

# Mindfulness is for Everyone - Yes, Even You

## TRAINER

Robin Landwehr, DBH, LPCC

Behavioral Health and Substance Use Disorder  
Program Manager

Community HealthCare Association of the Dakotas

*“If you want others to be happy,  
practice compassion. If you want  
to be happy, practice  
compassion.”*

*-Dalai Lama*



Mountain Plains (HHS Region 8)

MHTTC

Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network

Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

**SAMHSA**  
Substance Abuse and Mental Health  
Services Administration

# Disclaimer and Funding Statement

This presentation was prepared for the College of Nursing and Professional Disciplines under a cooperative agreement from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). All materials appearing in Mindfulness is for Everyone – Yes, Even You, except that taken directly from copyrighted sources, are in the public domain and may be reproduced or copied without permission from SAMHSA or the authors. Citation of the source is appreciated. Do not reproduce or distribute this content for a fee without specific, written authorization from the Mountain Plains Mental Health Technology Transfer Center. For more information on obtaining this PowerPoint presentation, please email Robin Landwehr at [Robin@communityhealthcare.net](mailto:Robin@communityhealthcare.net).

At the time of this presentation, Tom Coderre served as acting SAMHSA Assistant Secretary. The opinions expressed herein are the views of Robin Landwehr and do not reflect the official position of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), or SAMHSA. No official support or endorsement of DHHS, SAMHSA, for the opinions described in this session is intended or should be inferred.

The work of the Mountain Plains MHTTC is supported by grant H79SM081792 from the Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

The MHTTC Network uses affirming, respectful and recovery-oriented language in all activities. That language is:

STRENGTHS-BASED  
AND HOPEFUL

INCLUSIVE AND  
ACCEPTING OF  
DIVERSE CULTURES,  
GENDERS,  
PERSPECTIVES,  
AND EXPERIENCES

HEALING-CENTERED/  
TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE

INVITING TO INDIVIDUALS  
PARTICIPATING IN THEIR  
OWN JOURNEYS

PERSON-FIRST AND  
FREE OF LABELS

NON-JUDGMENTAL AND  
AVOIDING ASSUMPTIONS

RESPECTFUL, CLEAR  
AND UNDERSTANDABLE

CONSISTENT WITH  
OUR ACTIONS,  
POLICIES, AND PRODUCTS

# Stay Connected



[mhttcnetwork.org/centers/mountain-plains-mhttc/home](http://mhttcnetwork.org/centers/mountain-plains-mhttc/home)



[@Mountain-Plains-MHTTC](https://www.facebook.com/@Mountain-Plains-MHTTC)



[@MPMHTTC](https://www.twitter.com/@MPMHTTC)



[mhttcnetwork.org/centers/mountain-plains-mhttc/subscribe-our-mailing-list](http://mhttcnetwork.org/centers/mountain-plains-mhttc/subscribe-our-mailing-list)

# Session Objectives

- What mindfulness is and how it relates to stress
- Myths of mindfulness
- Mindfulness as a skill
- How COVID-19 has affected us as caregivers and how we can utilize mindfulness
- Mindfulness of our role as caregivers

# Mindfulness is...

“The ability to know what’s happening in your head at any given moment without getting carried away by it.” – Dan Harris

“Paying attention with openness, curiosity, flexibility, and kindness.” – Russ Harris (FLOCK)

# Myths About Mindfulness

- Myth: Mindfulness is a religious practice
  - Mindfulness is a mental skillset that can and has been used in different religions, but it can be practiced with no religious component.
- Myth: Mindfulness is just meditation
  - There are many ways to be mindful that do not include the practice of meditation.
- Myth: Mindfulness is for relaxation
  - Actually, no. But sometimes relaxation comes along for the ride. 😊  
Mindfulness can be effective in situations that are far from relaxing.
- Myth: Mindfulness will help me get rid of/control upsetting feelings/emotions and thoughts.
  - Mindfulness is about being present with our entire human experience, which may include things that upset us. Mindfulness can help in these situations, but the aim is not to control or “get rid of” thoughts, feelings or emotions.

