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February 2015

Dear Matthew,



For Individuals



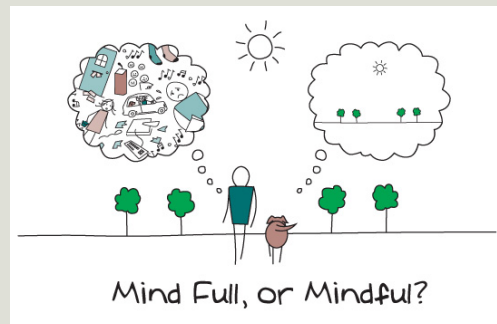
I could hear the groans from the two C-level executive clients as I began to explain mindfulness and how they could use it to be more successful. **Conversations about "mindfulness" with senior executives, is often met with skepticism and cynicism.** I realized the first place to start is talk about what it is, and how we can use it to become superior leaders.



For Organizations



Leaders face unprecedented challenges and wave upon wave of change. Uncertainty and unease may be the new working landscape. The meaning that we invest in all pervasive uncertainty or unease can cause powerful tides of anxiety. In short, we sacrifice our immediate experience with all its life giving energy for a mindless rumination that drains us.



CAREER ON!
Creating Career
Clarity and
Confidence, and
Avoiding a Career
Cul-de-sac

Anxiety feeds alienation, which eats away at healthy working culture. **Consequently, leaders need practices that offer access to nourishing immediacy, presence, greater resilience and an enhanced ability to focus in busy-ness.**

Mindfulness is NOT . . .



Click the book to read an excerpt

Mindfulness is NOT meditation. It may have originated in Buddhist meditative rituals, but the practice does not always necessitate meditation. It can be practiced at any moment, anywhere.

Mindfulness does NOT need you to "slow down." It is not so much about stopping to smell the roses as it is being aware of choosing your point of focus and being able to naturally regulate that choice. Mindfulness as a habit is required by the leader with an unhurried pace as much as the pressured fire-fighter.

Career On! is designed to help you develop a fulfilling career. The contents are designed to be a "roadmap" for your career development. This "roadmap" will lead you from where you are now through where you want to be, and how you can get there. Career On! has strategies for sustaining your efforts for the long haul. Keep it handy for use as a "how to" guide and a reference manual in developing your career.
by: Orlando Blake PhD

Testimonials

"I truly enjoyed our day.....it was great to be with the team and explore new ways of communication. Next go around we WILL not only survive the desert but come to decisions as a team and listen to one another" - **Andrew Melford**

"Thank you so much for your time and patience, I certainly found it to be a very useful day with everyone. True Colors is very insightful and I feel you gave me additional methods I will be able to use daily." - **Sarah Halime**

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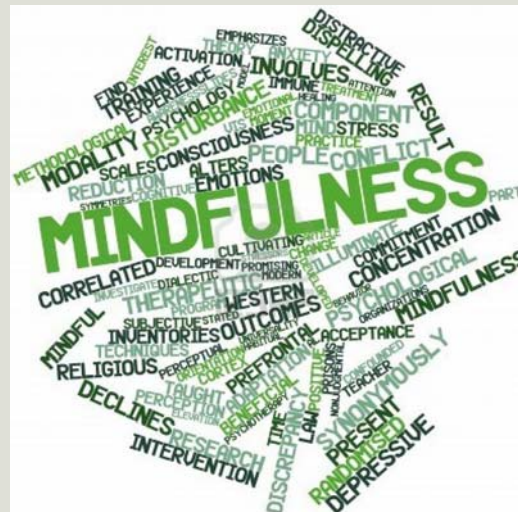
Forward to a Colleague

Mindfulness is NOT a gimmick. Like a lot of other useful practices, it too has been gimmicked as the new mantra, a short cut, the panacea to every ailment. While some short cuts are useful, most only give a short-term illusion of advancement. The true benefits increase when it becomes a habit.



Mindfulness can be used to calm as well as revive your mind. It has been used widely to reduce stress, blood pressure and anxiety. Mindfulness can generate unparalleled insight, allowing you to notice new things about yourself and the world around you.

