

Overview

Study Purpose

• This presentation aims to demonstrate and compare outcomes of an intervention that combines parent education with yoga and mindfulness instruction among two populations:

> **Incarcerated fathers** and **Parents who are in** treatment for drugs and alcohol.



Program:

- Classes meet on location 2-4/times a week for a 1-2 hour/sessions totaling 16-22 hours/series.
- The program combines a parenting curriculum (Fit 2 be Fathers) with mindfulness and yoga instruction. Six core parenting topic modules -- combined with yoga -- aim to improve participants' emotional balance; ability to tolerate feelings of distress; and sense of connection to family members.



• **Parental resilience ---** defined as the ability to manage stress both by decreasing stress and by improving the ability to effectively solve problems, build healthy relations with others, and bounce back in the face of challenges --- is recognized as a protective factor in child abuse prevention.

Protective Factors

- Nurturing & Attachment;
- ✓ Knowledge of Parenting & Child Development;
- ✓ Social Connections;
- ✓ Concrete Support for families;
- ✓ Children's Social Emotional Competence

Assumptions

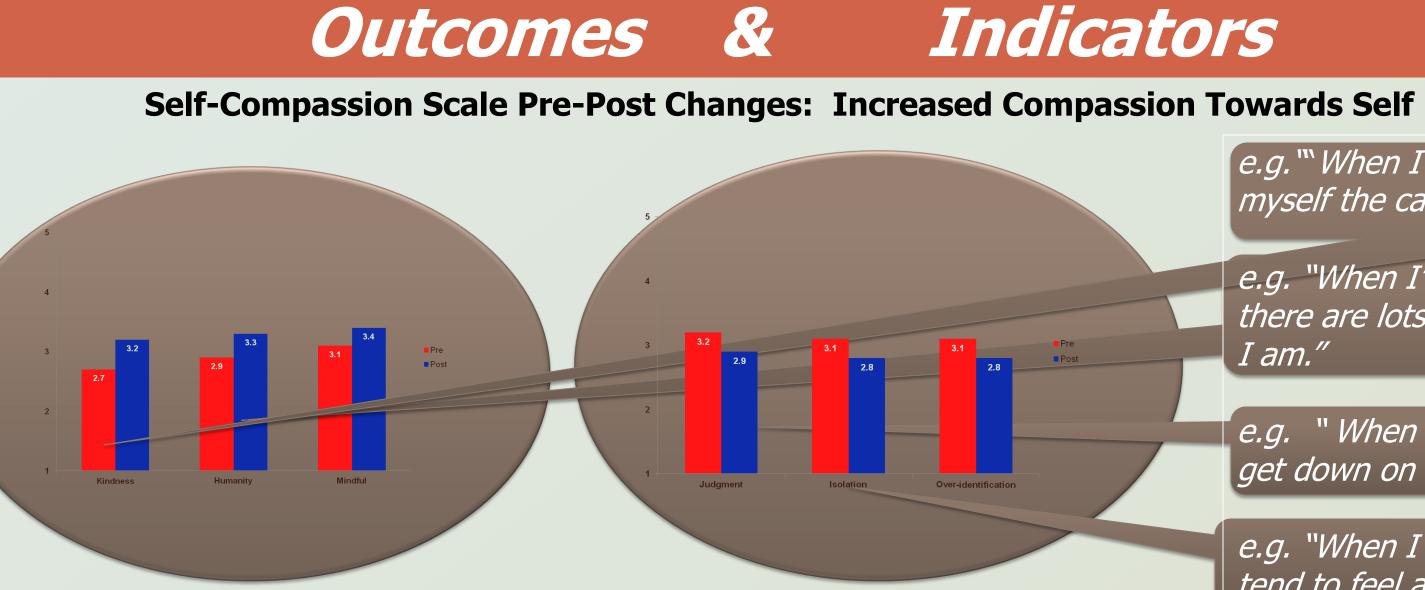
- Mindfulness and yoga promote parental resilience by promoting positive change and positive stress management inter-personally and intra-personally.
- Although emotional regulation is mostly learned in early stages of life, even high-risk adults can learn and cultivate these skills.

Outcomes-based Evaluation Comparison of Mindful Parenting Education Intervention Jennifer K. Crawford, Gitanjali Strestha, & Laura G. Hill

 Participants completed pre/post tests on site, first and last sessions • We used four scales to assess changes in physical and emotional regulation:

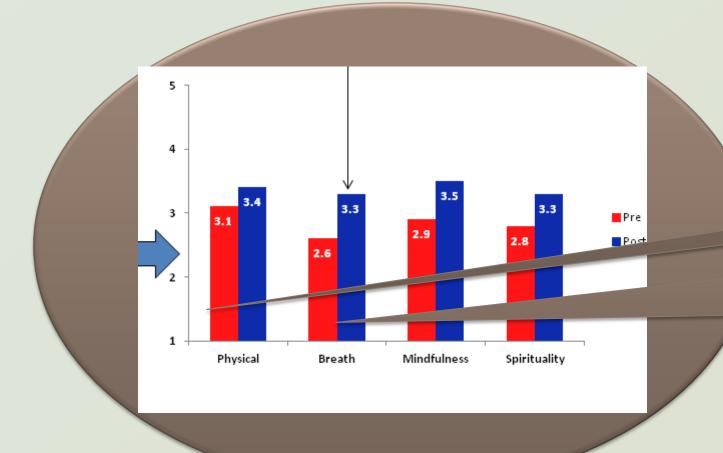
Self Compassion Scale (SCS) (Neff, 2003) Whole Person Survey (WPS) modified short form based on yoga therapy (Le Page, IYT 2001) Fit 2B Fathers (F2bF) program scale (Maiorano, 2001) **Distress Tolerance Scale (DTS)** (Simons & Gaher, 2005)

