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

Megan Fitzgibbons
Instructional Services Coordinator
Concordia University Library

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

01 Insight

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

- Barbezat, D. P., & Bush, M. (2013). *Contemplative Practices in Higher Education: Powerful Methods to Transform Teaching and Learning.* John Wiley & Sons.

- Kabat-Zinn, J. (2003). Mindfulness-based interventions in context: Past, present, and future. *Clinical Psychology: Science and Practice, 10*(2), 144. https://doi.org/10.1093/clipsy.bpg016

- Moniz, R., Eshleman, J., Henry, J., Slutzky, H., & Moniz, L. (2015). *The mindful librarian: Connecting the practice of mindfulness to librarianship.* Chandos.

- Nhất Hạnh Thích, & Weare, K. (2017). *Happy teachers change the world: A guide for cultivating mindfulness in education.* Parallax Press.

Embodiment
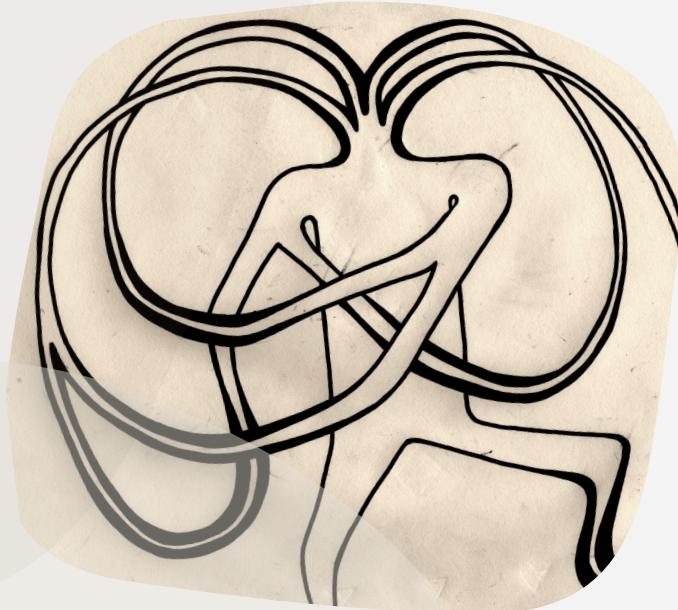
"Embodiment is:

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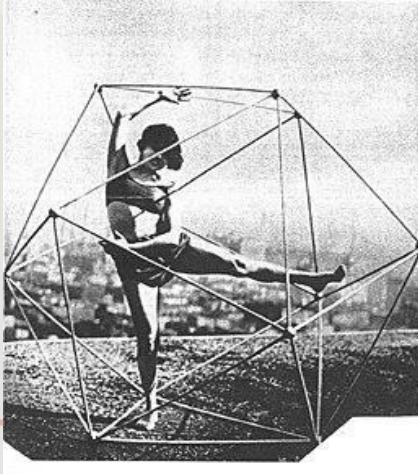
- **Somatic** awareness: awareness of the process of living inside the body
- **Spatial** experiences
- **Knowledge gained through the body** (getting a feel for something, muscle memory)
- **Embodied information**: "corporeal expression or manifestation of information previously in encoded form" (Bates,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

Key works on embodiment

- Ahern, K. (2018). Embodied databases: Attending to research 'places' through emotion and movement. *The Journal of the Assembly for Expanded Perspectives on Learning, 23*(1). https://trace.tennessee.edu/jaepl/vol23/iss1/8

- Bates, M. J. (2018). Concepts for the study of information embodiment. *Library Trends, 66*(3), 239–266. https://doi.org/10.1353/lib.2018.0002

- Batson, G., & Wilson, M. A. (2014). *Body and mind in motion: Dance and neuroscience in conversation.* Intellect Books.

- Eddy, M. (2017). *Mindful movement: The evolution of the somatic arts and conscious action.* Intellect.

- Green, B., & Hopwood, N. (2014). *The body in professional practice, learning and education: Body/practice.* Springer.

"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)

	Initiation	Selection	Exploration	Formulation	Collection	Presentation	Assessment
Feelings (Affective)	Uncertainty	Optimism	Confusion Frustration Doubt	Clarity	Sense of direction / Confidence	Satisfaction or Disappointment	Sense of accomplish-ment
Thoughts (Cognitive)	vague ⟶			focused ⟶	increased	interest	Increased self-awareness
Actions (Physical)	seeking	relevant Exploring	information ⟶	seeking	pertinent Documenting	information	

