Mindfulness Support Group

Week 1 - Introduction to Mindfulness

“...scientific research at medical centers all over the world suggests that training in mindfulness and MBSR can positively and often profoundly affect participants' ability to reduce medical symptoms and psychological distress while learning to live life more fully.” (Center for Mindfulness in Medicine, Health Care, and Society, University of Massachusetts Medical School, (UMASS) 2018).

Mindfulness is a basic human quality, a way of learning to pay attention to whatever is happening in your life that allows you a greater sense of connection to your life inwardly and outwardly. Mindfulness is also a practice, a systematic method aimed at cultivating clarity, insight, and understanding. It is an opportunity to re-awaken to what you already are.

Regarding your health and the potential for improved success in life, and for us here at KCC, as a student, mindfulness is a way for you to experientially learn to take better care of yourself by exploring and understanding the interplay of mind and body and mobilizing your own inner resources for coping, growing, and healing. This approach is also called Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR). We will use our own interpretation of this process for our mindfulness support group.

Juggling the demands of daily life, work, family and attending classes can put great demands (stressors) on a person. It may start with excitement, confusion, apprehension, the challenges of change and improving our lives. When the mind and body experience these feelings, over time the stressors contribute to the development of stress. When we are stressed we are less focused and become more susceptible to physical illness, feelings of discomfort and mental and/or emotional strain. We may not be functioning as well as we used to at this point. Practicing mindfulness may help return us to more effective functioning both physically and mentally. This occurs as the result of learning to draw upon our inner resources and natural capacity for greater health as well as balance, ease and peace of mind.

The practice of mindfulness can bring about decreases in physical and psychological symptoms, improved energy and enthusiasm, increased ability to relax, reduction in pain, improved ability to cope with stress (short and long-term) as well as improved self-esteem. Mindfulness is a way of learning to relate directly to whatever is happening in your life, a way of taking charge and consciously and systematically working with your own stressors. Mindfulness is not something you have to “get” – it is already within you. Mindfulness is a practice adapted from classic meditation practices that are centuries old.

Activities:

1. Mindful eating

2. Mindful breathing  [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wGFog-OuFDM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wGFog-OuFDM)