# Mindfulness Skills Include..

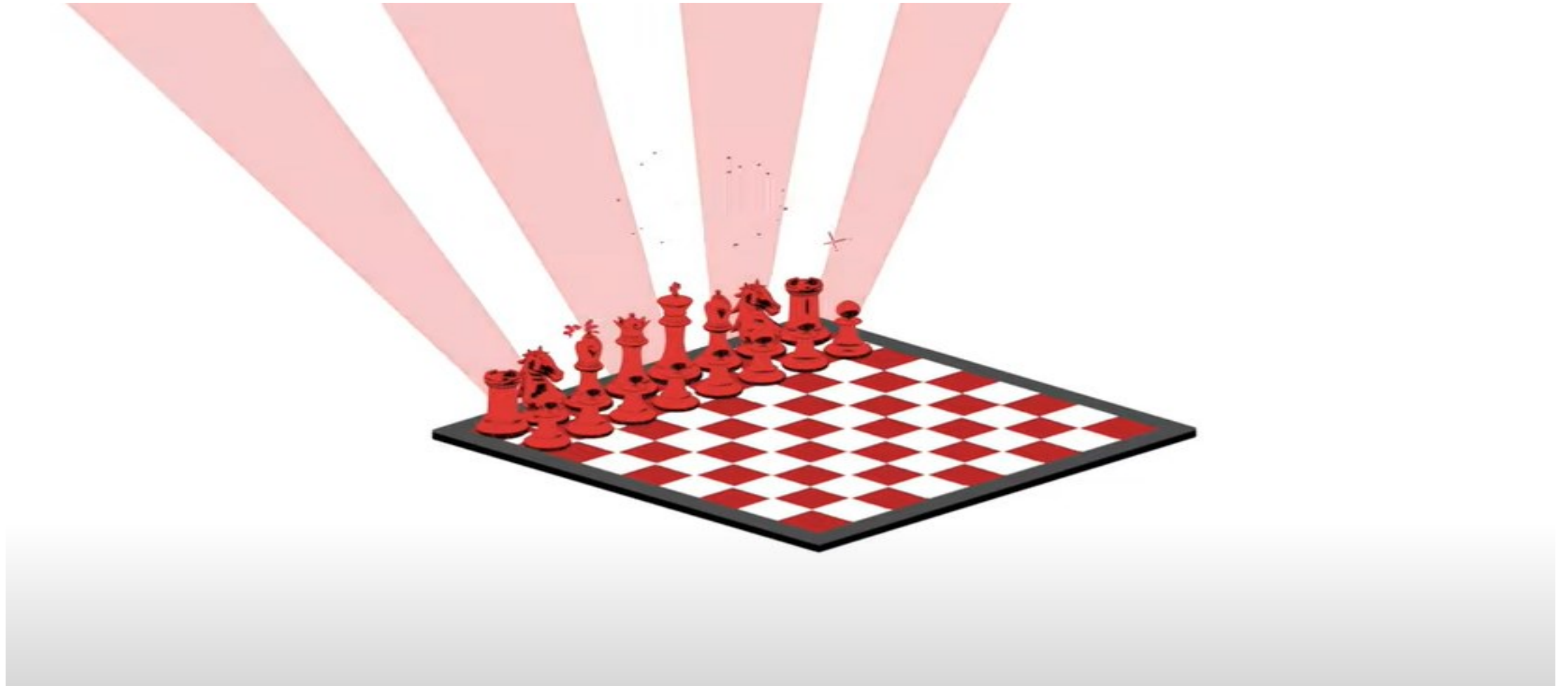
- Attention Skills (Broadening and Narrowing Focus)
- Unhooking
- Empathy / Acceptance– less judgement
- Values Guided Behaviors
- Develop Self-Compassion



# Mindfulness: Richness of Life



# The Chess Board



# Mindfulness Vs. Relaxation

- Being present vs. Distraction
- The situation doesn't always call for relaxation
- Fear, Sadness, Anger, Stress are natural
- Feel calm vs. Acting calmly



# Nerding out: The Autonomic Nervous System

These systems respond to our internal and external environments. Regulates Internal organs and glands, muscles. Works outside of our conscious control.

Sympathetic Nervous System –

Fight or Flight. Mobilize you. Awareness. Slows down Non-essential functions. “Sympathetic dominance”

Parasympathetic Nervous System –

Rest and Digest. Feed and Breed. Relax.

