

The Wise Brain Bulletin

News and Tools for Happiness, Love, and Wisdom
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Featured Article:

Mindful Motherhood

© Cassandra Vieten, Ph.D.
(www.mindfulmotherhood.org)

Excerpted from Mindful Motherhood: Practical Tools for Staying Sane During Pregnancy and Your Child's First Year (New Harbinger/Noetic Books, 2009)

There is perhaps no time, with the possible exception of facing death, that greeting “things as it is” as Suzuki Roshi once put it, is more called for than during pregnancy, childbirth, and early motherhood. Facing the birth of a child may not be the final frontier, but it is a frontier – complete with all the excitement, challenge, and adventure that confronting any unknown territory brings.

Moms and Mood

From hormones to stretch marks, labor pains to diaper changes, motherhood is an adventure like none other. The rapid changes in your body, your lifestyle, and your very identity call for a certain mental and emotional agility, like running an obstacle course or training for a marathon. And while motherhood is a source of great joy for most women, recent data suggest that up to 18.4% of pregnant women are depressed during their pregnancy, and as many as 19.2% of first time

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Greetings

The Wise Brain Bulletin offers skillful means from brain science and contemplative practice – to nurture your brain for the benefit of yourself and everyone you touch.

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Rick Hanson, PhD and Richard Mendius, MD edit the Bulletin, and it's designed and laid out by Laurel Hanson. To subscribe, please contact Rick at drh@comcast.net.

mothers may have major or minor depression in the first three months after delivery. Psychological disorders other than depression are also prevalent in the perinatal period, with 12% of women experiencing mood disorders, 8% facing post-traumatic stress disorders, and 7% having anxiety disorders. Over and above the estimated rates of perinatal mood disorders above, 20–25% of women experience mild to moderate levels of affective distress during

the first three months postpartum.

A very robust scientific literature links postpartum depression to impairments in mother-infant bonding. In addition, a large body of empirical evidence in both animal and humans studies indicates that stress and mood disturbance experienced during pregnancy increases the risk for preterm birth (which is considered one of the most pressing problem in maternal-child health in the U.S) and other pregnancy-related complications, and may adversely affect the developing fetus. Prenatal maternal stress may also be an important mediator of the observed relationship between race/ethnicity and rates of preterm birth.

Meeting a Need – Developing the Mindful Motherhood Program

In comparison to the potentially far reaching benefits, relatively little research has focused on developing interventions to reduce stress and

improve mood during the perinatal period. In response to the need for a brief, low-cost, non-pharmaceutical intervention to reduce stress, improve mood, and decrease the effects of stress and distressed mood on mother-infant bonding, and based on our own experiences as parents, my colleague John Astin and I developed the Mindful Motherhood program. Bringing together elements from several different mindfulness-training programs, as well as our own newly developed material, we piloted the program in a group of ten women.

Based on participants' feedback and our experience as facilitators and researchers, we made some changes to the program after this group ended and tried it out on another group of women. Finally, we compared two groups of women—one that received the training in pregnancy and one that did not. The women who did not receive the training during pregnancy participated in it when their babies were between three and six months old. Though small, this pilot study showed that it was possible to learn mindful awareness during pregnancy and early motherhood (even with baby in tow!), and women who engaged in mindfulness training during pregnancy had reduced negative emotions and anxiety during pregnancy compared with women who did not participate in the training (Vieten and Astin 2008). There were also trends toward reduced symptoms of depression and increased positive emotion.

What Is Mindful Motherhood?

Mindful motherhood, the way we teach it, is focused on being present, in your body, and connected with your baby no matter what is happening. It's being aware of your experience from moment to moment, as it is happening, without pushing it away, trying to make it stay, or judging it as bad or good. It is meeting each

situation as it is, and over time, more and more often, approaching whatever is happening with curiosity and compassion.

Mindful motherhood is a way of approaching the good, the bad, and the ugly of motherhood to the largest extent possible with open eyes and an open heart. Whether those experiences are internal, like thoughts, feelings, or body sensations; or external, like relationships, workplace situations, or the situations in your environment, mindful motherhood is about increasing the capacity to be with whatever is happening, no matter what it is. Exactly like mindfulness practice in any other situation. But motherhood demands a special kind of practice.

