

# **EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND MINDFULNESS**

**John Darwin**



**2015**

## EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND MINDFULNESS

### CONTENTS

Contents.....	2
1 INTRODUCTION.....	4
2 THE RELEVANCE OF MINDFULNESS TO EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE .....	6
Self-Awareness and Self-Management .....	8
Social Awareness and Relationship Skills .....	9
Flexibility.....	10
Decision Making.....	11
Resilience .....	13
3 BEYOND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE.....	13
Enjoying Life and Savouring.....	13
Mindful Movement.....	14
Emotional Intelligence and Positive Psychology .....	14
Conclusion.....	15
REFERENCES.....	16
Appendix One: Models of Emotional Intelligence.....	19

## EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND MINDFULNESS

### THE LINK BETWEEN MINDFULNESS AND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE: SOME KEY FINDINGS

- Regular practice of mindfulness meditation can enhance our ability to understand our own emotions
- People who regularly practice mindful meditation can easily develop the ability to detect and understand the emotions of others
- Regularly practicing mindful meditation can significantly enhance the ability of individuals to regulate and control their emotions
- Mindful meditation can allow individuals to effectively use their emotions
- Higher levels of characteristic mindfulness were associated with higher trait emotional intelligence, higher levels of positive affect, lower levels of negative affect, and greater life satisfaction
- Mindfulness and emotional intelligence both emphasize people's abilities to perceive, understand and regulate their thoughts and emotions
- Mindfulness promotes attunement, connection and closeness in relationships.
- Greater insight into self, others and human nature, along with an easing of ego-based concerns that is afforded by mindfulness, encourages a more compassionate concern for others
- Individuals can develop self-awareness, which is one of the major tenets of emotional intelligence, by practicing mindfulness meditation
- Participants with greater meditation experience exhibited higher emotional intelligence, less perceived stress and less negative mental health than those who had lower levels of meditation experience
- Those who completed mindfulness training demonstrated significant improvements with respect to emotional intelligence, perceived stress and mental health
- Mindfulness training was associated with higher emotional intelligence
- Empathetic responses are increased with meditation and mindfulness practices
- Counselling students who participated in a 10-week mindfulness-based stress management course showed significant pre-post increases in empathic concern for others
- Mindfulness training significantly alleviated the psychological distress and burnout that is often experienced by many physicians and improved their well-being.
- It also enhanced their ability to connect with each patient as a unique human being and to centre their care around that uniqueness
- Learn how to use meditation or relaxation exercises – they will help you to better focus your mind on your internal feelings
- Previous studies have found mindfulness training is intimately linked to improvements of attentional functions, cognitive flexibility and problem solving
- Mindfulness was negatively related to perceived stress, and positively related to emotional intelligence.
- Mindfulness increases immune functioning and produces brain changes consistent with more effective handling of emotions under stress.
- Mindfulness reduces symptoms of burnout and improves life satisfaction
- Mindfulness may improve ability to maintain preparedness and orient attention
- Mindfulness may improve ability to process information quickly and accurately
- Mindfulness can support the development of creativity

Each of the above is developed further in the text

1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate the link between emotional intelligence and mindfulness. There are now many models of emotional intelligence: to make the argument comprehensive, we bring together the various elements identified in six groupings, shown in Figure 1. Resilience is seen as an important consequence of EI enhancement. The link to other models is given in Appendix One.

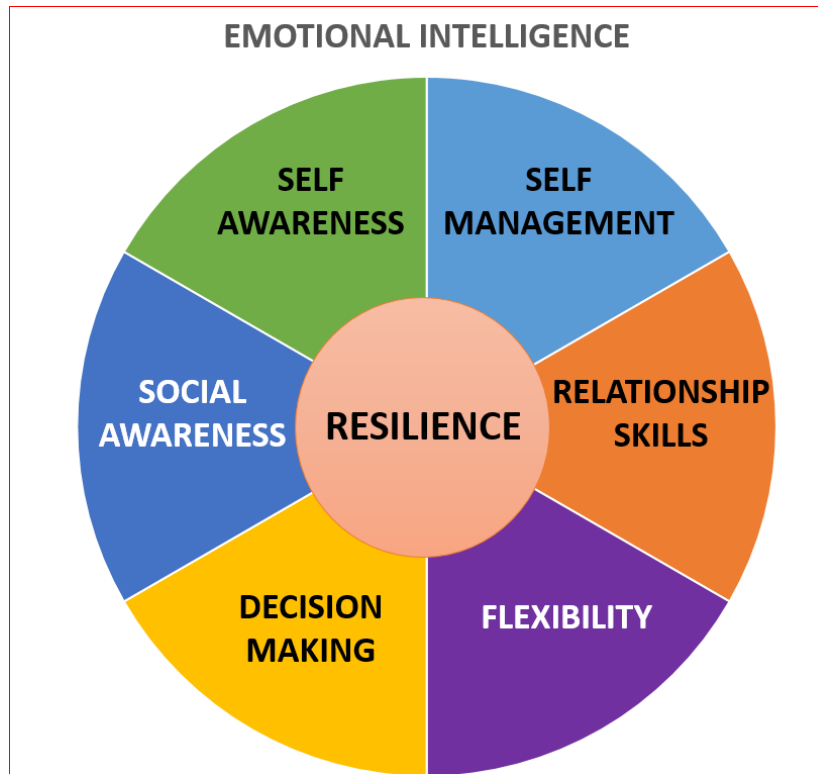


Figure 1

The competencies within each of these six headings are summarised in Table One.

TABLE ONE: COMPETENCIES IN EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE		
<b>SELF-AWARENESS</b> Emotional awareness Accurate self-assessment Self-knowing Straightforwardness Self-actualisation	<b>SOCIAL AWARENESS</b> Empathy Understanding others Developing others Service orientation Leveraging diversity Political awareness	<b>FLEXIBILITY</b> Commitment Initiative Optimism Adaptability Innovation Stress Tolerance
<b>SELF-MANAGEMENT</b> Self-Control Trustworthiness Conscientiousness Self-Confidence Self-reliance	<b>RELATIONSHIP SKILLS</b> Interpersonal Relationships Communication Conflict management Leadership Collaboration and cooperation Building bonds Team capabilities	<b>DECISION MAKING</b> Problem Solving Reality Testing Impulse Control Emotional Facilitation of Thinking Reflective Regulation of Emotions to Promote Growth

## EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND MINDFULNESS

We shall use the course Mindfulness Based Life Enhancement to illustrate the relevance of mindfulness. This course was specifically developed for a general audience, and has been running now for five years, with over 350 participants thus far. Research and evaluation based on their experience has shown that they see MBL as involving eight aspects. These are illustrated in Figure 2.