Regular mindfulness meditations seems to increase Parasympathetic activity and lower sympathetic activity based on Heart Rate Variability (HRV)



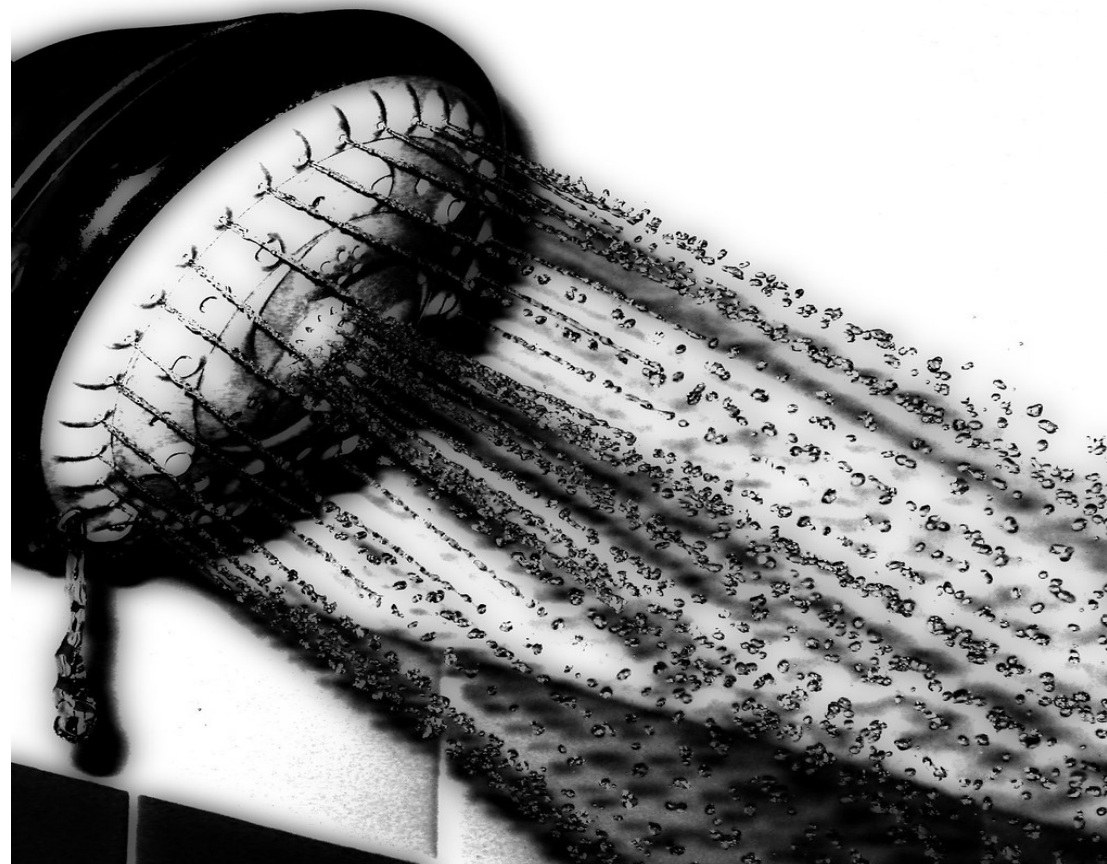
# Formal Mindfulness Practice

- Mindful Breathing
- Notice 5 Things
- Mindful Reflection
- Leaves on a Stream



# Informal Mindfulness Practice

- Mindful Routines
  - Shower
- Mindful Activities
  - A child's hair
- Mindful Chores and Work
  - Dishes



\* Mindfulness can help improve your attention

# Mindfulness and Self-Compassion

Acknowledging your own suffering and responding kindly  
Dr. Russ Harris' Six Elements of Self-Compassion

Acknowledging the Pain

Defusing from Self-Judgement (unhooking)

Acting with Kindness (Self-talk, Imagery, Self-touch, Self-Care)

Acceptance (Does not mean suck it up)

Validation

Connectedness (From thoughts of being alone, Engage with others)

# Mindfulness for Unhooking

## Caught Up / Rehashing and Rehearsing

- Noticing and naming
- My brain is just doing its job.. (always wants you to *do* something)
- If I buy into this thought will it lead to a life/behavior I want?