Mindfulness in Relationship

For one thing, mindful motherhood requests that you be mindful in relationship with another being. This ends up being true of any mindfulness practice – it's no mistake that lovingkindness practice is the ultimate conclusion of most retreats. But in this situation it defines the practice. Silence, solitude, retreat, refuge – the lone wolf-style of "I'm going to sit here quietly with my mind until I see clearly," is very rarely an option in early motherhood.

Down and Dirty Mindfulness

Second, in mindful motherhood you can forget the aspects of mindfulness that are of the transcendent-detached-observing-with-great-equanimity variety. Mindful motherhood is a practice that is

living, embodied, down and dirty, sensual, centered and grounded in this world, in this body, in this moment. It's about being present, in your body, and connected with your baby. It's playing with your baby in the dirt, rather than worrying about how it's going to get cleaned up. It's spending all morning in bed together, playing peek-a-boo, eating, napping, and cuddling. It's allowing anger to well up as you walk your baby back and forth for the sixth time that night, or allowing yourself the shivery shudder of being sick with the flu and still being the primary source of sustenance for your baby. There's not much time off from motherhood in the early days, no matter how much support you have.

An Embodied Practice

So mindful motherhood is an embodied practice. In the first year of your child's life, your body, much more than your mind or your words, is your primary communication tool. You receive almost all the incoming information you need from your baby through your body and its sensations (as opposed to the communication we tend to focus



on as adults—the exchange of ideas). And all the outgoing information you deliver to your baby goes through your body as well. You connect with your baby through your facial expressions, your warmth, your touch, your tone of voice, and your tension or relaxation in each moment. Your body is likely the primary source of nutrition, and even if you are bottle feeding, your body during feeding times nourishes your baby with important skin-to-skin contact.

In fact, everything your baby knows about you and is learning from you during this time of ultimate brain plasticity, when neural pathways are being laid down for life, is happening through the communication between your body and your baby's body. This communication is for the most part nonconceptual—it's made up of sensations and emotions rather than ideas. It's really staggering if you stop to think about it. It's as though you've had to learn sign language rather than verbal language, but the sign language isn't just with your hands—it's with your whole body. Because your body is so vital to your communication, paying attention to and centering your awareness in it becomes extremely important. Which is where mindfulness comes in.



Being Here Now

Finally, mindful motherhood above all is a practice of being present in the moment. If being nonjudgmental, accepting, curious, and compassionate, and observing your experience and letting it be as it is without struggling against it are some of the rooms that make up the house of mindful motherhood, being in the present moment is the foundation of the house.

The great news for many of us is that being present with our babies can be really easy. Their adorable little selves can be incredibly compelling. You can find yourself just hanging out in the present with the baby and observing everything that is going on with great interest, curiosity, and love. In some ways this is the pinnacle of mindfulness, so it gives you the opportunity to experience it naturally without even having to try. When all the hormones line up right and you are hanging out with your baby, this experience often trumps that hypervigilance about everything else. You get “mommy brain,” where everything else drops away for a while. These moments when mindfulness comes with ease are real gifts.

On the same note, when the baby is crying, it

forces you to be present in ways that you may sometimes wish you could avoid, but can't. It's really hard to ignore or be distracted from your own baby crying. In some ways, these moments are also gifts. They provide a great opportunity to be present as the moment is demanding and to begin to learn how to let go into the present moment, to relax into it, and walk right through it without all the extra suffering that comes from resisting it or trying to make it stop.

Finally, mindful awareness in

pregnancy and early motherhood opens the door to experiences of deep contentment, expansive joy, fierce love, and warm sensuality that can exceed anything you've experienced up until then, and when you are really present, they hold the potential to be transformative. Being open to this depth of feeling can change your understanding of who you are and what you are capable of.

