



Holistic Life Foundation



Loving Kindness Practice

About Us

The Holistic Life Foundation is a Baltimore-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization committed to nurturing the wellness of children and adults in underserved communities. Through a comprehensive approach which helps children develop their inner lives through yoga, mindfulness, and self-care HLF demonstrates deep commitment to learning, community, and stewardship of the environment. HLF is also committed to developing high-quality evidence based programs and curriculum to improve community well-being.



What is Mindfulness?

Mindfulness is the combination of **awareness**, **centering**, and **being present**. Awareness of your thoughts, emotions, actions, and interactions in a nonjudgmental way. The ability to get centered and return to it moment to moment as your awareness slips. And the ability to be present mentally, not constantly living in the past or in the future.

“Living in the past causes anger, living in the future causes anger, live in the now”



HLF in Community

Drug Treatment

Schools (K-12)

Detention Centers

Healing Cities Act

HLF Akwesasne Satellite Program



THE RESULTS

**IMPROVED FOCUS,
CONCENTRATION & GPA'S**

72%
SUSPENSIONS DROPPED

98.78%
POSITIVE CHANGE IN EMOTIONS

Results from the Mindful Moment program have shown positive impacts on students' inside and outside the classroom.

The program has effectively supported the social and emotional well-being of students, leading to reductions in suspensions and fights, as well as improvements in attendance, freshman GPA, freshman promotions, and overall school climate

Students getting into verbal or physical altercations in the classroom or hallways were referred to the Mindful Moment Room, this helped reduce suspensions in the classroom by 72% in a school year.

98.78% of students who visit the Mindful Moment room report a positive change in emotions.

The program has been shown to have long-term benefits, including greater empathy and confidence, which lead to stronger interpersonal bonds and a greater sense of community.



THE MINDFUL MOMENT PROGRAM GOES VIRAL

*A school replaced detention
with meditation.*

THE RESULTS ARE STUNNING.



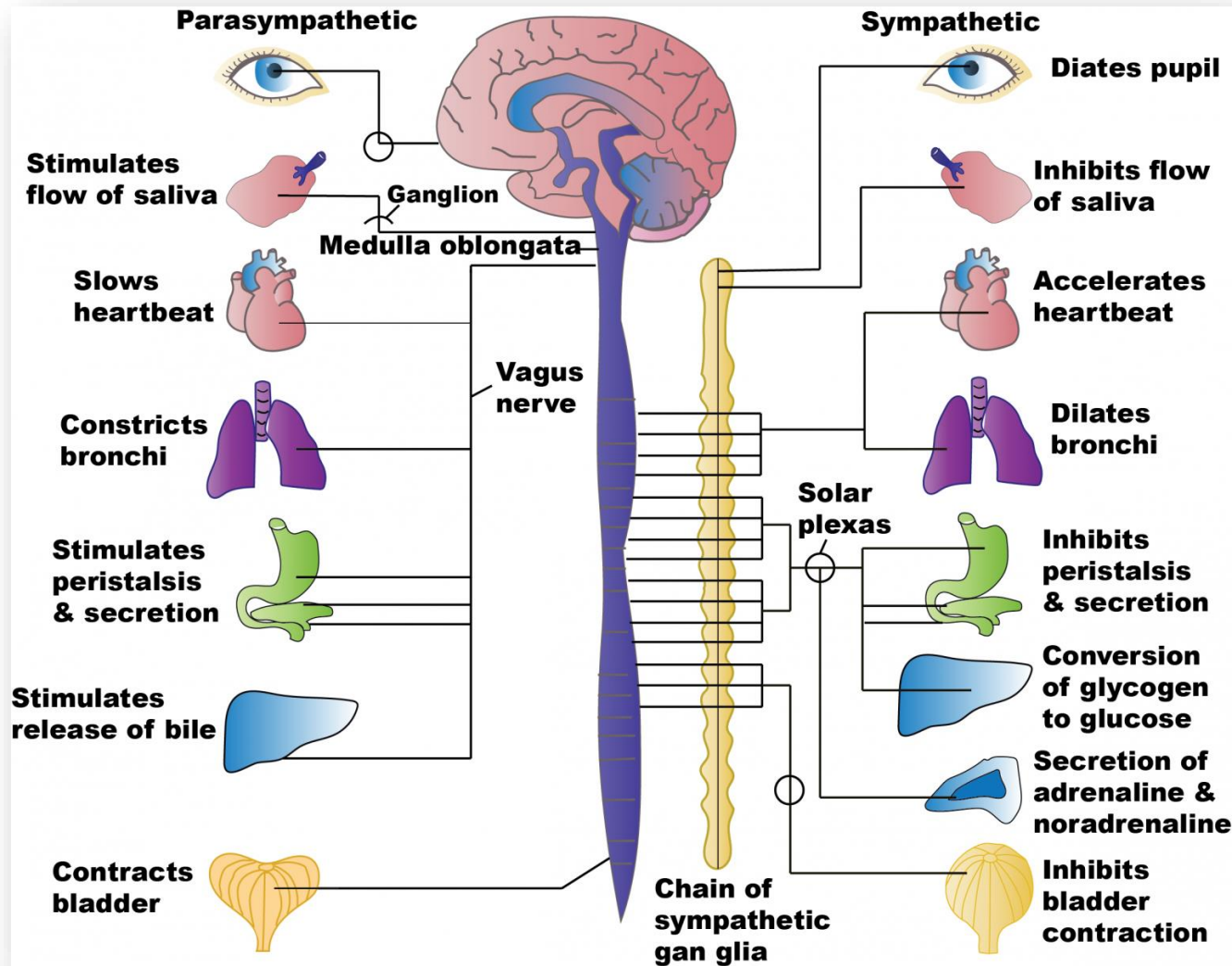
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The Breath

