Bias Education Support Team (BEST):

Introduction to Mindfulness

May 23, 2018
Sponsors

Diversity Committee
Campus Life Committee
Staff Council
Cultural Politics and Ethnic Studies
Diversity, Equity, Inclusiveness

Ongoing professional development

Social ecology

Responding and Preventing
Bias Education Support Team (BEST)

- Sub-committee of Diversity Committee
- Seasonal workshops
- Drop-in and regular practice
- Rapid response
- Lending library
- ½ credit course

- Separate from judicial and grievance process for now
Overview/Objectives

1) Definitions of Restorative Justice (RJ) and mindfulness (M)
2) Benefits of M
3) Practice of M
4) Discussion
Restorative Justice

- **Repair harm and relationships** using conferencing and problem solving circles.

- **Maintain relationships** when minor conflicts occur, using conflict resolution and informal mediation.

- **Make and develop relationships** by encouraging a community of care and a sense of shared responsibility for each others’ wellbeing using circle meetings etc.
Mindfulness
Mindfulness as Contemplative Practice

1) Noticing vs. Overidentification
2) Compassion vs Judgement
3) Interconnectedness vs. Isolation

(Thich Nhat Hanh, K. Neff, T. Brach)
Mindfulness

1) Practice
2) Quality of Attention
Community Knowledges

Qigong
QUALITY OF ATTENTION: 5 minutes

- Find a partner you do not know well
- Share
  - Name
  - Pronouns (if you wish)
  - Favorite sound (if you wish)
  - Affiliation with Pitzer
  - What is your intention for today’s workshop?
- • Noticing without judgement
- • Share the air
- • Fire
PART II: BENEFITS
Explicit Bias

Attitudes and beliefs that we have about a person or group on a conscious level. We are fully aware of these, so they can be self-reported.

Implicit Bias

Unconscious attitudes that lie below the surface, but may influence our behaviors.
Benefits: Mindfulness


Benefits: Mindfulness and DEI

- “Practice ways of speaking/listening that increase and strengthen interconnection across lines of real and perceived difference”

- “Break habits and stories that give rise to biases”

- R. Magee
Benefits: Mindfulness and DEI

"Individually these incidents seem benign. But cumulatively I believe that they act like sort of low-grade microtraumas that can that end up hurting you and your biology. It's not just having your feelings hurt. It's having your biology hurt as well." (Montenegro)
Executive Center
“The Thinking Brain”
Developmental shifts around ages 5-6, 11 & 15.
Handles logic, empathy compassion, creativity,
self-regulation, self-awareness, predicting,
planning, problem-solving, attention.

Limbic System

Emotional Center
“The Emotional Brain”
Developmental focus is during ages 0-5.
Processes emotions, memory, response to stress,
nurturing, caring, separation anxiety, fear, rage,
social bonding and hormone control.

Prefrontal Cortex

Survival Center
“Fight, Flight or Freeze”
Developed at birth. Regulates autonomic functions:
breathing, digestion, heart rate,
sleep, hunger, instinctual behaviors &
behaviors that sustain life.

Reptilian Brain
Epigenetics
Mindfulness as Contemplative Practice

1) Noticing vs. Overidentification
2) Compassion vs Judgment
3) Interconnectedness vs. Isolation

(Thich Nhat Hanh, K. Neff, T. Brach)
Benefits

"In relation to (mindfulness), to be honest, before going I really had ... no conceptualization of how (healing) can be related to justice. As the class has gone on, however, I realized how (mindfulness) relates to social justice. It makes me think of how taking care of oneself, treating other people and yourselves with love and empathy and peace, sharing space with people and generating this type of positive powerful energy, making people feel good, in and of itself can be a strong political act of love, perseverance, and living and loving radically. " (HS)
12:25 Quality of Attention - 5 minutes

- Turn to your partner
- I wonder...
- I learned...
- I question...
Mindfulness
12:40 Practice

Sitting Practice

Moving meditation

- Qi ball
- Push/pull
- (metaphor)
Metaphor: “Qi Ball”

“I am angry ALL the time. I am exhausted. It allowed me to be still. To remember myself. To notice. To tend to it. “

- HLML (Faculty)

“I feel like I am reading the news all the time. It is an onslaught. And my baseline is less. I am tired all the time. Now I feel calm and alert. “

- TRMS(Faculty)
Metaphor: “Push/Pull”

“What does this have to do with...”

“I feel uncomfortable talking about this (insert something related to diversity).”

“I teach about (insert topic).”
1:00 Discussion
1:10 Forecasting and Evaluation

- 5/23: Intro to Mindfulness
- 6/27: Restorative Justice - Dr. Jenny Escobar- CCEJ
- 7/25: Relational Mindfulness
- 8/22: Restorative Justice
- Sat: 10/13: Daylong: Institute for Social Transformation
- 1st and 3rd Tuesdays: Drop-in Mindfulness
- Rapid-response
- Lending library
Rhonda Magee: Mindfulness and DEI

- “Mindfulness becomes a part of basic workplace practice for each of us”

- “Create pathways—neural, emotional, and relational—to engagements that promote not merely personal, but relational and systemic changes that support real social justice”
"Conscious of systemic suffering and injustices, we work to create a more just, peaceful, and sustainable world. We promise, for the benefit of all, to practice self-care, mindfulness, healing, and joy. We vow to not burn out."

(Mushim Patricia Ikeda 2016)
Resources

1) Conversations on Compassion: Thich Nhat Hanh at Stanford University
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PewRDHeh3oY&t=3028s

2) UT Austin: http://self-compassion.org/category/exercises/#

3) UCLA Mindful Awareness Research Center: http://marc.ucla.edu/

4) Moving Together From Colorblindness to ColorInsight: Contemplative Inquiry, Research and Practice in the Work of Transformative Justice: Rhonda Magee
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1xcNaWUt_uk

5) Healing Justice Podcasts:
What next?

- **June 5 and 19:** BEST: Drop-in mindfulness led by Dr. Kathy Yep (PZ)
  - 1st and 3rd Tuesdays, 12:30 - 1:00 p.m.,
  - Living Room, McConnell Center, Pitzer
- **June 27:** BEST: Lunch Program
  - Restorative Justice: Dr. Escobar, California Conference for Equality and Justice (CCEJ)
  - 12:00 - 1:15 p.m.
  - Founders Room, McConnell Center, Pitzer
Questions? Comments?

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