# Mindful Dental Patient and the (almost) Runaway Bride



# Mindfulness and Attention

- Flexible perspective taking
- Observing self

# The Stageshow



# Mindfulness and Caregiver Stress

- Compassion Fatigue
- Extreme stress, that's what. Experienced by caregivers of people and animals. Can lead to preoccupation with suffering of others and can create secondary traumatic stress to the caregiver. Apathy, anger, bottled up feelings, and even substance use have occurred.

Compassion Satisfaction	Positive aspects of working as a helper
Compassion Fatigue	Negative aspects of working as a helper
Burnout	Inefficacy and feeling overwhelmed
Work-related traumatic stress	Primary traumatic stress direct target of event Secondary traumatic exposure to event due to a relationship with the primary person



# Long-Term Care and Covid-19

- According to the Atlantic's Long-Term care COVID-19 tracker, Less than 1% of people in this country live in LT care, but they represent 40% of COVID-related deaths. The following estimations show the impact on residents AND staff:
  - 684,781 Total cases
  - 97,190 Total deaths
  - 24,723 Total number of facilities affected
- About 8% of people who live in US long-term-care facilities have died of COVID-19—nearly 1 in 12. For nursing homes alone, the figure is nearly 1 in 10.\*

This is absolutely not the whole story.

# Mindfulness and Our Values

- Professional Values – Our True North
  - What do **we** want the heart of our agency to be about?
  - When people describe us, **we** want them to say...
  - When **we** are challenged and pushed to our limits **we** want to be found doing what?



# Be Present, Open Up, Do What Matters

Learning STOP!

- S (Slow Your Breathing)
- T (Take Note)
- O (Open Up)
- P (Pursue Your Values)



# Tips!

- Love, Work, Play, Health
  - Eat well
  - Sleep!
  - Exercise
  - Do fun things
  - Nurture your primary relationships
  - Seek reassurance
  - Develop a routine
  - Values-guided work
  - Set boundaries when necessary
  - SEE A PRO!





# Stay Connected



[mhttcnetwork.org/centers/mountain-plains-mhttc/home](http://mhttcnetwork.org/centers/mountain-plains-mhttc/home)



[@Mountain-Plains-MHTTC](https://www.facebook.com/@Mountain-Plains-MHTTC)



[@MPMHTTC](https://www.twitter.com/@MPMHTTC)



[mhttcnetwork.org/centers/mountain-plains-mhttc/subscribe-our-mailing-list](http://mhttcnetwork.org/centers/mountain-plains-mhttc/subscribe-our-mailing-list)

# Resources

- Act with Compassion <https://www.actwithcompassion.com/homeworks>
- B. Hudnall Stamm, 2009-2012. Professional Quality of Life: Compassion Satisfaction and Fatigue Version 5 (ProQOL). [www.proqol.org](http://www.proqol.org)
- The Atlantic. <https://covidtracking.com/data/longtermcare>
- Harris, R. (2015). How to develop self-compassion in just about anyone. Retrieved from [Www.ImlearningAct.com](http://www.ImlearningAct.com).
- Russ Harris 2011 [www.imlearningact.com](http://www.imlearningact.com) – Unhooking skills
- Recognizing the difference between your thoughts and you
- <https://www.actmindfully.com.au/about-mindfulness/#:~:text=%E2%80%9CMy%20own%20personal%20definition%20is,Russ%20Harris>
- Strosahl, K., Robinson, P, & Gustavsson, T. (2012). Brief interventions for radical behavior change: Principles and practice of focused acceptance and commitment therapy. Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Publications
- The Stageshow Metaphor - <https://youtu.be/nBPPr1hsbMM>
- The Chessboard Metaphor - <https://youtu.be/phbzSNsY8vc>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R2825kDSo4M> Written and narrated by Dr Russ Harris, an acclaimed ACT trainer and author of The Happiness Trap.
- How Meditation Improves Emotional and Physical Health  
<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-healthy-journey/201908/how-meditation-improves-emotional-and-physical-health#> =
- Autonomic Nervous System: Crash Course A&P #13 <https://youtu.be/71pCilo8k4M>



# QUESTIONS

Robin Landwehr

[Robin@communityhealthcare.net](mailto:Robin@communityhealthcare.net)



**Thank you for joining!**