- **Why and How**
 - In and out the nose
 - Filter, heater, humidifier
 - Inhale belly big, exhale belly small
 - 5 breaths per minute (6 second inhale and exhale): 12 to 18 years
- **Benefits**
 - Reduce rumination
 - Reduce stress
 - Improved circulatory health
 - Improved digestion
 - Autonomic nervous system health



Autonomic Nervous System



- Parasympathetic: Relaxed
- Sympathetic: Stressed
- Ideally, spend most of life in parasympathetic dominance
- Most people are stuck in sympathetic dominance due to chronic stress
- It's important to be able to shift between the two states
- Prolonged activation of the sympathetic nervous system (>4 hrs) can lead to negative health outcomes and chronic illness.

Belly Breath

Study

Johns Hopkins Bloomberg
School of Public Health and
Penn State University

Looked at cognitive measures

First randomized controlled
study on the effectiveness of
yoga and mindfulness on urban
youth

Feasibility and Preliminary Outcomes of a School-Based Mindfulness Intervention for Urban Youth

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Jacinda K. Dariotis · Laura Feagans Gould ·
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Abstract Youth in underserved, urban communities are at risk for a range of negative outcomes related to stress, including social-emotional difficulties, behavior problems, and poor academic performance. Mindfulness-based approaches may improve adjustment among chronically stressed and disadvantaged youth by enhancing self-regulatory capacities. This paper reports findings from a pilot randomized controlled trial assessing the feasibility, acceptability, and preliminary outcomes of a school-based mindfulness and yoga intervention. Four urban public schools were randomized to an intervention or wait-list control condition ($n=97$ fourth and fifth graders, 60.8% female). It was hypothesized that the 12-week intervention would reduce involuntary stress responses and improve

mental health outcomes and social adjustment. Stress responses, depressive symptoms, and peer relations were assessed at baseline and post-intervention. Findings suggest the intervention was attractive to students, teachers, and school administrators and that it had a positive impact on problematic responses to stress including rumination, intrusive thoughts, and emotional arousal.

Keywords Mindfulness · Yoga · Prevention · School-based intervention · Chronic stress

Youth who experience persistent poverty or other chronic environmental stressors face serious challenges to healthy development. Exposure to environmental stress is a key contributor to the etiology and maintenance of internalizing and externalizing disorders in youth (Compas et al. 2001; Grant et al. 2006). Indeed, as many as one quarter of impoverished youth have social and emotional difficulties relative to their more economically advantaged peers (Keenan et al. 1997). Those disparities persist and are part of a pathway leading to high rates of poor academic performance, school dropout, and negative social outcomes among socio-economically disadvantaged youth (Reynolds et al. 2001).