Figure 1: MINDFULNESS BASED LIFE ENHANCEMENT



## 2 THE RELEVANCE OF MINDFULNESS TO EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

A number of studies have explored the relationship of mindfulness to emotional intelligence, and a valuable review of the literature has been undertaken by Charoensukmongkol (2014). He concludes: “scholars have reported a positive relationship between mindfulness and EQ (Baer et al., 2006; Brown & Ryan, 2003). Since the objective of mindfulness meditation is to enhance the level of mindfulness, it can significantly facilitate the development of EQ.”

Charoensukmongkol identifies three specific ways this can happen. The first is that **regular practice of mindfulness meditation can enhance our ability to understand our own emotions**. He cites Brown, Ryan, & Creswell (2007), who found that since meditation training requires practitioners to closely observe their thoughts and feelings moment-to-moment without any judgment or interference, practitioners tend to develop a higher tendency to be aware of their emotional state and change than those who do not. Feldman, Hayes, Kumar, Greeson, and Laurenceau (2007) support this in their study, which found that the level of mindfulness was associated positively with more clarity of feelings, attention to feelings, and lower distraction.

His second argument is that “**people who regularly practice mindful meditation can easily develop the ability to detect and understand the emotions of others.**” Again this is supported by Brown et al who found that being mindful allows people to focus their attention better on how other people around them are feeling (Brown et al., 2007), which subsequently helps them decipher emotional cues of others more accurately (Krasner et al., 2009). Another study by Shapiro, Schwartz, and Bonner (1998) found that participants who attended their mindfulness programme tended to score higher on the overall empathy self-reported measurement. And a study by Brown and Kasser (2005) found that the level of mindfulness tended to associate positively with a felt sense of relatedness and interpersonal closeness.

The third contribution identified by Charoensukmongkol from the literature is that **regularly practicing mindful meditation can significantly enhance the ability of individuals to regulate and control their emotions** (Cahn & Polich, 2006). In particular, Feldman et al. (2007) found that people with a higher level of mindfulness tended to recover quickly from emotional distress compared with those with a lower level of mindfulness. Moreover, research found that practicing mindful meditation could heighten one's meta-cognitive ability (Zeidan, Johnson, Diamond, David, & Goolkasian, 2010), which is considered a higher-level cognitive ability that allows individuals to monitor and control their thought process (Flavell, 1987). In EQ literature, this meta-cognitive ability was proposed as a crucial ability for people to effectively regulate their emotions (Mayer et al., 2000; Salovey & Mayer, 1990).

Charoensukmongkol also points to evidence that **mindful meditation can allow individuals to effectively use their emotions**. This is because the quality of being mindful to one's own emotions, both negative and positive, enables one to appropriately focus on a task that might be performed better when a specific emotion is in place; and to avoid performing a task that cannot be performed well under such emotion (Averill, Chon, & Hahn, 2001). For example, George (2000) argued that while being in positive moods is important for tasks that require creativity, integrative thinking, and deductive reasoning, being in a negative mood tends to make people become more effective in tasks that require attention to detail, detection of errors and problems, and careful information processing. Without being sufficiently mindful, on the other hand, it can be difficult for people to focus on a task that could benefit from their currently felt emotion.

## EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND MINDFULNESS

Schutte and Malouff (2011) examined the relationship between emotional intelligence, mindfulness and subjective well-being. They concluded “The present study found that **higher levels of characteristic mindfulness were associated with higher trait emotional intelligence, higher levels of positive affect, lower levels of negative affect, and greater life satisfaction.** These results are consistent with previous preliminary research on the relationship between mindfulness and emotional intelligence (Baer et al., 2004; Brown & Ryan, 2003) and subjective well-being (Baer et al., 2008; Brown & Ryan, 2003; Brown et al., 2009; Falkenstrom 2010)”

Another study has been undertaken by Chu (2009), who also reviewed the existing literature. He concludes: “**Mindfulness and EI**, as defined by Salovey and Mayer (1990), are similar in that both are meta-cognitive and meta-mood constructs, that is, they **both emphasize people's abilities to perceive, understand and regulate their thoughts and emotions** (Donaldson-Feilder & Bond, 2004).”

Chu cites several studies which have supported the potential importance of mindfulness to EI more generally. “Ciarrochi, Blackledge, Bilich and Bayliss (2007) indicated that mindfulness-based EI training could improve EI. Kabat-Zinn (1993) and Welwood (1996) argued that **mindfulness promotes attunement, connection and closeness in relationships.** Baer, Smith and Allen (2004); Baer et al. (2006); and Brown and Ryan (2003) showed that the components of EI, which are social skills and perspective taking, interpersonal closeness, cooperative response patterns and marital partner satisfaction (Schutte, Malouff, & Bobik, 2001), are significantly related to mindfulness.

Davidson and Harrington (2002) also suggested that the **greater insight into self, others and human nature, along with an easing of ego-based concerns that is afforded by mindfulness, encourages a more compassionate concern for others.** Consistent with the proposition, Beitel, Ferrer and Cecero's (2005) point to correlational evidence which supported this notion (see Brown, Ryan, & Creswell, 2007, for review). In addition, **individuals can develop self-awareness, which is one of the major tenets of EI, by practicing mindfulness meditation.** This means that they could be mindful about their environment and whatever is happening in the here and now, rather than focusing too much on the past and the future (Epstein, 1990).”

