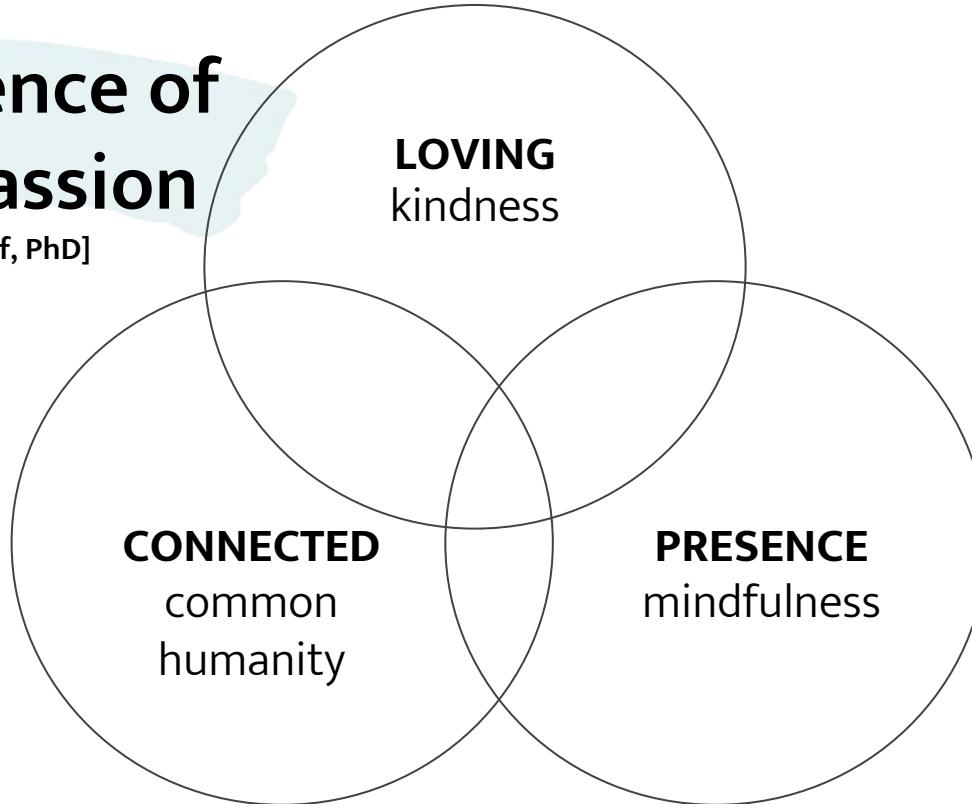
Caregivers and healers **need** to practice self-compassion in order to do their important work.

+ Kristin Neff, PhD



The Experience of Self-Compassion

[source: Kristin Neff, PhD]







WHY THIS MATTERS

- + Self-compassion has the power to reduce our discomfort and enhance the positives
- + Much of our suffering comes from *the conditioned mind* (concepts, beliefs, ideas) attaching meaning to things that aren't inherently meaningful
 - + A good thought filter: shoulds
 - + Example: my practice *should* look this way instead of that or my clients *should* be behaving/acting this way



You are not your ideas.



You don't have to believe
your own thoughts.



THIS IS A PRACTICE

- + You're experimenting to learn more about yourself, your mind and how you work
- + Take an attitude of curiosity instead of judgement with yourself as you implement mindfulness principles
- + As you practice, you'll continually get better at putting these concepts into practice



TAKE-HOME MESSAGES

- + The idea behind mindfulness is to get to know oneself better
- + We can use mindfulness to navigate the [very natural] ebbs and flows in our emotions while doing such challenging work
- + Mindfulness practice builds awareness, connection and compassion, thus leading to better overall self-care





THANK YOU!

Paige Smathers, RDN, CD

801-948-0898

paige@positive-nutrition.com

2936 S Highland Dr, Suite 100 | Salt Lake City, UT 84106