

## EMDR Therapy & Mindfulness

Creative and Engaged Solutions  
for Trauma-Focused Care

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## About Your Presenter

- Licensed Supervising Professional Clinical Counselor (MH)
- Registered Expressive Arts Therapist (REAT)
- Author, *EMDR Made Simple*, *Trauma Made Simple*, *Trauma and the Twelve Steps*, *EMDR Therapy & Mindfulness for Trauma Focused Care*, and *Dissociation Made Simple*
- Twenty-two years of experience working in social services and counseling; includes three years of experience in civilian humanitarian aid in Bosnia-Herzegovina
- Specialist in addictions, trauma, abuse, dissociative disorders, spirituality and spiritual abuse/religious trauma
- EMDRIA-Approved Consultant & Approved Training Provider
- Creator of the *Dancing Mindfulness* practice and author of *Dancing Mindfulness: A Creative Path to Healing & Transformation*

## Objectives

- To summarize the history of how mindfulness practice and mind-body medicine played a formative role in Shapiro's development of EMDR therapy
- To define mindfulness from a variety of perspectives (e.g., linguistic, spiritual, clinical) and explain what is meant by a mindfulness-informed intervention
- To discuss mindfulness as the *opposite of dissociation* and explain why extra care is needed in why/how we teach mindfulness skills to clients who dissociate
- To apply 10 mindfulness-informed interventions in clinical situations, particularly as a component of EMDR Therapy Phases 2 & 7, making appropriate adaptations in the spirit of trauma-focused care
- To apply these same skills in clinically difficult situations within the EMDR therapy framework (e.g., working with complex trauma, managing ab reactions, navigating dissociative presentations, addressing addiction)
- To articulate 5-6 fundamentals of teaching mindfulness skills in a trauma-informed way and seamlessly blend that teaching style into the practice of EMDR Therapy

## Objectives

- To identify how mindfulness philosophy and strategy shows up in all the procedural steps of Phases 3-6, which can assist participants who struggle with applying the protocol
- To define expressive arts therapy and explain what makes it an ideal system for both working with trauma and enhancing EMDR Therapy
- To translate all of the basic mindfulness skills covered in the course to more creative interventions using the expressive arts
- To adapt the various practices covered in this course for working with a variety of client populations, more fully considering the notion of meeting someone where they are "at"
- To develop a personal mindfulness practice for addressing secondary trauma and vicarious traumatization, which will translate into more effective delivery of EMDR therapy and clinical services overall for practitioners
- To discuss (and make clinical applications based on that discussion) the relational imperative in EMDR Therapy and connect how mindfulness and expressive arts practice helps to enhance that relationship

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## Agenda

### DAY 1

- Part 1: Foundations and Fundamentals of Mindfulness
- Part 2: Exploring Dr. Shapiro's Own Mindfulness and Embodied Practices and Their Role in the History of EMDR Therapy
- Part 3: Continued Experiential Practice with Mindfulness and Weaving Connections to EMDR Therapy
- Part 4: Expanding Skills with Navigating Dissociation

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## Agenda

### DAY 2

- Part 1: Creative Mindfulness- Introducing Expressive Arts Therapy
- Part 2: Structuring Mindful Expressive Arts Practices to Enhance EMDR Therapy
- Part 3: Demonstration & Discussion
- Part 4: Clinical Wrap-Up, Final Practices, Final Q & A

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## Mindfulness

- English term *mindfulness* first coined in 1881
- Comes from the Sanskrit word *smriti* meaning “awareness,” specifically, “coming back to awareness”

➤ Which implies?

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## Mindfulness

- Paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the presence of the moment, and non-judgmentally; as if your life depended on it (Kabat-Zinn, 2003/2005/2011)
- The self-regulation of attention to the conscious awareness of one’s immediate experiences while adopting an attitude of curiosity, openness, and acceptance (Bishop, Lau, Shapiro et al., 2004)

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## Mindfulness

- About 500 peer-reviewed studies on mindfulness in clinical work are published each year (since 2012) and this number continues to multiply
- For complete research summaries, good resources include:

The Greater Good @ UC Berkeley  
<http://greatergood.berkeley.edu>

Mindfulness Research Monthly  
<https://goamra.org>

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## Mindfulness: Meta-Analyses

- Mindfulness brings about various psychological effects, including increased subjective well-being, reduced psychological symptoms, and reduced emotional reactivity (Keng, Smoski, & Robbins, 2011).
- Mindfulness based interventions are effective treatments for a variety of psychological problems, especially in reducing anxiety, depression, and stress, at very least on par with cognitive and behavioral interventions (Khoury, Lecomte, Fortin, et al., 2013).
- Mindfulness-based interventions in children and youths hold promise, particularly in relation to improving cognitive performance and resilience to stress (Zenner, Herrnleben-Kurz, & Walach, 2014).