Chu's own study examined 351 full-time working adults in Taiwan. All of them meditated, although at different levels of meditation experience. Those **participants with greater meditation experience exhibited higher EI, less perceived stress and less negative mental health than those who had lower levels of meditation experience.** Chu then randomly divided 20 graduate students with no previous experience of meditation into a mindfulness meditation group and a control group. He measured both groups for the same variables and found that **those who completed the mindfulness training demonstrated significant improvements with respect to EI, perceived stress and mental health** compared to the control group.

Research by Snowden et al (2015) on student nurses and midwives found that **mindfulness training was associated with higher emotional intelligence** when the latter is viewed as an ability. They conclude “from a practical perspective, in line with the findings from this study, it also raises the possibility that mindfulness training may be a better way of enhancing emotional and cognitive abilities than pre-nursing programmes”.

So far we have looked at the overall evidence of links between mindfulness and emotional intelligence. It is now worth looking at links to specific themes in emotional intelligence.

## EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND MINDFULNESS

### THE GOOGLE EXPERIENCE

Google have made a strong link between emotional intelligence and mindfulness in their course Search Inside Yourself. Chade-Meng Tan, creator of this course, began with MBSR: “Meng’s first foray into marrying meditation and Google was Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction, but it didn’t attract much attention. “Stress reduction didn’t really fly here,” he told me. The hiring process at Google, Meng pointed out, is designed to draw out high achievers and idealists who have done something a little different, like hiking in Patagonia or going to war-torn areas to help children. “For high achievers, stress can be a badge of honour, and not many people will sign on for stress reduction, particularly those who need it the most. So I needed to go beyond stress reduction. I wanted to help people find ways to align mindfulness practice with what they want to achieve in life, so they can create peace and happiness in themselves, and at the same time create world peace.” (Shambhala Sun September 2009:34)

For Tan the key moment “came when I read Daniel Goleman’s Emotional Intelligence. ... Reading that book gave me another epiphany. I had found my vehicle for aligning meditation with real life, and that vehicle is emotional intelligence ..... a very good way (and I suspect the only way) to truly develop EI is with contemplative practices starting with Mindfulness Meditation.” (Tan 2012:234-5). And Goleman writes: “It was Meng who had the smarts to reverse engineer emotional intelligence. Meng picked it apart and put it back together again with a brilliant insight: he saw that knowing yourself lies at the core of emotional intelligence, and that the best mental app for this can be found in the mind-training method called mindfulness.” (ibid:viii) This led to a seven week course, the Search Inside Yourself Programme, in Google with three steps: develop attention training, increase self-knowledge and self-mastery, and create useful mental habits.

Tan states “How do we begin training emotional intelligence? We begin by training attention. .... A strong, stable and perceptive attention that affords you calmness and clarity is the foundation on which emotional intelligence is built. ... Our approach to cultivating emotional intelligence begins with mindfulness. We use mindfulness to train a quality of attention that is strong both in clarity and stability. We then direct this power-charged attention to the physiological aspects of emotion so we can perceive emotion with high vividness and resolution.”

The Search Inside Yourself Programme in Google has three steps:

- Develop attention training, which they see as “the foundation for emotional intelligence”
- Increase Self Knowledge and Self Mastery
- Create Useful Mental Habits<sup>1</sup>

### SELF-AWARENESS AND SELF-MANAGEMENT

Many of the studies discussed above have pointed to the heightened self-awareness which comes from mindfulness practice. The benefits include people's abilities to perceive, understand and regulate their thoughts and emotions.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: <http://www.siyli.org/take-the-course/siy-curriculum/>



## EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND MINDFULNESS

Studies by Jha, Krompinger and Baime (2007), and by Lutz et al (2008) have shown that **mindfulness improves aspects of attention**. Halliwell (2010) has described its benefits in increasing control of behaviour.

Self-Actualisation has been defined by Stein and Book as “the ability to realize your potential capacities. This component of emotional intelligence is manifested by your becoming involved in pursuits that lead to a meaningful, rich, and full life” (2011:76) The emphasis in MBLE on positive emotions such as empathetic joy, and positive activities such as savouring, reinforces opportunities for self-actualisation.

## SOCIAL AWARENESS AND RELATIONSHIP SKILLS

Central to EI discussions of social awareness is empathy. In MBLE empathy is addressed through several practices, including the enhancement of loving kindness, compassion and empathetic joy. These are explicitly addressed in the course, for reasons discussed in Darwin (2014). This is consistent with the argument of Boyatzis and McKee (2005), for whom compassion has three key elements:

- Understanding and empathy for others’ feelings and experiences
- Caring for others
- Willingness to act on those feelings of care and empathy

In their report on the integration of meditation in higher education, Shapiro et al [2008] argue that **empathetic responses are increased with meditation and mindfulness practices**. They cite two studies with graduate students which suggest that mindfulness training encourages empathic tendencies. Shapiro and colleagues (1998) found that MBSR increased levels of self-reported empathy in premedical and medical students relative to wait-list controls. Another study, which examined the effects of mindfulness training on a number of psychological variables in graduate counselling psychology students, included self-reported empathy (Shapiro et al., 2007).

**Counselling students who participated in a 10-week MBSR-based stress management course showed significant pre-post increases in empathic concern for others** relative to a matched cohort control group. This study also showed that increases in MAAS-assessed mindfulness were related to these increases in empathy (Shapiro & Brown, 2007). Lutz et al (2008) assessed brain activity using functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) while novice and expert meditation practitioners generated a loving-kindness-compassion meditation state. Research subjects were presented emotional and neutral sounds. During meditation, activation in insula was greater in the expert compared to the novice meditators during presentation of negative sounds. The findings of the study support the role of the limbic circuitry in emotion sharing, which is a key component of empathy and compassion, and point to how long-term meditation practice can sensitize this limbic circuitry.