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

03 Application

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

Intentionality
Selecting search strategies according to present needs

Habits
Reducing overwhelm with relevant info management tools

Awareness
Paying attention physical sensations, thoughts, and feelings
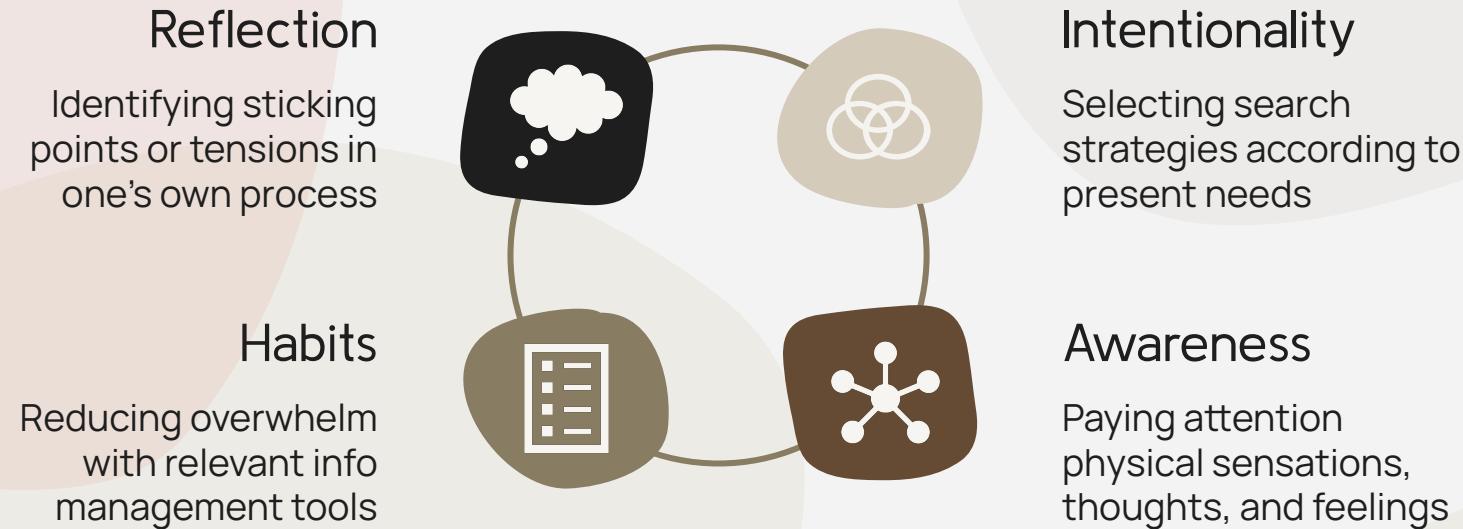
Sample slides

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)

OR

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

Wheel of emotions

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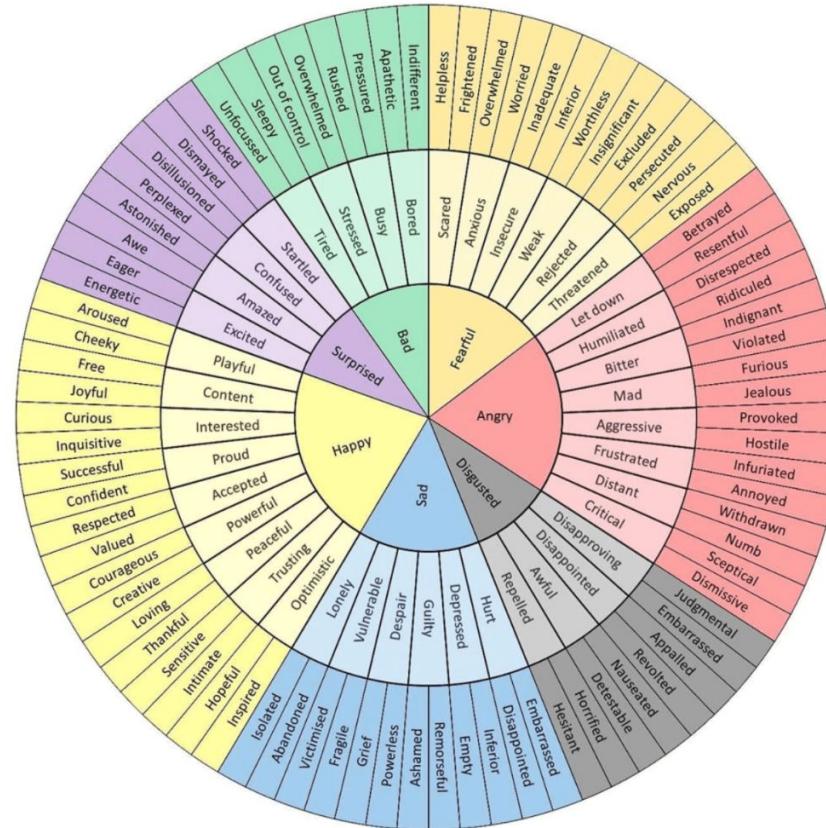
Example of feeling analysis + strategies

Feeling	Strategy
Optimistic	Systematic searching
Overwhelmed	Pearl growing
Anxious	Physical activity, breathing practices

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

Expected outcome	Result
Reflection	✔
Awareness	✔
Intentionality	✖
Habits	?

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.

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THANKS!

Megan Fitzgibbons
megan.fitzgibbons@concordia.ca

🐦 @fitzm