Childhood Adversity and Impaired Regulatory Systems

Emerging evidence supports at least one mechanism along this pathway in that childhood adversity has been found to trigger neurobiological events that alter brain development (Andersen 2003; Shonkoff et al. 2009; Teicher et al. 2002), potentially impairing the stress response systems that underlie cognitive and emotion regulatory capacities (Andersen and Teicher 2009). As a result, chronically-stressed children are at risk for difficulties with cognitive

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Results

Reduction in involuntary stress reactions

Decreased rumination, intrusive thoughts, emotional arousal


Focus groups showed improvement in behavior in the classroom




JOHNS HOPKINS
BLOOMBERG
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

ADOLESCENT
MATTERS

Issues Brief



WINTER 2011



CENTER for
ADOLESCENT
HEALTH



Say
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MINDFULNESS MAKES
A DIFFERENCE IN THE
LIVES OF URBAN YOUTH

Although youth may be more “in the moment” than adults, young people can move through their days on autopilot, especially stressed out youth in underserved urban communities. These youth are at risk for a host of stress-related consequences, including social-emotional difficulties, behavior problems, and poor academic performance. Mindfulness-based approaches may help chronically stressed and disadvantaged youth by enhancing their ability to regulate their thoughts and emotions.

This issues brief details findings from a pilot randomized controlled trial that assessed the outcomes of a school-based mindfulness intervention. This research represents a partnership between the Holistic Life Foundation and researchers at the Prevention Research Center at Penn State University and the Center for Adolescent Health and the Center for the Prevention of Youth Violence at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. The findings suggest the intervention was:

- Attractive to students, teachers and school administration, and
- Effective in impacting stress-related problems, including rumination, intrusive thoughts and emotional arousal

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WHAT IS MINDFULNESS?

Mindfulness is defined as the awareness that emerges through paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally to the unfolding of experiences moment by moment. Mindfulness has its origins in the Buddhist tradition, through Eastern practices of meditation. It is not meditation however, since the goal is to have an increased awareness of the present moment, not to achieve a higher state of consciousness.

SOURCE: Kanner, E. Harker and Iris E. Funder. (2008). Teaching Mindfulness to Children, *Child Welfare Review*, 12(1), 75-81, 8.

THE BENEFITS OF MINDFULNESS

If research conducted primarily with adults is any indication, mindfulness-based approaches—yoga and meditation—can help chronically-stressed youth build their aptitude in controlling emotions and intrusive thoughts. Yoga, meditation and other mindfulness practices have been shown to be beneficial to respond to adverse psychological outcomes. Mindfulness has been reported to have positive effects on mental health, mood and stress.

Issues Brief

ADOLESCENT MATTERS

WINTER 2011

MINDFULNESS INTERVENTION OUTCOMES

Students were enthusiastic about the program, with 73.5 percent of students at one intervention school completing at least 75 percent of the classes. Focus groups conducted with students and teachers indicated that the students had a positive experience in the program and learned skills that helped them in their day-to-day lives.

“Most important thing I learned in the program is that it’s all different ways to deal with your stress, like instead of fighting and stuff.”
—5th grade boy

“It helps you relieve stress when you really feel stressed out or you’re really mad and focus on what’s inside of you and just make sure that you stay calm.”
—5th grade girl

“The program has helped me because now I know different routines and exercises that I can do at home that help me lower and reduces my stress. So whenever I get stressed out I can just do a pose and sometimes I can show my mother and my family.”
—4th grade girl

Further focus groups revealed that teachers were uniformly supportive of the idea of training urban youth using yoga and mindfulness techniques, especially if they could aid students struggling with behavior problems, high activity level, and poor attention-focus. Some teachers noted that they observed improvements in their students.

The intervention group reported significant improvements on the overall responses to stress scale of Involuntary Engagement, compared to the control group. In addition, significant differences were found on three of the five subscales—rumination, intrusive thoughts, and emotional arousal.

