

Fostering Mindfulness and Wellness on a Budget

February 2-4, 2020 | Seattle, WA

Presenters

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Agenda

- Introduction
- Rationale for Presentation
- Definitions Mindfulness; Wellness
- GW's Programmatic Initiatives Mindfulness/Wellness
- How You Can Implement Initiatives on Your Campus
- Mindfulness Exercises
- Discussion/Questions







Learning Outcomes

- Goal #1: Learn definitions of mindfulness and wellness and the benefits for military and veteran students.
- Goal #2: Engage in sample mindfulness activities that can be adapted for military students.
- Goal #3: Learn about GW's curricular approach to mindfulness and wellness, which includes yoga, outdoor adventure/leadership, fitness, and meditation.
- Goal #4: Learn about cost effective ways to leverage campus and community resources.
- Goal #5: Share promising practices with each other.





Back Story

- NASPA 2019
 - Ideas and information exchange
 - Inspirational
- Challenge to have cost-effective programming...







Definitions and Examples

Mindfulness

- "Mindfulness means paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgementally." Jon Kabat-Zinn
- Receptivity, versus reactivity
- Strengthens social-emotional regulation, cognitive outcomes, overall well-being.

Mindfulness can be practiced through exercises that engage any of the 8 senses.







Rationale for the Presentation

- Why Mindfulness for All Students, Student Veterans, Academia?
- (Adapted from Sonn, Erin 2019)
- Noticeable change in overall GW culture to reflect and embody the principles and practice of mindfulness;
- Decreased levels of stress among GW military students, increased sense of well-being;
- Increased retention, persistence, and graduation rates of GW's military students;
- **Increased capacity for learning and preparedness** to connect, create, and innovate, due to increased neuroplasticity, as well as accessibility and development of prefrontal cortex (brain);
- Increased social and emotional intelligence, sense of resilience and perseverance, and overall growth mindset;
- **Greater sense of community and connectedness** among students/faculty/staff, who receive mindfulness training (PD), and students/stakeholders;
- Higher perceived level of efficacy, and lower stress levels among students/faculty/staff.









Implementation at GW - Planning and Rationale

- Self-Study Findings & Strategic Planning Action Items:
 - CAS Standards for Veteran Offices
 - Promising Practices/Benchmarking
 - Self-Study Themes
 - Campus Experts
 - Self Study Team
 - Counseling
 - Nursing
 - Integrative Medicine
 - Naval ROTC
 - Public Health





Implementation at GW - Curriculum

Curriculum

- Holistic Wellness Model
 - Mindfulness
 - Fitness
 - Outdoor Activities
 - Meditation
 - Yoga
 - Facility Dog
- Adapted to GW campus culture/climate
 - City Setting, High Intensity
- Adapted to GW military student demographics
 - Graduate Students
 - Online Offerings
 - Multiple demands on time family, school, work/internships, etc.
 - Stress, Anxiety, Depression, and Sleep Issues.

































How do you get *busy* students to be excited about these activities?

- Instagram/Social Media
- Videos (home-made)
- Advertising





Our newest Wellness/mindfulness effort GW Facility
 Dog Initiative: Our newest staff member: Laney;
 partner: Semper K9







Implementation at GW - Key Partnerships

Academic Partners

- School of Medicine
- School of Public Health
- Counseling Program

Campus Partners

- Health and Fitness Center
- Student Counseling Center
- TRAILS

VSO Partners

- Team Red, White, and Blue
- Semper K9

Other Partners/Resources

- GW Naval ROTC
- Dept of Veteran Affairs
- Sierra Club





Implementation at GW - Funding

- Use Existing Resources online;
- Engage Campus Experts;
- Partner with other Campus Offices;
- Work with Local, Regional, and National Veteran Service Organizations (VSOs);
- Research Community-Based Resources and Services;
- Grant-Writing; and
- Fund-Raising.





Implementation at GW - Next Steps

- Create more intentional learning outcomes;
- Perform pre- and post-surveys;
- Assess individual programs;
- Perform a needs analysis;
- Create a more robust communications campaign; and
- Hire a consultant/full time staff member.







Wellness on Your Campus

Cost Effective Plan

- Step One: Assess Your Students' Needs analyze demographics, talk with student veterans, SVA chapters, etc.
- Step Two: Inventory Current Resources, Activities, Initiatives
- Step Three: Identify Partners
 - Student Veteran "Champions"
 - On-campus: schools of medicine, public health, counseling programs, counseling center, etc.
 - Off-campus: VSOs, grants, etc.
- Step Four: Create a Curriculum for the Year/Semester
- Step Five: Start Slow and Gain Momentum
- Step Six: Use multimedia to promote events; have co-sponsors
- Step Seven: Build a Case Statement Grants and Donations
- Step Eight: Continue to Build Partnerships
- Step Nine: Evaluate and Plan for Next Year





Mindfulness Demonstration

Exercises





Wellness on Your Campus

Other Cost Effective Ideas

- Interview a counselor or mindfulness instructor right before finals for a webinar for campus-based and online students;
- Advertise free or by donation community yoga courses;
- Hike a local trail not requiring transportation;
- Organize your own 5K or 10K walk/run; and
- Research local non-profits that offer wellness resource/services/activities/discounts for servicemembers.
 - Examples: <u>Semper K9</u>, <u>Project Healing Waters</u>,
 <u>Veterans Yoqa Project</u>; https://youtu.be/DZi5Zod-tXo





Free Mindfulness Resources

Meditation:

- Best apps: https://www.healthline.com/health/mental-health/top-meditation-iphone-android-apps
- Free Mindfulness Project: http://www.freemindfulness.org/download
- Mindful Magazine: https://www.mindful.org/audio-resources-for-mindfulness-meditation/
- UCLA Health Mindful Research Center: https://www.uclahealth.org/marc/mindful-meditations
- Muse: Free Mindful Resources:
 https://choosemuse.com/blog/ultimate-list-of-free-meditation-resources/

Yoga:

- https://www.thebalanceeveryday.com/free-yoga-videos-1356521
- https://www.yogiapproved.com/yoga/youtube-channels-we-recommend-for-free-yoga-videos/
- Veterans Yoga Project resources: https://www.veteransyogaproject.org/practice





Questions?

Should you have any questions, please reach out to:

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