Chaskalson [2011] argues that mindfulness training is an effective means of developing emotional intelligence. “Above all, perhaps, it significantly enhances your capacity for empathy and attunement. In a study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association in 2009, 18 Krasner and his colleagues reported the results of a mindfulness course they carried out with 70 primary-care doctors in Rochester. As other similar studies have shown, **the training significantly alleviated the psychological distress and burnout that is often experienced by many physicians and improved their well-being**. But it also expanded their capacity to relate to patients and enhanced patient-centred care. Enhancing the capacity of the physician fully to experience the clinical encounter, in its pleasant and unpleasant aspects, non-judgementally and with a sense of curiosity and adventure, had a profound effect on the experience of

## EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND MINDFULNESS

stress and burnout. **It also enhanced their ability to connect with each patient as a unique human being and to centre their care around that uniqueness.**"

Emotional Self-awareness is defined by Stein and Book as "the ability to recognise your feelings, differentiate between them, know why you are feeling these feelings, and recognise the impact your feelings have on others around you" (2011:53) One of the Four Foundations of Mindfulness is Mindfulness of Feelings. Not surprisingly, Stein and Book advise readers to "**learn how to use meditation or relaxation exercises – they will help you to better focus your mind on your internal feelings**" (ibid:67)

### FLEXIBILITY

Stein and Book define flexibility as "the ability to adjust your emotions, thoughts, and behaviour to changing situations and conditions. This component of emotional intelligence applies to your overall ability to adapt to unfamiliar, unpredictable, and dynamic circumstances. Flexible people are agile, synergistic and capable of reacting to change, without rigidity. These people are able to change their minds when evidence suggests that they are mistaken. They are generally open to and tolerant of different ideas, orientations, ways, and practices" (2011:187)

An important aspect of flexibility is stress tolerance, defined by Stein and Book as "the ability to withstand adverse events and stressful situations without developing physical or emotional symptoms, by actively and positively coping with stress." (2011:196) The first major mindfulness course developed was of course Kabat-Zinn's Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction, with the specific intent of helping people to address stress. The evidence in support of its efficacy is to be found in his books (eg 1990, 1994), and in many subsequent studies.

A study by Bao et al (2015) commented that "**Previous studies have found mindfulness training is intimately linked to improvements of attentional functions, cognitive flexibility and problem solving** (Jha, Krompinger, & Baime, 2007; Moore & Malinowski, 2009; Ostafin & Kassman, 2012)." Their study involved 380 native Chinese speaking adults. They report: "The purpose of the present study was to investigate the pivotal role of EI in the relationship between mindfulness and perceived stress in a sample of Chinese adults. Correlational results showed that **mindfulness was negatively related to perceived stress, and positively related to emotional intelligence**. These results are consistent with previous research that reported relationships between mindfulness and perceived stress (Black et al., 2012; Bränström et al., 2011; Gard et al., 2012; Weinstein et al., 2009), and EI (e.g., Baer et al., 2004, 2006; Brown & Ryan, 2003; Schutte & Malouff, 2011; Sinclair & Feigenbaum, 2012; Snowden et al., 2015" (Ibid:51)

There are many additional studies showing the benefits of mindfulness in stress management. Davidson et al (2003) have shown that **mindfulness increases immune functioning and produces brain changes consistent with more effective handling of emotions under stress**. Ortnier, Kilner and Zelazo (2007) identify its effect in reducing negative mood, perceived stress and rumination, while Halliwell has shown mindfulness reduces anxiety levels (2010). A study of health professionals has shown **mindfulness reduces symptoms of burnout and improves life satisfaction** among (Mackenzie, Poulin and Seidman-Carlson 2006)

Also important to flexibility is optimism, which Stein and Book define as "the ability to look at the brighter side of life and to maintain a positive attitude even in the face of adversity. Optimism is an indicator of

## EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND MINDFULNESS

one's positive attitude and outlook on life. It involves remaining hopeful and resilient, despite occasional setbacks. Optimism is the opposite of pessimism, which is a common symptom of depression.” (2011:208)

Optimism is one of the six aspects of Positive Psychology explicitly addressed in the MBL programme. For example, participants are encouraged to do the thought experiment described by Ricard (2007), comparing pessimistic and optimistic ways of viewing an airplane voyage. As research on Positive Psychology has blossomed, a number of studies have identified the value of optimism (see for example Seligman 2006, 2011, Snyder et al 2011).

Hope is also explicitly addressed in MBL. For Boyatzis and McKee (2005) hope is one of the three elements of resonant leadership, along with mindfulness and compassion. McKee, Johnston and Massimilian (2006)<sup>2</sup> argue that hope positively impacts on our brains and hormones, allowing us to feel calm, happy, amused and optimistic. We are up for the challenges ahead. They see hope as contagious, and have drawn three lessons for leaders:

- They need to have dreams and aspirations, but also to be in touch with the people who surround them. This helps to form a desired image of the future that can be shared.
- They need to be optimistic and believe in their ability to effect change.
- They must see the desired future as realistic.

A final example of flexibility is innovativeness, which the Consortium for Research on Emotional Intelligence in Organizations<sup>3</sup> identify as being comfortable with and open to novel ideas and new information. People with this competence:

- Seek out fresh ideas from a wide variety of sources
  - Entertain original solutions to problems
- Generate new ideas
- Take fresh perspectives and risks in their thinking

This relates closely to mindful learning, described in the next section.

## DECISION MAKING

Decision making includes problem solving, reality testing and impulse control. Reality testing has been defined by Stein and Book as “the ability to assess the correspondence between what's experienced and what objectively exists. Reality testing involves "tuning in" to the immediate situation. The best simple-sentence definition of reality testing is that it is the capacity to see things objectively, the way they are, rather than the way we wish or fear them to be.” (2011:159)

Shapiro et al. [2008] found that **mindfulness**

- **May improve ability to maintain preparedness and orient attention**
- **May improve ability to process information quickly and accurately**
- **Can support the development of creativity**

Langer's work on mindful learning is very relevant here. She has identified three aspects of Mindful Learning:

---

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.iveybusinessjournal.com/topics/leadership/mindfulness-hope-and-compassion-a-leader%E2%80%99s-road-map-to-renewal>

<sup>3</sup> [www.eiconsortium.org](http://www.eiconsortium.org)

## EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND MINDFULNESS

- The creation of new categories, “When we make new categories in a mindful way, we pay attention to the situation and the context. Old categories break down and the individual is no longer trapped by stereotypes.” (Langer 1997:75)
- Openness to new information “The receiving of new information is a basic function of living creatures. Mindfully engaged individuals will actively attend to changed signals.” (140)
- Awareness of more than one perspective “Once we become mindfully aware of views other than our own, we start to realize that there are as many different views as there are different observers. Such awareness is potentially liberating.” (79)

Mrazek et al (2013) looked at another important aspect of decision making – working memory capacity. They concluded: “The present study demonstrates that a 2-week mindfulness- training program can elicit increased working memory capacity and superior reading comprehension on the GRE. ... At least for people who struggle to maintain focus, our results suggest that the enhanced performance derived from mindfulness training results from a dampening of distracting thoughts. Our findings of reduced mind wandering are consistent with recent accounts that mindfulness training leads to reduced activation of the default network, a collection of brain regions that typically show greater activation at rest than during externally directed cognitive tasks.”