The intervention group’s reduction in involuntary stress reactions suggests that mindfulness-based practices were effective in helping youth self-regulate their emotions and reduce worrying thoughts.

If you want to be happy, be.
—Henry David Thoreau


CONCLUSION

Mindfulness-based approaches may be advantageous to urban youth by improving their capacity to cope with persistent stress. Enhancing responses to stress and the ability to control negative feelings and troubling thoughts among at-risk youth has the potential to encourage the development of core competencies that will benefit young people in school, at home and with friends, in the community—and throughout life.

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Research paper

Delivering mindfulness in the classroom via a technology-enabled approach: Feasibility and the potential impact on teachers' psychological well-being, self-efficacy, and mindfulness

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ABSTRACT

This longitudinal study included 64 teachers. We examined the feasibility and preliminary effects of a newly designed program, playing pre-recorded mindfulness practices to elementary school students by teachers across one school year. Self-report surveys and logbooks were used to collect data quantitative and qualitative data. During the first four months of implementation, teachers reported significant improvements in self-efficacy in classroom management and lower levels of perceived stress. Levels of mindfulness increased significantly and gradually throughout the school year. Qualitative results underlined potential changes in teachers' outcomes, suggesting a calming effect and perceived improvement in their teaching skills.

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1. Introduction

Within the educational sciences, mindfulness-based interventions have gained increased interest in improving mental, cognitive, and behavioral outcomes in both students and teachers (Dunning et al., 2018; Felver et al., 2016; Meiklejohn et al., 2012; Zoogman et al., 2015). Mindfulness originated in the Buddhist philosophy and meditation practice over two and a half thousand years ago (Brown et al., 2007). Initiated by the work of Jon Kabat-Zinn, mindfulness can be defined as the capacity to direct one's attention to an experience as it unfolds, in the present moment, with open-minded curiosity and acceptance while being non-judgmental (Kabat-Zinn, 2003). Practicing mindfulness meditation has been suggested to enhance self-regulation strategies by means of better attention- and emotion regulation, greater body awareness, and changes in perspective on the self (Hölzel et al., 2011).

Most mindfulness-based approaches, whether for children, adolescents, or adults, often include an intensive program of several weeks. A review and meta-analysis of 33 RCTs on the effects of face-

to-face mindfulness-based interventions (on average 8–12 weeks) by trained mindfulness instructors concluded that these interventions have a modest positive impact on reduced stress and increased mindfulness in children and adolescents (Dunning et al., 2018). Zenner et al. (2014) systematically reviewed 24 mindfulness-based interventions for schools and concluded moderate positive effects, particularly in relation to resilience to stress and improvements in cognitive performance. Yet, Zenner and colleagues, as well as other scholars, point out that there is significant heterogeneity in the format of the program (e.g., 2–28 weeks), with programs delivered during regular school hours in two-thirds of the studies (Felver et al., 2016; Maynard et al., 2017; Zenner et al., 2014; Zoogman et al., 2015).

A similar picture can be observed regarding mindfulness-based programs for teachers (Albrecht et al., 2012; Emerson et al., 2017). A systematic review of 12 studies showed a wide range in program format, content, and duration, including the standard 8-week mindfulness program and modified programs of four to nine weeks (e.g., SMART, CARE; Emerson et al., 2017). Comparable to studies among students, most mindfulness-based intervention trials in teachers demonstrated a reduction in cognitive-affective problems (e.g., stress, anxiety, depression) and an increase in teachers' self-efficacy, showing moderate positive effects. Overall, results provide evidence for the model assuming that teachers

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Study

Brite Klusmann primary investigator

64 classrooms

Looked at teachers

The Body Keeps Score

- Trauma is stored in the body
- Effects the mind as well
- Proprioceptive input
- Must make the body a safe space