• Total participants who filled out pre/posttest (N) = 125 Total participants in Jail who filled out pre/posttest (n) = 56



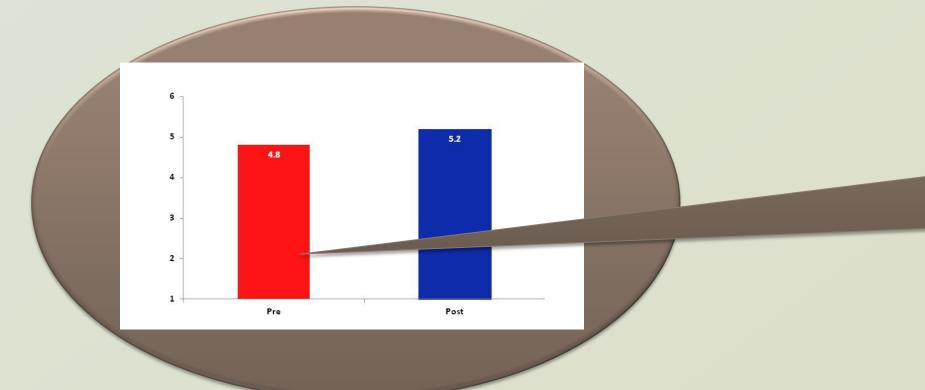
There was statistically significant improvement on all subscales.

Whole Person Survey Pre-Post Changes in Overall Wellness: Increased Skills for Managing Stress

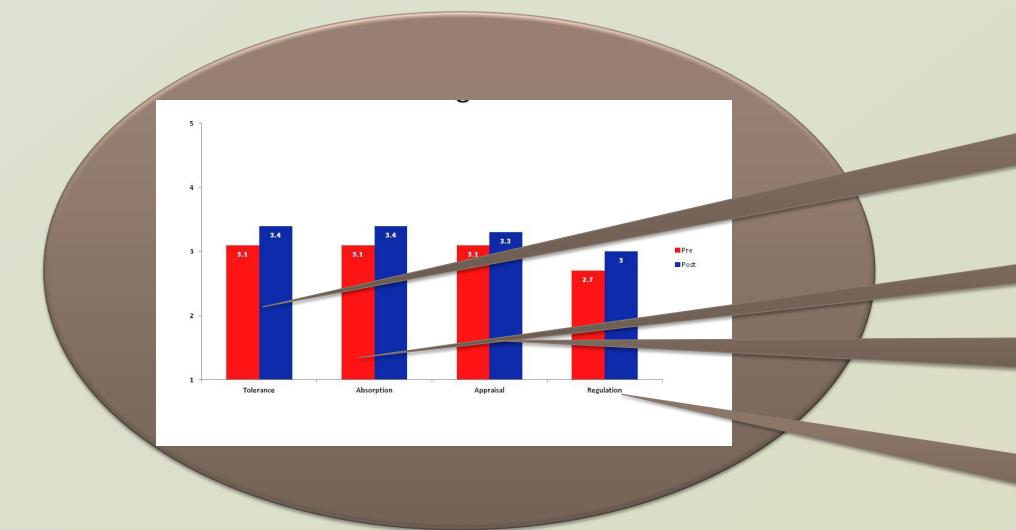


There was statistically significant improvement on all subscales.

Fit 2B Fathers Pre-Post Knowledge Changes: Increased Parenting Knowledge



Participants reported statistically significant improvement in the Fit2bFathers Scale. Distress Tolerance Scale Pre-Post Changes: Increased Ability to Tolerate Emotional Distress



All DTS subscales but Absorbtion showed statistically significant improvement at p=.01. (Absorbtion p = .06)

Method

Total participants in **Center** who filled out pre/posttest(n) = 69

e.g. "When I'm going through a very hard time, I give myself the caring and tenderness I need.." e.g. "When I'm down and out, I remind myself that there are lots of other people in the world feeling like I am." e.g. "When I see aspects of myself that I don't like, I get down on myself." e.g. "When I fail at something that's important to me I tend to feel alone in my failure." e.g. "I have tools and skills to reduce physical pain in

my body and to bring myself towards balance." (Whole Person Survey Physical #5). e.g. "I notice my breath to assess how relaxed or stressed I am." (WPS Breath & Energy #2)...&.. e.g

"I know how to breath fully using my entire torso: abdomen, solar plexus and lungs, front, side, and back of my body." (WPS Breath & Energy #3)

e.g. "Play is an important way for children to learn about the world." *(Fit2bF#7)*

Tolerance (e.g., "I can handle feeling distressed or upset.") Absorbtion (e.g., "My feelings of distress are [not] so intense that they completely take over.") Appraisal (e.g., "My feelings of distress or being upset are acceptable.")

Regulation (e.g., When I feel distressed or upset [**I don't feel]** I must do something about it immediately).

Data makes a promising case to further apply and to study parent education, mindfulness, and yoga -- as underutilized motivations for change & as interventions to build parental resilience among criminal justice, mental health, substance abuse treatment populations, and general populations.

Presented at "Mindful Families, Schools, & Communities Research to Practice: Promoting Child Well-being Conference, University of Washington, April 16-17, 2013. Correspondence to crawfordj@wsu.edu

Summary of Results

1) a) Statistically significant positive changes across all four overall aggregate scales suggest that program content and delivery is helping participants to be resilient, better able to respond to their children's needs.

b) All subscales except for one (DTS Absorbtion) were statistically significant.

2) Comparing the two population groups (jail & treatment center), there were no statistically-significant differences on any of the scales.

Implications

Suggested follow up studies include more rigorous analyses to control for other factors (e.g. age, number of program hours, parent/non parent). (One current study will address eight specific outcome areas for parental resilience that includes more specific indicators).