Applying principles of mindfulness and embodiment in library instruction to foster wellness

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AGENDA

01 Insight
  Basic principles of mindfulness and embodiment

02 Connections
  Mindfulness & embodiment + library instruction

03 Application
  Possibilities for incorporating mindfulness & embodiment

04 Feedback
  Your questions and suggestions in the chat or later on
Mindfulness and embodiment principles (+ caveat)
Mindfulness

“Awareness that emerges through:

- paying attention on purpose
- in the present moment
- nonjudgmentally
- to the unfolding of experience moment by moment.”

(Kabat-Zinn, 2003, p. 145, modified formatting)

Cultivating consciousness and intention as a way of being

Openness and curiosity
Examples of practices

• Meditation
• Chanting
• Reflective practice
• Journaling
• Walking meditation
• Yoga
• MBSR (mindfulness-based stress reduction)
Key works on mindfulness


Embodiment

“Embodiment is:

- embedded in the continuous movement of external sense perception,
- proprioception (the internal or sixth sense),
- graviception (the relationship with gravity),
- and kinesthetic self-perception (kinesthesia: the sense of movement).”

Emond (2021, formatting modified)
Embodiment includes:

- **Somatic** awareness: awareness of the process of living inside the body
- **Spatial** experiences
- **Knowledge gained through the body** (getting a feel for something, muscle memory)
- **Embodied information**: “corporeal expression or manifestation of information previously in encoded form” (Bates, 2018, p. 245)
Key works on embodiment


"Mindfulness that includes somatic awareness opens the gateway to various types of ‘connectedness:’ within a person, between people, and with the mysterious or unknown…"

—MARTHA EDDY
02 Connections

Mindfulness & embodiment + library instruction
Why?

Is information seeking only cognitive?
The research says no!
### Information Search Process (+ descendants)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feelings (Affective)</th>
<th>Initiation</th>
<th>Selection</th>
<th>Exploration</th>
<th>Formulation</th>
<th>Collection</th>
<th>Presentation</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Uncertainty</td>
<td>Optimism</td>
<td>Confusion</td>
<td>Frustration</td>
<td>Clarity</td>
<td>Sense of direction / Confidence</td>
<td>Satisfaction or Disappointment</td>
<td>Sense of accomplishment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Thoughts (Cognitive) | |                        | focused     | increased   | interest   | Increased self-awareness |
| vague               | focused |

| Actions (Physical)  | seeking | relevant Exploring | information | seeking | pertinent Documenting | information |
|                     |         |                    |             |         |                       |             |

“Information search process,” Kuhlthau, 2004
See also Fourie and Julien, 2014 on the need to study emotions in information science
Technostress

- Physical and emotional experience
- Feelings of disorientation and disembodiment
- Detrimental to learning / information literacy development
- Pervasive among university students (Upadhyaya & Vrinda, 2021)
Oppression / marginalization

Is connected to:

- Denial or diminishing of lived experiences
- Vulnerability to technostress and research anxiety

Can be countered by:

- Holding space for experiences
- Not privileging “correct actions” in information seeking
Outcomes of centring mind and body

**Intention**
- Intentionality in seeking / evaluating information resources

**Openness**
- Preparing the mind for serendipity, creativity, critical thinking

**Well-being**
- Preventing or ameliorating stress and anxiety
Possibilities for incorporating mindfulness & embodiment
Workshop for grad students

- Part of a writing retreat event
- Focus on information search strategies for thesis research
Workshop elements

Reflection
Identifying sticking points or tensions in one’s own process

Habits
Reducing overwhelming with relevant info management tools

Intentionality
Selecting search strategies according to present needs

Awareness
Paying attention to physical sensations, thoughts, and feelings
Sample slides
From the workshop
Mapping it out

** Activity

Take two minutes right now to **draw a diagram or picture of your information search process** for your thesis or another major project.

How did you start?

Where will you stop?

What is your path?
Different search techniques

Pearl growing
Systematic searching
Browsing
Social connections
Suggestions for the break

Actions in the body that enable emotional regulation and help mental focus

**Proprioceptive input**
- Spin in an office chair
- Balance on something
- Lift something heavy
- Squeeze a stress ball
- Create something with your hands (e.g., knitting, kneading dough)

**Centring**
- Track your breath with a pen on paper
- Observe the sounds around you
- Notice the sensations in your body (e.g., tension, pain, comfort)
- Set a timer for 2 minutes and let all thoughts go

OR
Wheel of emotions

Where are you on this wheel today when you think about your information search process?
Example of feeling analysis + strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feeling</th>
<th>Strategy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Optimistic</td>
<td>Systematic searching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overwhelmed</td>
<td>Pearl growing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxious</td>
<td>Physical activity, breathing practices</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To take away

- Cultivating awareness of your mind and body during your process
- Selecting appropriate search tool and strategies according to different stages of your process
- Committing to methods of keeping track of your information that work for you

What can you add?
## Learning from the workshop

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expected outcome</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reflection</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intentionality</td>
<td>✗</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Habits</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Further work to do

Praxis
Continuing to develop my own practice of somatic awareness and mindfulness to understand the connections with information literacy

Conversations
Engaging with students to understand how to light sparks in their thinking about mindfulness in the context of their research and learning
Other ideas

“Embodying” databases
Simulation exercise
(Ahern, 2018)

Concept mapping
Pen + paper, software, multiple iterations to promote reflection

Topic selection
Scaffold this part of the process with mindfulness
(Moniz et al., 2015, p. 50-52)

Digital + physical
Examining effects of using large format interactive screens during info seeking
Mindfulness & embodiment in library instruction

Centring learners’ minds and bodies to support their holistic engagement in research and information seeking
YOUR FEEDBACK

Please let me know what you think in the chat, or contact me directly.
References