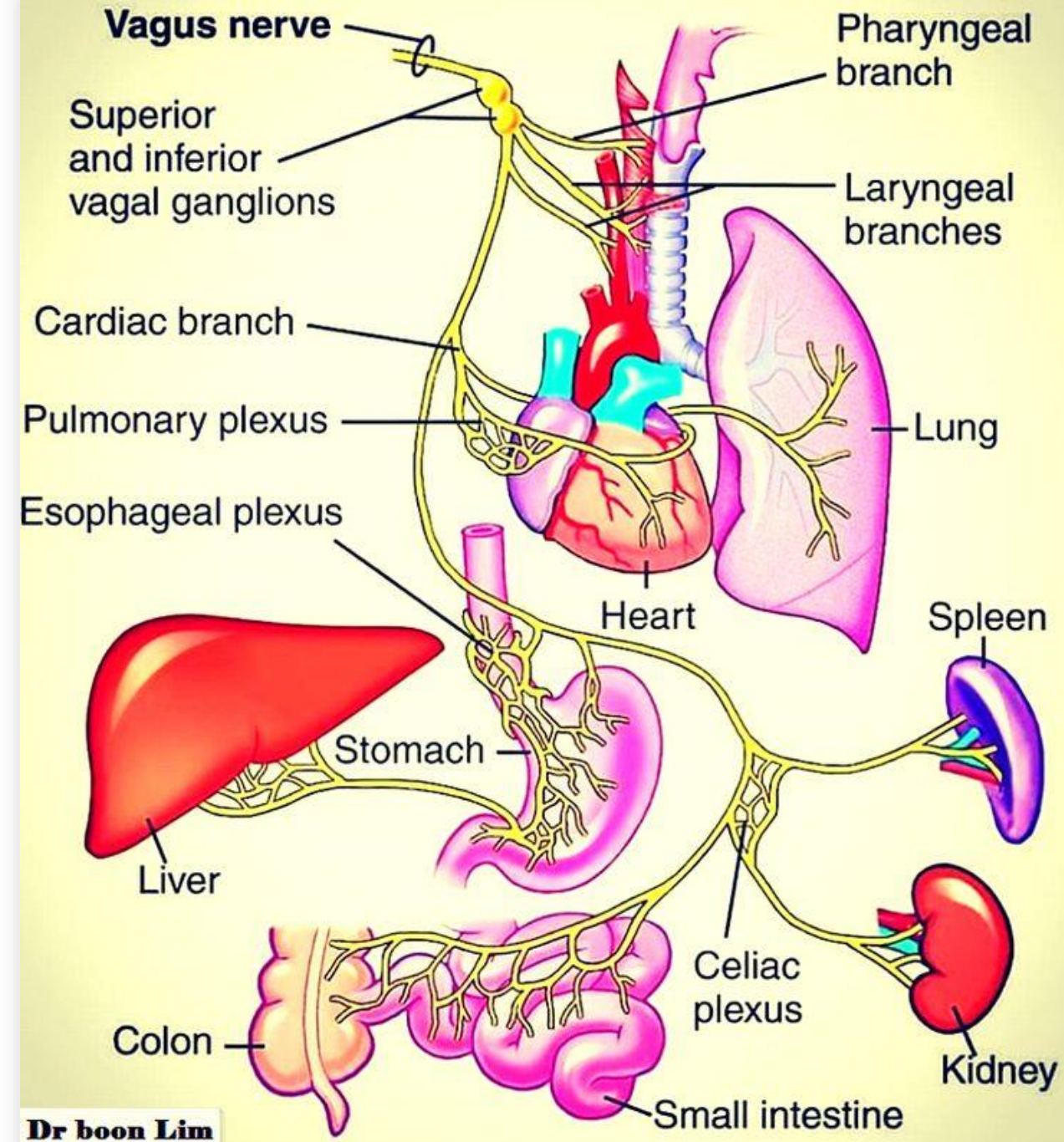


People have a range of capacities to deal with overwhelming experience. Some people, some kids particularly, are able to disappear into a fantasy world, to dissociate, to pretend like it isn't happening, and are able to go on with their lives. And sometimes it comes back to haunt them.