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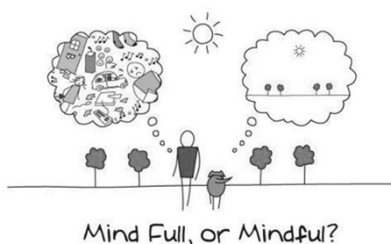
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## An Introduction to Classic Mindfulness Practices




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## Video Resource

- To review all of the skills covered today, please visit the following free resource:

[www.traumamadesimple.com/videos](http://www.traumamadesimple.com/videos)

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### Skill 1: Practicing Awareness




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### Skill 2: Body Scan




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### Meta-Analysis: Li, Howard, Garland, et al. (2017)

- 34 randomized controlled trials studying substance abuse/addiction counseling
- "Virtually all studies found that mindfulness treatments were associated with superior treatment outcomes at posttreatment and follow-up assessments compared to comparison conditions" (p. 69)

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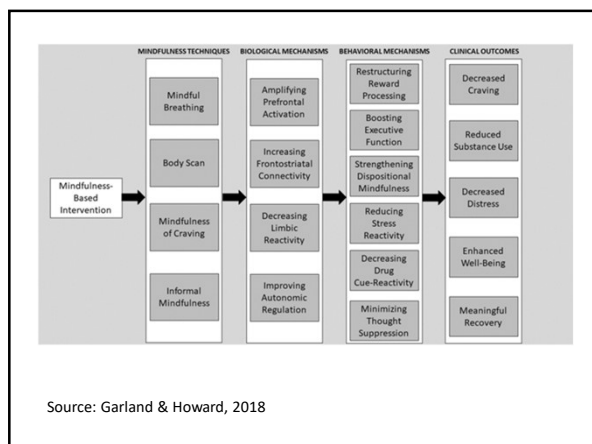
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### Dissociation & Mindfulness (Forner, 2019)

- The mindful brain seems to be more about connection and dissociation seems to be more about how to survive disconnection.
- In many ways, dissociation is a state of missing mindfulness.
- If someone dissociates often enough, they will become a human being who is phobic of mindfulness.

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### Trauma-Focused Considerations (Marich & Dansiger, 2018)

- Eyes can stay open
- Time in the exercise is variable
- Let people know how long the exercise, specifically the silence, will last
- Clarify any misconceptions or misinformation about what mindfulness or meditation means
- Be open to variations in practice
- Have your own practice—this will help you to modify if your worksheets seem to fail you

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### Skill 3: Light Stream Imagery




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### The EMDR Therapy Approach

- Mindfulness posited as one of the potential mechanisms of action in EMDR therapy (Logie, 2014)
- EMDR therapy also conceptualized as an extension of mindfulness practice, especially considering Shapiro's roots with meditation and mind-body medicine practice (Marich & Dansiger, 2017)

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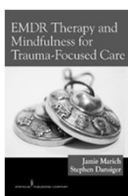
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### The Mindful "Roots" of EMDR

- Shapiro studied mind-body medicine as part of her journey in the 1980's, which included mindfulness training with Stephen Levine
- The standard EMDR therapy protocol is rich with language from mindfulness traditions
- In healing addiction, working with mindfulness in Phase 2 is imperative for decision making/case conceptualization with related cases and in preparing a client for work in Phases 3-8
- EMDR therapists have their own mindfulness practice allows them to better attend to the complexities that will emerge in treating addiction with EMDR therapy and in better understanding the interplay between trauma and addiction




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### **"Go With That"**

- A classic phrase used in EMDR training, deriving from mindfulness meditation, specifically Vipassana meditation (a form of mindfulness meditation)
- What role did "go with that," or its variations, play in this demonstration?
- What does "go with that" mean to you?

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### **Vipassana Meditation**

- A form of meditation typically grouped with the mindfulness approach
- Mindfulness of breathing a major facet
- Etymology: "clear seeing" or "before the eyes"
- Aim is to promote introspection, observation of bodily sensations, analysis through sitting with the lived experience
- Many see it as "EMDR without the eye movements"

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### **The Four Noble Truths** (as presented by Marich & Dansiger, 2018)

- Suffering is inevitable
- Pain is a guarantee in this life, but suffering is caused by craving, clinging, aversion, and unhealthy attachment to material things, people, results, and experiences.
- Get into and through these causes and conditions to end the suffering.
- The alleviation of suffering is possible.

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## From Forward by Noah Levine

- EMDR therapy is the Dharma. Dharma means to see clearly and respond wisely. The Buddha often said that he only taught the truth of suffering and how to end suffering. Buddhism teaches many different techniques in the service of ending suffering, mindfulness being the main meditative technique offered in the core teachings, called the Eightfold Path.
- EMDR therapy is mindfulness. Mindfulness is the Dharma.