Mindfulness IS . . .



Attention management in its highest form. **Mindfulness involves deliberate awareness of every thought and feeling that occurs** in an open, accepting and non-judgmental manner. This neutral attention prevents the emotions from distracting you and drawing your energy away.

Leaders today need to move beyond their accustomed mental models and familiar world views to **new ways of listening, observing, thinking, innovating, responding, balancing and leading.** Here are some reasons why mindfulness is essential for leaders:

The human brain works on a **pattern-recognition.** Our brain notices general markers and patterns and fills in the rest based on existing mental frameworks and memories. Most of our behaviors, even decisions, are based on this incomplete information.

Mindfulness ensures you are perceptive about the current context and discern the changes in your experiences. Being present and noticing the complete picture also helps your brain more accurately retrieve and learn what you need in that moment. This, in turn, ensures that you respond to situations, not react to them.

Dr. Orlando Blake

Dr. Blake's 25 years business of experience includes senior executive positions for Warner Bros and Guess? Inc. Orlando is a Founding Fellow of the Institute for Professional Coaching Association at Mclean Hospital a Harvard Medical School Affiliate and a Certified Performance Technologist from International Society of Performance Improvement. Dr. Blake has authored of more than 7 books covering TQM, Conflict Resolution, Career and Personal development, and Leadership.



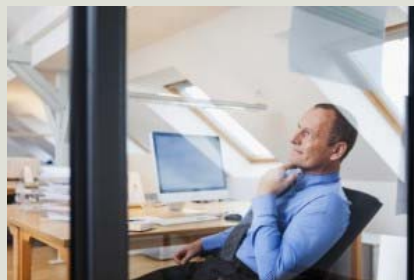
Neuroscientists have observed through MRIs **that mindfulness is associated with an increase in grey-matter density.** Mindfulness showed increases in brain regions associated with **cognitive "executive" functions** such as planning, decision making and judgment, as well as those associated with self-awareness, empathy and love.

Even in a resting state our minds are constantly gathering information. **Focus, therefore, takes conscious effort.** Deliberate concentration on the present moment allows leaders to develop exceptional focus, superior observation capacity, and expands awareness to facilitate more effective and accurate use of intuitive abilities.

With mindfulness, **you train your mind to focus on the present and respond with reason before emotion.** It's about taking a pause and guiding yourself to become "aware enough in the moment so that before you react, you're aware of how you're responding to a situation," says Ronald Epstein, a professor of family medicine at the University of Rochester Medical Center in New York. "That gives you the choice to blow up or not to blow up. You recognize and say, 'I'm about to lose my temper,' rather than losing your temper."

In 2013 Kirk Warren Brown, a psychologist at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, who has been studying and practicing mindfulness for more than 20 years, published one of the first studies to look at **how mindfulness practice affects emotional reactions.** By studying how brain waves change in response to emotional stimuli such as unpleasant images, he and his colleagues found that individuals deemed to be more mindful had **lower stress responses than less-mindful individuals.**

Practicing Mindfulness



Organizations, as well as individuals, can and should be mindful. **Mindful organizations are those that dedicate themselves to paying attention-both inwards and outwards.** The active observation of new things allows mindful organizations to be more

responsive, adaptive and faster.

The beauty of mindfulness is that once it's learned, it can be done easily, while doing other things. "It's something that can be applied under any kind of circumstance: washing the dishes, doing child care, driving, sitting in front of the computer," Brown

says.

Do you believe you are practicing mindfulness? Click the button to take our free mindfulness self-assessment quiz and score yourself to find out!



To learn how you can use mindfulness to increase your leadership and executive capabilities, access The Blake Group's free resources section [HERE](#).

Sincerely,

Orlando Blake, PhD, CPT

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Other resources for mindfulness: Center for Mindfulness in Medicine, Health Care, and Society at the University of Massachusetts Medical School.

Find Us on LinkedIn: Join us on LinkedIn today! Daily you strive to update and transform your career and by joining us on LinkedIn, we'll help you promote career opportunities and generate business relationships. We'll also share valuable information to strengthen your customer relationships and develop your leadership effectiveness.



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