The Time is Now

The gist is that pregnancy, childbirth, and early motherhood are not a time to put your mindfulness practice on hold and accept that you just won't be able to attend to that part of your life as much during this period. Quite the contrary, pregnancy, childbirth, and early motherhood stimulate mindful awareness. When you lean into it, your mindfulness practice makes you grow as a mom (because essentially, the same ingredients that make up mindful awareness, when applied to your relationship with your baby, add up to being a good mom), and becoming a mom encourages mindfulness in a way that few other life experiences can. Yes, pregnancy and early motherhood can be uniquely disruptive to your usual self-care routines, such as setting aside time for meditation or yoga. But this period of time also provides an opportunity to cultivate a practice of radical mindfulness—one that is deeply embodied, and infuses itself throughout your everyday life. The bottom line is to be gentle with yourself. There are limitless opportunities to cultivate mindful motherhood in pregnancy, childbirth, parenting, and in the rest of your life. Much of what I've talked about in this book will come to you naturally, and more than anything, the information I've tried to convey is just a reminder to stay true to what is most real in each moment. Stay true to your center (your breathing, your body, and your connection to your baby), to that

part of you that is awake, aware, and encountering each moment of motherhood for the first time. Rather than being a big project or a strenuous endeavor, mindful motherhood is about giving yourself permission to rest in this moment...and in this one...and in this one. Rest into whatever it is that is happening, and explore the adventure of motherhood with open eyes, an open mind, and an open heart.

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Author Bio

Cassandra Vieten, Ph.D., is a licensed clinical psychologist, director of research at the Institute of Noetic Sciences, associate scientist at the Mind Body Medicine Research Group at California Pacific Medical Center Research Institute in San Francisco, CA, and co-president of the Institute for Spirituality and Psychology. Her research on mindfulness-based approaches to dealing with addictions, mood disorders, and for stress reduction during pregnancy and early motherhood has been funded by the National Institutes of Health, the State of California, and several private foundations. In addition to *Mindful Motherhood*, she is coauthor, along with Marilyn Schlitz and Tina Amorok, of *Living Deeply: The Art and Science of Transformation in Everyday Life*.

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The Modern Mind - and Beyond

The non-scientist's relation to modern science is basically craven: we look to its discoveries and technology to save us from disease, to give us a faster ride and a softer life, and at the same time we shrink from what it has to tell us of our perilous and insignificant place in the cosmos. Not that threats to our safety and significance were absent from the pre-scientific world, or that arguments against a God-bestowed human grandeur were lacking before Darwin. But our century's revelations of unthinkable largeness and unimaginable smallness, of abysmal stretches of geological time when we were nothing, of supernumerary galaxies and indeterminate subatomic behavior, of a kind of mad mathematical violence at the heart of matter have scorched us deeper than we know.

John Updike

*Desire the horse
Depression the cart*
Leonard Cohen

Human history becomes more and more a race between education and catastrophe.
H.G. Wells

Nothing in biology makes sense except in light of evolution.
Theodosius Dobzhansky

Indeed, we have probably learned more about the brain in the past 20 years than in all of recorded history.
Alan Leshner

The most wonderful discovery made by scientists is science itself.
Jacob Bronowski

It's a fairy tale to think that once we have attained deep faith, or have had some great enlightenment experience, our whole life will be one joyous delight after another and all sadness will be swept away, so that all we can see is paradise. Living a life of true reality . . . there has to be a settling into one's life in a much deeper place, where you face whatever comes up.

True religious teaching is not a denial of our day-to-day predicaments; it is not cleverly glossing over reality, or feigning happiness. On the contrary, religious teaching has to be able to show us how we can swim through one wave at a time -- that is, those waves of laughter, tears, prosperity, or adversity . . . I was forced to search out what true religion is when I was not unlike a stray dog, always badgered by anxieties over daily life, having to pick up whatever scraps I could.

As long as we are alive, there will always be fortunate things and unfortunate things happening in our lives. Inevitably, we go through times of utter collapse as well . . .

When we settle in the attitude that whichever way our life falls we feel grateful, we can feel the varying textures of fortune and misfortune in terms of joy and bitterness during the day's walk. If we look at humankind from a long view of billions of years, this animal called Homo sapiens is nothing more than a single existence that suddenly appeared in this universe and will leave it without a trace. A single day in the life of this very small human species is just one tiny joy, one minute of bitterness. Without an attitude that whatever happens is OK, we are going to wind up neurotic.

Still, even though whatever may happen is OK, if you do not apply any businesslike principle to your activities, even to one like takuhatsu [begging for alms], you will end up a fool. Going the Middle Way between the neurotic and the fool is precisely what doing takuhatsu is about."

