

HDCO 530: Mind/Body Medicine & The Art of Self-Care

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Course Description

This course is a graduate level class designed primarily for graduate students in mental health counseling, school counseling, and marriage and family therapy but also for graduate students in health promotion, wellness, community health, nursing and medical school. The objective of the course is two-fold. First, the course is designed to familiarize students with contemplative practice and its relevance for the fields of behavioral medicine, wellness, and psychotherapy. Second, the course is designed to give future health care providers practical methods for taking care of themselves and preventing burnout. The course will be interdisciplinary in nature drawing on source materials from religious studies, psychological and medical anthropology, behavioral medicine, cross-cultural psychology, and psychiatry. The course will entail both academic and experiential learning.

Course Objectives and Content

1. To provide students with techniques and skills for self-care.
2. To foster students' understanding of indigenous traditions of contemplative practice from both Eastern and Western cultures.
3. To foster students' awareness of mind/body medicine and contemporary attempts to adapt contemplative practice to health care.
4. To foster students' awareness of mind/body research regarding the effectiveness of contemplative practice in behavioral medicine.
5. To begin to foster students' awareness of ethical considerations in the application of mind/body medicine.
6. To foster students' awareness of the impact of culture and cultural understandings of well-being on the counseling process.

Required Readings

Epstein, M. (1995). *Thoughts without a thinker*. New York: Basic.

Course pack of selected journal articles and chapters

Recommended Readings

Desikachar, T. K. V. (1995). *The heart of yoga*. Rochester, VT: Inner Traditions International.

Flickstein, M. (1998). *Journey to the center: A meditation workbook*. Somerville, MA: Wisdom.

Goldstein, J., & Kornfield, J. (1987). *Seeking the heart of wisdom: The path of insight meditation*. Boston: Shambhala.

Kabat-Zinn, J. (1990). *Full catastrophe living*. New York: Delta.

Kohen, K. S. (1997). *The way of Qigong*. New York: Ballantine.

Kornfield, J. (1993). *A path with heart*. New York: Bantam.

Kraftsow, G. (1999). *Yoga for wellness*. New York: Penguin.

Masters, Jarvis Jay. (1997). *Finding freedom: Writings from death row*. Junction City, CA: Padma Publishing.

Molino, A. (Ed.). (1998). *The couch and the tree: Dialogues in psychoanalysis and Buddhism*. NY: North Point Press.

Ornish, D. (1998). *Love & Survival*. New York: Harper.

Rubin, J. (1996). *Psychotherapy and Buddhism*. New York: Plenum.

Santorelli, Saki. (1999). *Heal thy self: Lessons on mindfulness in medicine*. New York: Bell Tower.

Smith, B., & Boudreau, L. (1986). *Yoga for a new age: A modern approach to hatha yoga*. Seattle, WA: Smith Productions. BSmith7677@aol.com

Suzuki, D. T. S. (1956) *Zen Buddhism*. New York: Doubleday/Anchor.

Suzuki, S. (1970). *Zen mind, beginner's mind*. New York: Weatherhill.

Course Requirements and Evaluation Criteria

1. **Attendance and Participation:** Students are expected to attend all classes and participate actively.

Attendance: Class attendance will be evaluated on promptness, frequency, and extent (consistent lateness, missing class, and leaving class early will adversely affect grades).

Participation: Grades will also be strongly impacted by the degree and quality of class participation related to discussion of assigned readings (*come prepared!*). Lack of participation will adversely affect grades by *at least* half a grade (e.g., A to A-). Note: talking too much in class, especially when it lacks substance, will be counted against the student.

Process Journal: This journal will be an opportunity for you to dialogue with yourself (and to a lesser extent with me) about your experiences during this course. The intent of the journal is to provide a holistic outlet for your reactions. You should discuss in your journals both your reaction to the ideas and concepts in the readings and discussions and also your reactions to the contemplative practices. You are expected to take ideas from the readings

and to pursue the implications of them in depth in your journals. Consider the journal an opportunity to demonstrate that you have read, synthesized and integrated the readings. The journal is an appropriate place to talk about not only positive changes and effects that are associated with your practice, but also the resistance and blockages to your practice, as well as fears and anxieties that you may experience. You might consider having a journal entry for each practice session. You will link up with one other student in class to process your activity during the semester. Talk about this interaction in your journal. You will be marked down severely if you solely list that you did activity “x” for “y” amount of time and it was “good”, “difficult”, “adjective of choice here”.

All journal entries will be considered confidential. The expected total length of your journal is 60 pages double-spaced type (approximately 4 pages per week). You will turn in your journal three times during the semester. Due dates: February 21, April 4, May 2. The purpose of my review of your journals will not be to evaluate the quality of your experience (or writing) but rather to give you feedback and evaluate the quality of your thinking with respect to the readings.

2. **Class Presentations:** You will be expected to present two 15-minute overviews of selected empirical research on aspects of mind/body medicine (e.g., contemplative practice, meditation, yoga, the relaxation response, tai chi chuan). This will provide an opportunity for us all to learn about the growing literature that examines the implications of these practices for health and development. You are expected to develop a detailed two-page outline/overview of your presentation. The outline will include these headings:

- ❖ APA citation
- ❖ Purpose of study
- ❖ Methods
- ❖ Results
- ❖ Conclusions/implications
- ❖ Limitations

Bring enough copies of your overview to distribute to all classmates.

3. **Homework:** You will be expected to engage in some type of practice for a minimum of 45 minutes a day, six days per week. Two days a week class will count. You are responsible for practicing four days per week on your own. Practice may include meditation, yoga, chi gong, tai chi, the relaxation response, Quaker worship, or other practices with my approval.

You will link up with one other student in class to process your activity during the semester. You are expected to meet with this other student once a week.

Grading

| | |
|----------------------------|-------------------|
| Attendance & Participation | 20 points |
| Journal | 50 points |
| Research Presentations | 30 points |
| TOTAL POSSIBLE | 100 points |
| A | 94-100 |
| A- | 90-93 |
| B+ | 87-89 |

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|----|-------|
| B | 84-86 |
| B- | 80-83 |
| C+ | 78-79 |
| C | 74-77 |
| C- | 71-73 |

Journal Writing

Use the following questions to help you structure your journals.

How did the practice make you feel?

Why do you think you felt this way?

What do you think about during practice?

Why do you think you are doing this?

How do you think you can focus on the now?

What would be a way/What would help you do that?

How does this affect your everyday life?

Mentally/physically/socially

Does practice make you feel connected/disconnected from the world?

Does it make you feel a part of something else?

Partner: How does talking with your partner affect your practice? What are the similarities/differences between you and your partner?

Why do you think you have these similarities or differences?

What is the point of the experience as it relates to the rest of your life/day?

How has your life improved?

Where are you getting stuck/What is stopping you?

What time of day is preferred? Why?

If you could place yourself anywhere during practice, where would that be?

What reservations do you have about practice?

Have they worked for/against you?

How do distractions affect you?

How is focus switching-during and through practice and physical or mental?

How has your physical body changed as a result of practice?

What are your expectations about what you will get out of practice?

How does your atmosphere affect you? E.g. people around you, time of day, place.

Did you try this with others? How did this go?

Why do other thoughts enter your mind during practice?

Why is your practice affecting other parts of your life in the way it is?

What can you do to make the effects last longer?

What can you do to make yourself more focused?

What are you feeling and thinking right after practice?

Where is best place for you to do your practice?

Why do you think this is helping/not helping?