— Bessel van der Kolk —

Vagus Nerve

- Controls threat perception
- Communication between mind and body
- Not functioning properly when you go through trauma
 - “I don’t know why I hit them”
 - Things perceived as a threat at too high a level
- Can be healed with Stress Breath



Stress Breath

Core Values of HLF

Reciprocal Teaching

Authenticity

Practicality

Fun

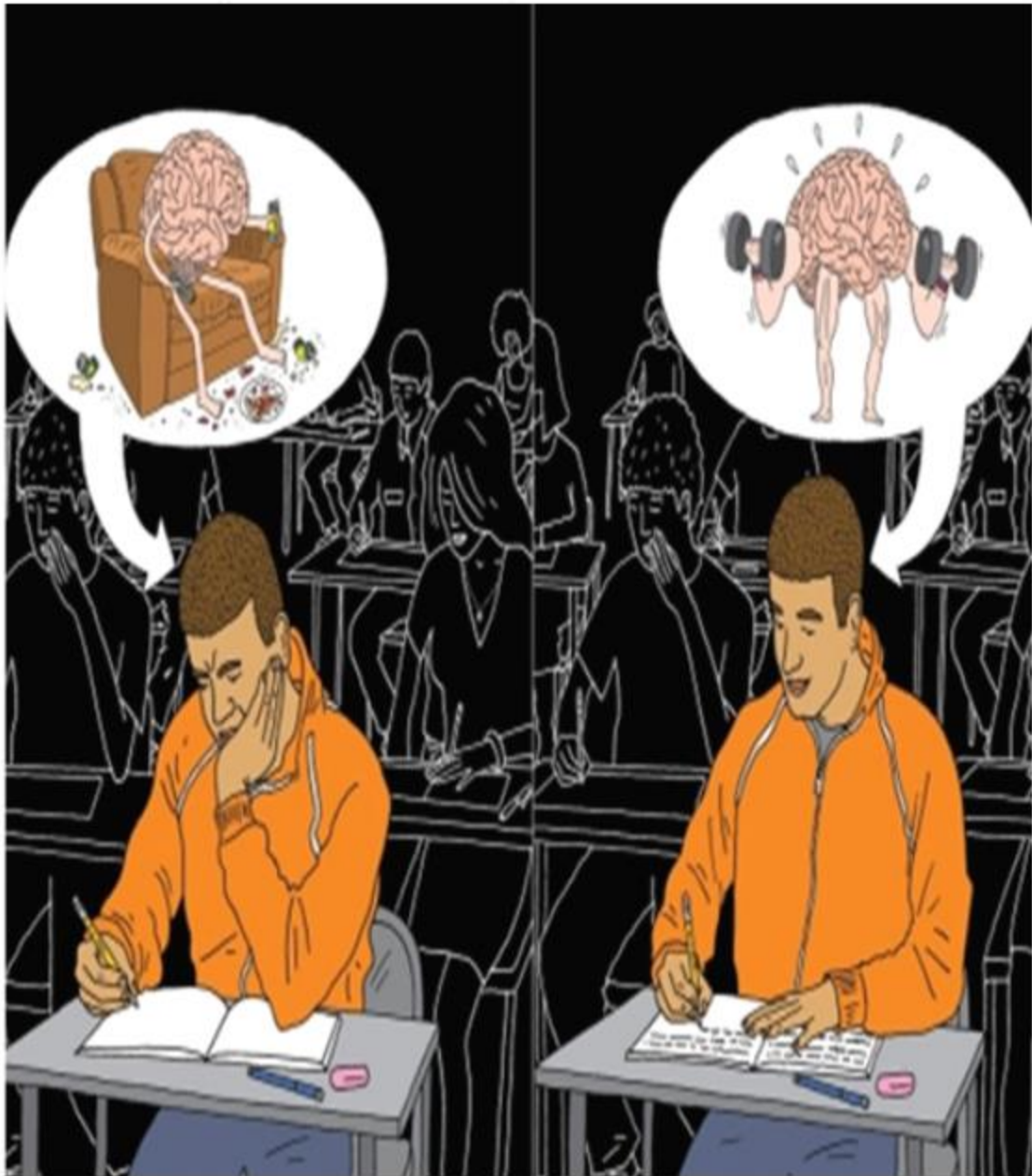
Empowerment

Love



Neuroplasticity

- The brain's ability to rewire itself
- Can be for the good or the bad
- How you from the things you repeat mentally or physically (your habits)



Next Thought Meditation

Q&A

For more information

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