Koshi Uchiyama Roshi [Zen master in Japan, who supported his temple through standing in his robes daily on the street in downtown Kyoto with a bowl for alms]

Life is fragile. Love is the glue.
Unknown

ADHD and Mindfulness Study:

An Interview with Lidia Zylowska, M.D.

By Kelley McCabe
[reprinted and edited with permission
from eMindful (www.mindful.com)]

Kelley: Lidia, Thank you for taking the time to speak with me this afternoon! I'd like to talk about your research on the impact of mindfulness on adolescents and adults diagnosed with ADHD - why don't you tell me a little bit about the work that you've just done? I've read the study several times but I'd love to hear your perspective.

Lidia: Sure, so what we did with the study was to take typical mindfulness training and make it user friendly for people with ADHD. We then looked at the feasibility of the training for both adults with ADHD as well as going a little bit younger - to include teenagers - and we hope that this kind of training can be studied with children in the future.

We developed this program called 'Mindful Awareness Practices for ADHD', or MAPS for ADHD, which is an 8-week course similar to other mindfulness intervention models. We wanted to make the so-called formal practice (i.e. sitting or walking meditation) very gradual, keeping in mind that people with ADHD - particularly those with hyperactivity - may have difficulty sitting for longer periods of time.

At the same time, we also emphasized the so-

called informal practice aspect of mindfulness training or paying attention in daily life. For example, really paying attention to sensation of taste when you are eating, paying attention to your breath throughout your day, noticing how you are sitting in a chair in front of a computer, noticing your body while playing sports, and so on.

Also, a big component of the MAPS course was talking about "What is ADHD?" and reframing it as a neurobiological difference that exists on a continuum and can have different types of self-regulation difficulties associated with it. In this re-framing, curiosity and openness is brought to self-observation, encouraging awareness of both difficulties as well as potential unique positive characteristics that come with ADHD and ultimately developing a better way to work with one's weaknesses.

Another modification of the course over the traditional 8-week interventions was an emphasis on developing lovingkindness - which is sometimes part of mindfulness training and sometimes not. We thought that aspect was important because there's often low self-esteem in people with ADHD; a kind of reactivity to yourself, negative thoughts, self-criticism, or

feeling different. Overall, the course emphasizes acceptance and self-compassion as a way to promote change.

Looking at the change before and after the course, we found improvement in self-report of ADHD symptoms. The symptoms of inattention and hyperactivity improved significantly; they were measured before the class, at the conclusion, and - although we did not report this in the paper - we also repeated the measurement 3 months after the training was completed. We found that there was actually even more improvement at the post 3 month mark than right after the training which was very encouraging.

Kelley: Yes, I would have expected that, that's great.

Lidia: We also looked at measures of predicting anxiety and depression before and after and we found anxiety and depression improved in adults [as a result of the MAPS training], although not so much in adolescents. In addition, we used a battery of tests that are often used to look at cognitive impairment in ADHD. Even though cognitive impairments are not necessary for a diagnosis of ADHD, it is common to have some

San Rafael Meditation Group

Open to beginners and experienced practitioners, we meet on Wednesday evenings at the A Sante day spa in downtown San Rafael at the corner of Brooks and 3rd. "Early-bird" meditation starts at 6:45 with formal instruction at 7:00; meditation ends at 7:30, followed by a brief break, and then a dharma talk and discussion, ending at 8:30. It is led by Rick Hanson, and for more information, check out www.WiseBrain.org/sanrafaelmeditation.html. Newcomers are always welcome!

trouble with working memory: the ability to hold information "online" for short periods of time. In ADHD, there are frequently so-called cognitive inhibitions or executive function problems, or difficulty being able to ignore distracting information, to stay focused on a task, or to be organized.

So we used an executive function test battery that taps into inhibition as well as working memory abilities. We found improvements on measures of [how well people handled] conflicts of attention and on some of the inhibition-implying measures, but not so much improvement on the working memory measures.

In our study, we used a computer test called the "Attention Network Test" or "ANT." It looks at three aspects of attention: alerting, orienting, and handling conflicted attention. Alerting is the ability to just be alert enough to pay attention, orienting is the ability to shift attention to the target and then move of attention again, and conflicted attention is the ability to pay attention when something else is distracting being able to ignore that distracting information. Among those three aspects, the conflicted attention aspect improved the most significantly.

Grateful Wonder

"... of the people, by the people, for the people..."