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## Skill 4: Walking Meditation




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## Skill 5: Tapping Meditation & Body Drumming




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### Neurological Implications for Combining Mindfulness Practice with EMDR & Other Reprocessing Therapies

- Simple mindfulness practices are ideal for preparation work; not only are they excellent coping skills, they get the brain ready for deeper work
- The attitudes of mindfulness, if being actively cultivated, put the brain in a better position to process
- Simple mindfulness strategies (whether bilateral or not) are ideal for closing down a session or for clients to access on their own in between sessions for affect regulation

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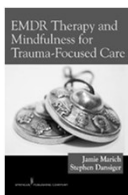
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### Case Conceptualization Notes

- Decision making based on the stages of change and respecting how clients work with mindfulness skills in Phase 2 is crucial
- Planning targeting sequences can be informed by this work in Phase 2, with respect to the stages of change, and client's work with other recovery capital (e.g., 12-step/mutual help groups)
- Going back to the "first" memory or relying on chronological history is impractical; assessing (Phase 3) through the *three poisons* in Buddhist psychology can offer tremendous insight
- Recovery roadblocks and their underlying themes also provide strategies forward




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### REVIEW and DISCUSS Trauma-Focused Considerations (Marich & Dansiger, 2018)

- Eyes can stay open
- Time in the exercise is variable
- Let people know how long the exercise, specifically the silence, will last
- Clarify any misconceptions or misinformation about what mindfulness or meditation means
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## Bodyfulness

- Coined by Christine Caldwell (2014) of Naropa University
- Includes practices like yoga, somatic processes, Qi Gong, dance, and other practices that add another dimension to the practice of mindfulness by more fully encouraging awareness of the body
- Developed in response to existing biases against these practices being legitimate meditation and mindfulness avenues

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## Expressive Art Therapy Overview

- Characterized by a multi-modal, multi-art orientation
- Focus on process rather than analysis or outcome
- The International Expressive Arts Therapy (IEATA) Organization, founded in 1994, describes the development of expressive arts therapy as a process with contributions coming from many traditions, individuals, theoretical contributions (e.g., person-centered, Gestalt), and institutions
- Honoring the indigenous roots of expressive arts therapy critical to the IEATA mission; focus of 2017 conference on indigenous roots of expressive arts therapy

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## Expressive Arts Therapy: Indigenous Roots (Arrien, 2013)

- The 4 healing salves:

- ✧ storytelling
- ✧ singing
- ✧ dancing
- ✧ silence




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## Expressive Arts Therapy: The Meaning of Multi-Modal

- By definition, the field of expressive arts therapy concentrates on the convergence of multiple arts forms, not just focus on one
- Examples of expressive art forms include:
  - ✧ dance/movement
  - ✧ music (creating, listening)
  - ✧ writing (journaling, poetry, short stories, etc.)
  - ✧ photography
  - ✧ theater
  - ✧ visual arts (collage, drawing, pottery, sculpture, crafting, etc.)
  - ✧ visualization and meditation

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## Conditions That Foster Creativity (Rogers, 1993)

- Psychological safety
  - ✧ accepting the individual as of unconditional worth
  - ✧ providing a climate in which external evaluation is absent
  - ✧ understanding empathetically
- Psychological freedom
- Offering stimulating and challenging experiences

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## Practice 1: Yogic Breathing Techniques with Expressive Invitations




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## Practice 2: Mindful Movement & Dancing Mindfulness Introduction




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## Practice 3: Coloring Pages & Gush Art




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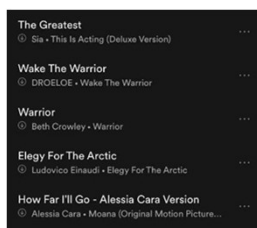
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## Practice 4: Mindfulness PLAYLIST




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### Practice 5: Taking it to the Page




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### Feedback in Expressive Arts Therapy

- In sharing feedback with others during open sharing portions of expressive arts processes, avoid using judgmental language
- Consider how a statement like, "That was beautiful!" technically meets the standards of judgmental language.
- Challenge yourself to offer feedback from the "I" perspective. Describe how you feel/felt or what you are experiencing as you witness another's art sharing process.

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### Group Discussion

- Describe your personal experience with the process.
- What did you discover in your process?
- What did you learn about yourself in the process?
- What did you notice about judgment or self-criticism during the process?
- What role did the multi-modality of the art forms play in discovering what you discovered in your process?
- Which of the skills explored in this process can be applied to your overall trauma recovery plan? (HINT: Think personally first! Then discuss how you may see threads of application in the phases of EMDR therapy, specifically Phases 2 & 7)
- How can all of these skills apply to your use of interweaves in EMDR Therapy?

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## Mindfulness & Self Care

- Promoting mindfulness in psychotherapists-in-training could positively influence the therapeutic course and treatment results in patients (randomized, double-blind controlled study; Grepmaier, Mitterlehner, Loew, et al, 2007)
- Health care professionals participating in a mindfulness-based stress reduction program (MBSR) were able to more fully identify their own themes of perfectionism, the automaticity of “other focus,” and their tendencies to always enter “fixer” mode; this recognition led to numerous changes along personal and professional domains (grounded theory; Irving, Park-Saltzman, Fitzpatrick, et al., 2014); a similar study that exclusively studied nurses yielded similar findings (Frisvold, Lindquist, McAlpine, 2012)

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## Mindfulness & Self Care

- In an extensive mixed methods research study with working psychotherapists from a variety of theoretical backgrounds, Keane (2013) concluded that personal mindfulness practice can enhance key therapist abilities (e.g., attention) and qualities (e.g., empathy) that have a positive influence on therapeutic training.
- Mindfulness practice could provide a useful adjunct to psychotherapy training and be an important resource in the continuing professional development of therapists across modalities.

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