Thinking rationally is also important to good decision making, and Stein and Book (2011) make considerable use of Ellis’s ABCDE model, which challenges the tendency to run with possibly irrational interpretations of events. In MBLE this is used as part of the theme Challenging Negative Thinking through Mindful Learning.

Stein and Book define impulse control as “the ability to resist or delay an impulse, drive, or temptation to act. Impulse control entails avoiding rash behaviours and decision making, being composed, and able to put the brakes on angry, aggressive, hostile, and irresponsible behaviour” (2011:175). Developing impulse control is an important part of MBLE, and the metaphor of the Two Darts is used to illustrate this.

### THE TWO DARTS

In the Sallatha Sutta the Buddha explains that pain can be disentangled from suffering. Using the metaphor of two darts, he describes the first dart as unavoidable – perhaps a painful feeling or longer term sickness, a painful comment from someone else. So this can be either physical or mental pain. But the second dart we fire ourselves, and this causes mental suffering which compounds the issue. This may be in the form of rumination – thinking about how unpleasant the pain is, feeling sorry for ourselves because we are ill, or resenting the way we were spoken to by someone, and dwelling upon how unpleasant they have been. The practice of mindfulness cannot prevent the first dart, but it can address the second: *“It is as if a man were pierced by a dart, but was not hit by a second dart following the first one. So this person experiences feelings caused by a single dart only.”* The Mindful Space provides the moment of choice, where it becomes possible to reject the automatic pilot and instead choose a different course.

This mindful space has also been described by Frankl: *“Between the stimulus and response, there is a space and in that space lies our freedom and power to choose our response”* (1962). The Two Darts proves a powerful metaphor for people to keep in their mind, noticing the many times they are about to fire the second dart, and developing the ability to choose not to do this.

Extract from Darwin 2014

## EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND MINDFULNESS

### RESILIENCE

Developing resilience is central to the work of Boyatzis and McKee (2005). Explicitly building upon the insights of emotional intelligence, they identify “three essential paths of resonance: mindfulness, hope and compassion” (2005:10). They define these as follows:

- Mindfulness: Being awake, aware and attending – to ourselves and to the world around us
- Hope: When we experience Hope, we feel excited about a possible future, and we generally believe that the future we envision is attainable
- Compassion: When we experience Compassion, we are in tune with the people around us. We understand their wants and needs, and we are motivated to act on our feelings.

Williams et al followed 60 trainee police officers from the recruit phase into the workplace to determine if “anti-avoidance” strategies – acceptance, mindfulness and emotional awareness - predicted more positive mental health and wellbeing in police recruits after 1 year of service. They comment: “Policing is an emotionally challenging occupation, as is evidenced by our finding that police recruits experienced increases in depression and mental health problems as they entered the police workforce. But not all officers responded badly to entering the workforce. After controlling for baseline levels of wellbeing, officers who tended to be mindful, could identify their feelings, and did not suppress their thoughts tended to experience smaller increases in depression.” (2010:280) Their conclusion is that “Recruits who are better able to identify their feelings and are more able to be present to moment-to-moment experience are more likely to make a transition into the workplace that is characterised by lower levels of depressive symptoms and better mental health.” (ibid:281)

### 3 BEYOND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Mindfulness Based Life Enhancement was developed to help people enhance their life in general. Not surprisingly, therefore, it extends beyond emotional intelligence. Two aspects in particular are worth mentioning here.

#### ENJOYING LIFE AND SAVOURING

These are not often discussed in organisational settings, but a notable exception is the ‘Fish Philosophy’, which has become widely used in organisations. Based on the experience of Seattle’s Pike Place Fish Market, it has four key themes:

- Play
- Make Their Day
- Be There
- Choose Your Attitude

It is easy to see parallels between this and mindfulness – for example, Be There is about being present, Make their Day is about serving others and enhancing their lives. Of Play, the originators say “*Most of us learned early in life that work and play are separate, and that if you are playing you could not possibly be working. But to have a livable work environment, one in which human beings thrive, a certain amount of playfulness or lightheartedness is required. We have found no exception to this rule*” (Lundin et al. 2002:9) They suggest activities which can easily be translated to ageing, including ‘Find ways to play at work’ and ‘Have some fun’.

## EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND MINDFULNESS

### MINDFUL MOVEMENT

Emotional intelligence does not specifically address the body, but Stein and Book (2011) identify the importance of somatic awareness in helping to “tune in to what your body is telling you” (48), noting the physical signs of feelings such as anger, depression, anxiety and fear. They also comment that “There have been so many studies looking at the relationships between emotional intelligence and health that researchers have begun doing major reviews looking at all the studies in order to summarize their findings.” (2011:29). They cite in particular the work of Schutte and colleagues, who analyzed the effects in 44 studies looking at this connection, and concluded: “The current meta-analysis indicates that overall there are significant relationships between emotional intelligence and mental health, psychosomatic health, and physical health.” (Schutte et al 2007:922) A subsequent study by Martins et al concluded: “The main findings of the present meta-analysis represent an extension of the results obtained by Schutte et al. (2007) and corroborate the overall tendencies already identified by their study, reinforcing prior conclusions.” (2010:561)

Stein and Book refer also to a study by Saklofskc, Austin and colleagues, who tested 497 Canadian university students with a personality test and the EQ-i and had them monitor their exercise behaviour. It seems that extroverts and people high in emotional intelligence exercise more frequently. Personality-factors were seen as distinct from emotional intelligence skills in terms of their influence of exercise.

### EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY

The MBL course specifically includes a number of themes explored in positive psychology: optimism, hope, savouring, purpose, gratitude and forgiveness. One of the pioneers in emotional intelligence, Bar-On, has looked at the relationship between EI and Positive Psychology. He comments: “emotional intelligence has a significant impact on successful performance, happiness, well-being and the quest for a more meaningful life, which are important topics of study in the area of positive psychology (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).” (2010:55)

Bar-On refers back to an even earlier pioneer, Maslow: “Based on research that spanned close to two decades, Maslow identified a number of key characteristics of “self-actualising people” such as self-acceptance, the ability to relate well with others, the capacity to act independently, social responsibility, the intent to solve rather than avoid problems, spontaneity, creativity, and a tendency to behave realistically.” (ibid:56) He cites also Jahoda: “Based on an exhaustive search of the literature, she summarised the key factors that contribute to “positive mental health” (which is identical to what is being voiced by the positive psychology movement today). The key factors that Jahoda described were very similar to the characteristics of Maslow's self-actualising individuals and included self-acceptance, self-determination, self-actualisation, flexibility, satisfying interpersonal relationships, stress tolerance, effective reality testing and acceptance of reality, efficient functioning and adaptation, problem solving, and achievement in significant areas of life.” (ibid)

Bar-On concludes : “To summarise, the most prevalent human factors that are currently the focus of study by positive psychologists are self-regard and self-acceptance based on self-awareness, the ability to understand others' feelings (i.e. social awareness and empathy) and the capacity for interpersonal interaction (i.e. social skills), compassion and altruism, integrity and responsibility, cooperation and

## EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND MINDFULNESS

teamwork, self-regulation (i.e. emotional self-control), problem solving, giftedness, optimism and hope.” (ibid.)

In summary, Bar-On argues that “The findings presented in this article strongly indicate that emotional intelligence is indeed an integral part of positive psychology. Based on the approach applied, the following factors appear to share the widest degree of overlap between these two fields of psychology:

- self-regard and self-acceptance based on accurate self-awareness
- the ability to understand others' feelings and the capacity for positive social interaction
- the management and control of emotions
- realistic problem solving and effective decision making
- self-determination
- optimism” (ibid:59-60)

### CONCLUSION

The conclusion is simple: mindfulness is a valuable basis for the enhancement of emotional intelligence. As discussed in Darwin (2014), participants on the MBL course have found many benefits relating to awareness, acceptance and stress reduction. They have also found that mindfulness practice, both formal and informal, enhances the quality of their lives. A recent example of such evidence comes from an MBL course run for a large public sector organisation. Every participant was asked to complete a self-assessment questionnaire, involving three measurement scales before the start of the course, and again on the final day of the course.

The *Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS)* “assesses individual differences in the frequency of mindful states over time. .... The MAAS is focused on the presence or absence of attention to and awareness of what is occurring in the present.” (Brown and Ryan 2003:824). The Scale has 15 questions, and Brown and Ryan provide results obtained from a random sample of 313 undergraduates. The 15 MBL participants exceeded these figures on just two of the fifteen questions before the course began. By the end of the course, they exceed the figures on all fifteen questions.

The *Flourishing Scale* was developed by Diener et al. (2010). The Scale has 8 statements, and Diener et al provide the results of six studies in various locations. The mean result for MBL participants was below all of these prior to the course, and above all of them by the conclusion of the course.

The *Perceived Stress Scale (PSS)* is the most widely used psychological instrument for measuring the perception of stress (Cohen et al 1983, 1988). It is a measure of the degree to which situations in one’s life are appraised as stressful. Items were designed to tap how unpredictable, uncontrollable, and overloaded respondents find their lives. The scale also includes a number of direct queries about current levels of experienced stress. Scores ranging from 10-23 are considered low stress; scores ranging from 24-36 moderate stress, and scores ranging from 37-50 high perceived stress<sup>4</sup>. The mean score for MBL participants had moved from moderate to low by the conclusion of the course. The perceived stress level for every respondent had reduced.