Here's to the people of Iran:

- Three musicians and one extraordinary song

www.youtube.com/watch?v=91pMQfuZf04

- And the whole Gettysburg Address:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gettysburg_address

The Wellspring Institute
for Neuroscience and Contemplative Wisdom

The Institute is a 501c3 non-profit corporation, and it publishes the Wise Brain Bulletin. The Wellspring Institute gathers, organizes, and freely offers information and methods – supported by brain science and the contemplative disciplines – for greater happiness, love, effectiveness, and wisdom. For more information about the Institute, please go to www.wisebrain.org/wellspring.html.

We think that at multiple levels, mindfulness can be helpful with attention training, emotional regulation, and lowering stress, as well as with learning how to relate to yourself in a more loving, kind or compassionate way.

Kelley: That's great - thanks for that summary. Are you planning a subsequent study?

Lidia: While our study is currently finished, other groups are interested in doing similar work at UCLA's Mindful Awareness Research Center (MARC) and elsewhere, wanting to do a follow-on with children or adults. That would be a really nice way to further validate this study.

Kelley: I have been asked many times if I think using eMindful's live, interactive virtual classroom (where students and participants can see and hear each other) to teach children about mindfulness would be a good idea. The rationale is children are so great with computers. Do you think that would be effective?

Lidia: That's a good question. I have definitely thought about that - there are a lot of lives touched by ADHD and there have been lots of requests from people not just in the Los Angeles area where we are, but from other states and even all over the world - so I think it would be nice to be able to reach people beyond LA to offer this kind of training.

Kelley: Yes, I'm wondering if you think the live online class would be as effective or not?

Lidia: Yes, well I think if there is an interactive component, and members can interact with each other, and participants really feel like they are a part of a group, then, yes, I think it would be



effective.

Involving parents in this kind of learning can also be helpful as parents are natural teachers to their children; they can model mindful communication, and they can use mindfulness as a tool for their own well-being and managing the stress of parenting.

Another application is for people with ADHD who were diagnosed as adults, [so they] grew up thinking that they were different and not quite knowing why. As a result there is a need for [this population of people] to connect with other people who are like them and to have a sense of belonging. The idea of creating an on-line community of these adults has always been interesting to me. A community in which you can bring mindfulness to this issue of learning about yourself and accepting yourself as you are - but at the same time being able to keep working at it. We often talk about balancing when talking to individuals with ADHD: being able to accept something that is difficult, but not giving up. You can work with the difficulties of ADHD and still bring compassion to that work.

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Author Bios

Lidia Zylowska, M.D. is a board-certified psychiatrist who focuses on mindfulness-based interventions in mental health, and on adult Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). Trained at the UCLA Neuropsychiatric Institute, Dr. Zylowska also completed a fellowship at the UCLA Center for East-West Medicine. In 2003, Dr. Zylowska was awarded the UCLA Robert Wood Johnson Clinical Scholars Program Fel-

lowship during which she led the study of the Mindful Awareness Program (MAP) for ADHD: a meditation-based training in self-regulation (see Zylowska et al, Journal of Attention Disorders, May 2008 for study results). Dr. Zylowska is one of the co-founders and a faculty member at the UCLA Mindful Awareness Research Center (MARC), which promotes mindfulness education to the general public. Actively involved in clinical work, Dr. Zylowska has a private practice in West Los Angeles where she sees many adults with ADHD and uses mindfulness in her treatment. Dr. Zylowska periodically offers on-line workshops related to mindfulness and ADHD, and her CD "Mindfulness for Adult ADD/ADHD" is coming out in Fall 2009. For more details including an overview of the initial MAP for ADHD 8-week training, please visit www.lidiazylowska.com.



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Kelley McCabe is the founder of eMindful. In addition to teaching mindful eating at eMindful, Kelley is currently teaching mindfulness meditation at the Center for Spiritual Care in Vero Beach, FL.

Your Brain on Starbucks

© Jan Hanson, M.S., L.Ac.

Take a minute to imagine your ideal cup of coffee. If you're like most Americans, what springs to mind may not be black coffee, but a rich mocha, steaming caramel macchiato, or whipped frappachino. For many of us, a visit to Starbucks – or similar coffee joints – is a regular event, and we drink our customized lattes with pleasure.

But what are you really consuming? A cup of coffee? Or something more like a milkshake? I admit I love my trips to Starbucks, but most of their drinks contain one or more of these three worrisome ingredients: sugar, dairy products, and caffeine.

Sugar

I knew a girl who worked as a Starbucks barista, and she told me that a white chocolate mocha was one of their most popular drinks. Fortunately for us today, the internet (and handy in-store brochures) take the guesswork out of nutrition and let us see, with brutal clarity, what we are really consuming. Compare a medium white chocolate mocha from Starbucks, and a hot fudge sundae from McDonald's. Which would you say would be a healthier choice? If you're like me, you probably guessed the coffee – how bad could it be? However, that medium Starbucks mocha has 59 grams of sugar (and 470 calories), while the hot fudge sundae comes in at “only” 48 grams of sugar and 330 calories!

The problem is that you think you just ordered a cup of coffee with a little sugar added. Nope, that mocha was your dessert! And it isn't just the mochas – a medium Frappuchino, depending on the particular flavor, can have up to 65 grams of sugar; a medium green tea latte (sounds healthy, right?) has 55 grams, and their medium, plain hot chocolate has 40 grams. Even in their theoretically healthier options, danger lurks: a medium strawberry banana vivanno smoothie has 41 grams of sugar, and a “light” Frappuchino has 32 grams. Just for comparison, a 12 oz can of Coke has 39 grams of sugar, and a Hershey's sundae pie from Burger King has 22 grams.

So what's wrong with sugar? It raises your insulin, and high blood sugar and insulin cause diabetes. It's also a major cause of cardiovascular disease and is implicated in vastly increasing your risk of cancer. It also hurts your brain functions – high blood sugar wears on the hippocampus (Wu et al. 2008) and eating large amounts of sugar is linked to relative cognitive impairment in older adults (Messier and Gagnon 2000). And all of that is not to mention – sugar makes you fat!

Dairy

An allergy to dairy products is the single most prevalent allergy in my own nutrition practice. While I do tend to test people who are more like-

ly to have allergies, at least 75% of the patients I test come up allergic to dairy. The reactions can cause digestive problems, sinus congestion, ear infections, and skin rashes. I have seen all of these symptoms completely disappear with the removal of dairy products from a patient's diet. Additionally, dairy itself has a negative effect on the body and immune system. Casein, the major protein in dairy products, promotes the growth of cancer tumors in rats (studies reported in The China Study, T. Coin Campbell, 2006, BenBella Books). Another study showed that even without a known sensitivity, increased consumption of dairy correlates with an increased risk of Parkinson's disease (Park et al. 2005).

Most (although not all) drinks at Starbucks contain some amount of milk, which contributes to overall consumption of milk products.

Caffeine

While this may surprise you, I'm not very concerned about the actual caffeine in the drinks. I accept it with few reservations in mindful

amounts. Coffee, in and of itself (the caffeine, not the milk and sugar!) has rarely been linked to health problems. Increased coffee consumption is actually associated with a decreased risk for diabetes and Parkinson's disease (Pereira et al., 2006; Ross, et al., 2000).

On the other hand, coffee is a high acid drink, and can irritate the stomach. Also, caffeine is a stimulant, and, while it may be helpful to increase your energy, it can make you nervous and jittery, plus disturb your sleep. But, in thoughtful quantities, caffeine is really not a health problem, per se.

So What Should I Drink?

Personally, I love Starbucks (and here you thought I never went in!) Because their drinks are so customizable, it is actually entirely possible to create a healthy drink. My own favorite drink is a decaf espresso macchiato – that's a couple shots of decaf espresso with lots of foam on it, which I top with cocoa powder. I have my foam made from heavy whipping cream, which

dramatically decreases the amount of casein, the milk protein (if you have a strong dairy allergy, that amount of cream could upset you, but it doesn't bother me). I love it! With no added sugar, I find it delicious.

What are some other options? Obviously, black coffee or espresso is great if you enjoy it. They have a variety of teas, both hot or iced, which are delicious (but be careful to specify "unsweetened," otherwise you could



Perspectives on Self-Care

Be careful with all self-help methods (including those presented in this Bulletin), which are no substitute for working with a licensed healthcare practitioner. People vary, and what works for someone else may not be a good fit for you. When you try something, start slowly and carefully, and stop immediately if it feels bad or makes things worse.

be in for up to 35 grams of sugar!).