---

<sup>4</sup> Source: **State of New Hampshire Employee Assistance Program**

REFERENCES

- AVERILL, J. R., CHON, K. K., & HAHN, D. W. (2001). Emotions and creativity, East and West. *Asian Journal of Social Psychology*, 4(3), 165–183.
- BAO, X. et al (2015) Dispositional mindfulness and perceived stress: The role of emotional intelligence *Personality and Individual Differences* 78 48-52
- BAR-ON, R. (2010) Emotional intelligence: an integral part of positive psychology *South African Journal of Psychology* 40(1) 54-62
- BOYATZIS, R. and MCKEE, A. (2005) *Resonant Leadership* Boston: Harvard Business School Press
- BROWN, K. W., RYAN, R. M., & CRESWELL, J. D. (2007). Mindfulness: Theoretical foundations and evidence for its salutary effects. *Psychological Inquiry*, 18(4), 211–237.
- BROWN, K.W. and RYAN, R.M. (2003) The Benefits of Being Present: Mindfulness and its Role in Psychological Well-Being *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* Vol 84 No 4 822-848
- BROWN, K. W., & KASSER, T. (2005). Are psychological and ecological well-being compatible? The role of values, mindfulness, and lifestyle. *Social Indicators Research*, 74(2), 349–368.
- BRYANT, F.B., CHADWICK, E. AND KLUWE, K. (2011) Understanding the processes that regulate positive emotional experience *International Journal of Wellbeing* 1(1) 107-126
- CAHN, B. R., & POLICH, J. (2006). Meditation states and traits: EEG, ERP, and neuroimaging studies. *Psychological Bulletin*, 132(2), 180–211.
- CHAROENSUKMONGKOL, P. (2014) Benefits of Mindfulness Meditation on Emotional Intelligence, General Self-Efficacy, and Perceived Stress: Evidence from Thailand, *Journal of Spirituality in Mental Health*, 16:3, 171-192
- CHASKALSON, M. (2011) *The Mindful Workplace* Chichester:Wiley-Blackwell
- CHU, L.-C. (2010) The benefits of meditation vis-a-vis emotional intelligence, perceived stress and negative mental health. *Stress and Health*, 26,169-180.
- CIARROCHI, J., BLACKLEDGE, J., BILICH L. and BAYLISS, V. (2007) Improving Emotional Intelligence: A Guide to Mindfulness-Based Emotional Intelligence Training in Ciarrochi, J. and Mayer, J. (2007) *Applying Emotional Intelligence: A Practitioner's Guide* Hove:Psychology Press
- COHEN, S., KAMARCK, T., and MERMELSTEIN, R. (1983). A global measure of perceived stress. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 24, 386-396.
- COHEN, S. and WILLIAMSON, G. (1988) Perceived Stress in a Probability Sample of the United States in SPACAPAN, S. and OSKAMP, S. (Eds.) *The Social Psychology of Health*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- CUTLER, H. (2001) *The Mindful Monk* Psychology Today available at <http://www.psychologytoday.com/articles/200105/the-mindful-monk>
- DARWIN, J. (2014) *Mindfulness Based Life Enhancement* Aberdeen:Inspired by Learning
- DAVIDSON R.J, KABAT-ZINN J, SCHUMACHER J et al. (2003). Alterations in brain and immune function produced by mindfulness meditation. *Psychosomatic Medicine* 65 564–570.
- DIENER, E. et al (2010) New Well-being Measures: Short Scales to Assess Flourishing and Positive and Negative Feelings *Soc Indic Res* 97:143–156
- FELDMAN, G., HAYES, A., KUMAR, S., GREESON, J., & LAURENCEAU, J.-P. (2007). Mindfulness and emotion regulation: The development and initial validation of the Cognitive and Affective Mindfulness Scale-Revised (CAMS-R). *Journal of Psychopathology and Behavioral Assessment*, 29(3), 177–190.
- FLAVELL, J. H. (1987). Speculations about the nature and development of metacognition. In F. E. WEINERT & R. Kluwe (Eds.), *Metacognition, motivation, and understanding* (pp. 21–29). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- GOLEMAN, D. (1995) *Emotional Intelligence* New York:Bantam Books
- GOLEMAN, D. (1999) *Working with Emotional Intelligence* London: Bloomsbury
- GOLEMAN, D. (2004) *Destructive Emotions: and How We Can Overcome Them*. New York:Bantam Books
- GOLEMAN, D. (2007) *Social Intelligence* London: Random House
- GOLEMAN, D. (2013) *Focus: The Hidden Driver of Excellence* London:Bloomsbury
- GOLEMAN, D., BOYATZIS, R. and MCKEE, A. (2001) Primal Leadership: The Hidden Driver of Great Performance *Harvard Business Review* December
- HALLIWELL, E. (2010) *Mindfulness Report* Mental Health Foundation available at [http://www.livingmindfully.co.uk/downloads/Mindfulness\\_Report.pdf](http://www.livingmindfully.co.uk/downloads/Mindfulness_Report.pdf)



## EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND MINDFULNESS

- JHA, A.P., KROMPINGER, J, BAIME, M.J. (2007). Mindfulness training modifies subsystems of attention. *Cognitive, Affective & Behavioral Neuroscience* 7 109 119.
- KABAT-ZINN J., (1990), *Full Catastrophe Living: Using the Wisdom of Your Body and Mind to Face Stress, Pain and Illness*. Delta
- KABAT-ZINN J., (1994), *Mindfulness meditation for everyday life*. Piatkus:New York
- KRASNER, M.S., EPSTEIN, R.M., BECKMAN, H., et al (2009) Association of an educational program in mindful communication with burnout, empathy, and attitudes among primary care physicians, *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 302, 1284-1293.
- LANGER, E. (1997) *Mindfulness: The Power of Mindful Learning*. Reading, MA: Perseus Books.
- LUNDIN, S., CHRISTENSEN, J. and PAUL, H. (2002) *Fish Tales* London:Hodder and Stoughton
- LUTZ, A., DAVIDSON, R. et al (2008) Regulation of the Neural Circuitry of Emotion by Compassion Meditation: Effects of Meditative Expertise *PLoS ONE* 3(3): e1897. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0001897
- MARTINS, A. et al. A comprehensive meta-analysis of the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and health *Personality and Individual Differences* 49 (2010) 554–564
- MAYER, J. and SALOVEY, P. (1997) What is Emotional Intelligence in SALOVEY, P. and SLUYTER, D. *Emotional Development and Emotional Intelligence: Educational Implications*
- MRAZEK, M., FRANKLIN, M. et al. (2013) Mindfulness Training Improves Working Memory Capacity and GRE Performance While Reducing Mind Wandering *Psychological Science* XX(X) 1 –6
- NEWMAN, M. (2008) *Emotional Capitalists: The New Leaders* Chichester:John Wiley
- ORTNER, D., KILNER, S. and ZELAZO, P. (2007) Mindfulness meditation and reduced emotional interference on a cognitive task *Motivation and Emotion* Volume 31, Number 4, 271-283,
- REN, J., HUANG, Z. et al (2011) Meditation promotes insightful problem-solving by keeping people in a mindful and alert conscious state *Science China Life Sciences* 54:10:961-965
- RICARD, M. (2007) *Happiness: A Guide to Developing Life's Most Important Skill* London: Atlantic Books
- SCHUTTE, N. et al. (2007) A meta-analytic investigation of the relationship between emotional intelligence and health *Personality and Individual Differences* 42 921–933
- SCHUTTE, N. and MALOUFF, J. (2011) Emotional intelligence mediates the relationship between mindfulness and subjective well-being *Personality and Individual Differences* 50:1116-1119
- SEGAL, Z., WILLIAMS, J.M. and TEASDALE, J. (2013) *Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy for Depression 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition* London:Guilford Press
- SELIGMAN, M.E.P. (2011) *Flourishing* London: Nicholas Brealey
- SHAPIRO, S.L. and SCHWARTZ, G.E. (2000). The role of intention in self-regulation: Toward intentional systemic mindfulness. In M. BOEKAERTS, P.R. PINTRICH, & M. ZEIDNER (Eds.), *Handbook of self-regulation* (pp. 253 273). San Diego, CA: Academic Press.
- SHAPIRO, S. L., CARLSON, L., ASTIN, J., & FREEDMAN, B. (2006) *Mechanisms of mindfulness* *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 1 14
- SHAPIRO, S. L., SCHWARTZ, G. E., & BONNER, G. (1998). Effects of mindfulness-based stress reduction on medical and premedical students. *Journal of Behavioral Medicine*, 21(6), 581–599.
- SHAPIRO, A., WARREN BROWN, K. AND BIEGEL, G. (2007) *Teaching Self-Care to Caregivers: Effects of Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction on the Mental Health of Therapists in Training* Training and Education in
- SHAPIRO, S., BROWN, K. and ASTIN, J. (2008) *Toward the Integration of Meditation into Higher Education: A Review of Research* Prepared for the Center for Contemplative Mind in Society, available at <http://www.contemplativemind.org/resources/reports#highered>
- SNOWDEN, A. et al: (2015) The relationship between emotional intelligence, previous caring experience and mindfulness in student nurses and midwives: a cross sectional analysis *Nurse Education Today* 35 152–158
- SNYDER, C.R., LOPEZ, S. and PEDROTTI, J. (2011) *Positive Psychology* London:sage
- STEIN, S. and BOOK, H. (2011) *The EQ Edge: Emotional Intelligence and your Success* Nississauge:Jossey-Bass
- SUZUKI, S. (1970) *Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind* New York:Weatherhill
- TAN, C-M (2012) *Search Inside Yourself* London:Harper-Collins
- WILLIAMS, V., CIARROCHI, J. and DEANE, F. (2010) On being mindful, emotionally aware, and more resilient: Longitudinal pilot study of police recruits *Australian Psychologist*, December; 45(4): 274–282