Since healthy choices begin with moderation, try just putting less sugar in whatever drink you order. Request your drink with half the pumps of syrup they usually put in. Better yet, order your drink completely unsweetened and add the sugar yourself – a teaspoon of sugar has 4 grams of sugar in it, and adding a few spoonfulls is still a lot less than what's normally in a mocha. In terms of dairy products, try your drink with soy milk, or experiment with heavy cream.

Bottom line, Starbucks is full of dietary dangers. But if you're careful and you know what you're eating (check out www.starbucks.com/nutrition), there's no reason a Starbucks trip can't be an enjoyable part of your day.

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Author Bio

Jan Hanson, M.S., L.Ac., is an acupuncturist and specialist in clinical nutrition whose private practice focuses on women's health and temperament issues in children. She is co-author of *Mother Nurture: A Mother's Guide to Health in Body, Mind, and Intimate Relationships* (Penguin, 2002). While working at the Neurochemistry Research Laboratory at the Veteran's Hospital in Sepulveda, California, she co-authored a research paper when she was 18 years old. She went on to receive a B.A. from UCLA and an M.S. from the Academy of Chinese Culture and Health Sciences.



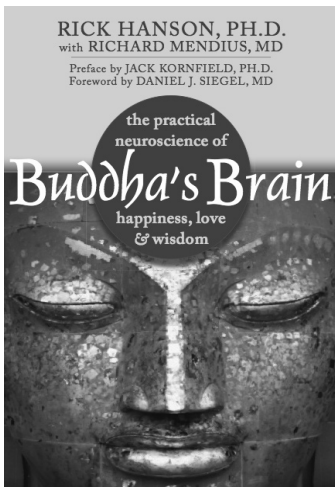
Offerings

Rick Hanson, PhD, and Rick Mendius, MD

1. *Buddha's Brain: The Practical Neuroscience of Happiness, Love, and Wisdom* is now in production, with a publication date of November

1, 2009. It can be pre-ordered from Amazon at www.newharbinger.com/productdetails.cfm?PC=852 or from New Harbinger at www.newharbinger.com/productdetails.cfm?PC=852. By Rick Hanson, PhD (with Rick Mendius, MD; preface by Jack Kornfield, PhD and Foreword by Dan Siegel, MD), this book draws on the historically unprecedented integration of modern

neuroscience and ancient contemplative wisdom to show you how to use your mind to change your brain to change your life.



2. The “two Ricks” – Mendius and Hanson – have also produced a 3 CD set with Sounds True called *Meditations to Change Your Brain*. This program combines fascinating insights with seven powerful guided practices that you can use routinely to change your own brain for the better. For more info, go to Amazon (www.amazon.com/Meditations-Change-Your-Brain-Hanson/dp/159179711X/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1247945310&sr=8-1) or Sounds True (<http://shop.soundstrue.com/shop.soundstrue.com/SelectProd.do?jsessionid=D684B884BEAF8107013C3B4395A03811?prodId=1979&manufacturer=Sounds%20True&category=Spiritual%20Teachings&name=Meditations%20to%20Change%20Your%20Brain>).

3. At the Science and Nonduality Conference in

Marin County, California, during October 23–25, Rick Hanson will speak on **Self Is a Unicorn: The Real Representations of an Unreal Being in the Brain**. See www.scienceandnonduality.com for more information.

4. Through R. Cassidy Seminars, Rick Hanson will be presenting **Taking in the Good** as a continuing education workshop to mental health professionals. Through using the neural machinery of memory in clever ways, you can defeat the negativity bias of the brain, which particularly remembers and then reacts to stressful or painful experiences – even though most of life is positive or neutral. The results include greater self-confidence, better mood, and a gradual healing of upsetting, even traumatic, experiences. The locations and dates are

Friday, October 2: San Francisco, CA

Friday, October 9: Sacramento, CA

Friday, November 13: Los Angeles, CA

Saturday, November 14: Pasadena, CA

See www.academeca.com/Amedco/SeminarInfo.aspx?seminarId=417 for more information.

5. At Spirit Rock Meditation Center in Woodacre, CA, Fred Luskin, Ph.D. and Rick Hanson, Ph.D. will offer a daylong benefit on Sunday, August 23 on Forgiveness and Assertiveness. These two subjects, which are often seen as at odds with each other, actually support each other. This workshop will cover how we form grievances, healthy forgiveness, and healthy assertiveness. Dr. Luskin is a world-renowned expert on forgiveness, and we will get into the nitty-gritty of how to work through difficult issues with others. (www.spiritrock.org/calendar/display.asp?id=RF1D09)

6. At Spirit Rock, in 2009, these daylongs with Rick Mendius and Rick Hanson are scheduled:

• **Resting in Emptiness: The Evolution of Awareness and the Transcendence of the Self**, on Saturday, November 7. This workshop will address the thorny and fundamental question of . . . “me, myself, and I.” The self – with its tendencies to grasp after possessions and take things personally – is perhaps the premier engine of suffering. We’ll explore the evolution of the apparent self in the animal kingdom, and the ways in which the self is real and is also not real at all, coming to rest more and more in the underlying spacious awareness in which self appears and disappears. (www.spiritrock.org/calendar/display.asp?id=RR4D09)

• **The Hard Things That Open the Mind and Heart: Practicing with Difficult Conditions**, led with James Baraz, on Sunday, December 13. This is for people grappling with difficult conditions – both internal and external – and for caregivers and friends who support those individuals. These include challenges with the body, mind, and life circumstances. We’ll cover Buddhist perspectives and practices for difficult conditions; lovingkindness for oneself and for any being who suffers; brain-savvy ways to strengthen your capacity to be with the hard stuff; and methods from the intersection of the dharma and neuroscience for lifting mood and cultivating joy. (www.spiritrock.org/calendar/display.asp?id=JB3D09)

7. With the **Dharma Zephyr Insight Meditation Community** in Nevada, Rick will be leading a two day workshop September 12 and 13 on using brain-savvy methods to steady the mind, quiet it, bring it to singleness, and concentrate it, following the road map of the Buddha. See www.nevadadharmadharma.net/zephyr.html for more information.

8. At the University of East London, the conference on **Mindfulness and Well-Being: From Spirituality to Cognitive Neuroscience** will be held on November 20 and 21. Rick will be giving several talks and a workshop. Contact Dr. Patrizia Collard at drcollard@stressminus.co.uk for more information.

9. At the London Insight Meditation Center, Rick Hanson will be presenting **The Neurology of Awakening** on Sunday November 22. See www.londoninsightmeditation.org.uk/programme/schedule for more information (click on Daylong Retreats).

10. Rick Hanson has a chapter, **7 Facts about the Brain That Incline the Mind to Joy**, in *Measuring the Immeasurable* – which is chock full of essays from luminaries like James Austin, MD, Larry Dossey, MD, Daniel Goleman, PhD., Candace Pert, PhD, Marilyn Schlitz, PhD, Dan Siegel, MD, Charles Tart, PhD, and Cassandra Vieten, PhD. Check it out at <http://www.amazon.com/Measuring-Immeasurable-Scientific-Case-Spirituality/dp/1591796547>.

11. Sounds True offers **Meditations for Happiness** by Rick Hanson, Ph.D. It’s 3 CD’s worth of talks and brain-savvy exercises for increasing your happiness, with an emphasis on experiential practices and practical tools. It is offered as an inexpensive download to your computer, where you can listen to it or burn it to CD’s or transfer it to an iPod.

This program truly turned out to be pretty great, and here’s a comment about it from the author, Annie Spiegelman:

On his new “Meditations for Happiness” program, benevolent Rick Hanson guides me to sit down and face my inner critic – and then actually see it as a form and shrink it. Being a Master Gardener, I see the critic as a gnome who tiptoes into my brain when no one is looking, with those tiny pointy shoes, and makes me doubt myself. I shrink him down to the size of a snail and toss him out. He knows nothing. The shoes are a dead giveaway.

Here’s the link to this program at Sounds True: <http://shop.soundstrue.com/shop.soundstrue.com/SelectProd.do;jsessionid=91E06512A8A5D4D222A639DA4C1ED2F9?prodId=1715&manufacturer=Sounds%20True&category=Exploring%20the%20Psyche&name=Meditations%20for%20Happiness>

Fare Well.

May you and all beings be happy, loving, and wise.