## **EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND MINDFULNESS**

ZEIDAN, F., JOHNSON, S. K., DIAMOND, B. J., DAVID, Z., & GOOLKASIAN, P. (2010). Mindfulness meditation improves cognition: Evidence of brief mental training. *Consciousness and Cognition*, 19(2), 597–605.

## EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND MINDFULNESS

### APPENDIX ONE: MODELS OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

	<b>Goleman, Boyatzis, McKee</b>	<b>EQ-I 2.0 Scale</b>	<b>CASEL</b>	<b>Emotional Capital</b>
<b>SELF AWARENESS</b>	<b>SELF AWARENESS</b>	<b>SELF PERCEPTION</b>	<b>SELF AWARENESS</b>	<b>SELF AWARENESS</b>
<b>Accurate self-assessment</b> <b>Emotional awareness</b> <b>Self-knowing</b> <b>Straightforwardness</b> <b>Self-actualisation</b>	Accurate self-assessment Self-confidence Emotional self-awareness	Self-regard Self-actualisation Emotional self-awareness	The ability to accurately recognize one's emotions and thoughts and their influence on behaviour. This includes accurately assessing one's strengths and limitations and possessing a well-grounded sense of confidence and optimism.	Self-knowing Straightforwardness
<b>SELF MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>SELF MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>SELF EXPRESSION</b>	<b>SELF MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>SELF MANAGEMENT</b>
<b>Self-Control</b> <b>Trustworthiness</b> <b>Conscientiousness</b> <b>Self-Confidence</b> <b>Self-reliance</b>	Emotional self-control Transparency Adaptability Achievement Initiative Optimism	Emotional expression Assertiveness Independence	The ability to regulate one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviours effectively in different situations. This includes managing stress, controlling impulses, motivating oneself, and setting and working toward achieving personal and academic goals.	Self-control Self confidence Self-reliance
<b>SOCIAL AWARENESS</b>	<b>SOCIAL AWARENESS</b>	<b>INTERPERSONAL</b>	<b>SOCIAL AWARENESS</b>	<b>SOCIAL AWARENESS</b>
<b>Empathy</b> <b>Understanding others</b> <b>Developing others</b> <b>Service orientation</b> <b>Leveraging diversity</b> <b>Political awareness</b>	Empathy Organisational awareness Service	Empathy Interpersonal Relationships Social Responsibility	The ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others from diverse backgrounds and cultures, to understand social and ethical norms for behaviour, and to recognize family, school, and community resources and supports.	Empathy
<b>RELATIONSHIP SKILLS</b>	<b>RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT</b>		<b>RELATIONSHIP SKILLS</b>	<b>SOCIAL SKILLS</b>
<b>Interpersonal Relationships</b> <b>Communication</b> <b>Conflict management</b> <b>Leadership</b> <b>Building bonds</b> <b>Collaboration and cooperation</b> <b>Team capabilities</b>	Inspirational leadership Influence Developing others Change catalyst Conflict management Building bonds Teamwork and collaboration		The ability to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships with diverse individuals and groups. This includes communicating clearly, listening actively, cooperating, resisting inappropriate social pressure, negotiating conflict constructively, and seeking and offering help when needed.	Relationship skills

## EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND MINDFULNESS

DECISION MAKING		DECISION MAKING	RESPONSIBLE DECISION MAKING	
<b>Problem Solving</b> <b>Reality Testing</b> <b>Impulse Control</b> <b>Emotional Facilitation of Thinking**</b> <b>Reflective Regulation of Emotions to Promote Growth**</b>		Problem Solving Reality Testing Impulse Control	The ability to make constructive and respectful choices about personal behaviour and social interactions based on consideration of ethical standards, safety concerns, social norms, the realistic evaluation of consequences of various actions, and the well-being of self and others	
FLEXIBILITY		STRESS MANAGEMENT		ADAPTABILITY
<b>Commitment</b> <b>Initiative</b> <b>Optimism</b> <b>Adaptability</b> <b>Innovation</b> <b>Stress Tolerance</b>		Optimism Flexibility Stress Tolerance		Optimism Adaptability Self-actualisation
		ADDITIONAL SCALE		
		Happiness		
<b>** These come from Mayer and Salovey, whose four branches of emotional intelligence also included Perception, appraisal and expression of emotion, and Understanding and analysing emotions</b>				