



**OBTC 2015 at University of La Verne
June 17th – 20th, 2015**

1) Title of Proposal:

Loving-kindness and Mindfulness: Practices for Being More Heartful and Awake in Organizations

2) Abstract:

This workshop aims to: 1) guide participants through three spiritual practices, which are based on wisdom distilled from Sufism, Judaism and Buddhism, for the embodying of higher emotions such as compassion and loving-kindness; and 2) create a dialogue on the implications of these practices for individuals and organizations wishing to generate positive work cultures. The overall intent of the session is to provide a practical yet theoretically well-grounded way of approaching spirituality in organizations, that can be used by both students and business leaders, to create greater overall positive workplace climates.

3) Keywords:

Loving-kindness, inner wisdom, awakening to higher emotions

4) Format

- Activity or exercise
- Discussion roundtable (60 minute only)
- General discussion session

5) Time Requested:

- 30 Minutes
- 60 Minutes (*Roundtables must select 60 minutes*)
- 90 Minutes

6) Planning Details:

Chairs configured in a circle or a case classroom in a horseshoe shape with comfortable seats. White boards and newsprint board.

7) Learning Objectives or Goals for the Session:

1. To understand how loving-kindness and inner wisdom can be developed using selected core teachings from some of the world's great spiritual traditions (eg. Sufism, Judaism, Buddhism)
2. To give attendees a set of practices for developing mindfulness and loving-kindness in leadership settings.
3. To create a network of like-minded participants who can explore the possibility of conducting research in this area.

8) Management or Teaching Topics:

Management and teaching topics which are relevant to this session include positive organizational leadership, spiritual leadership, and transformation of organizations to develop more caring, compassionate and heart-ful cultures. Theoretical and disciplinary foundations within the broader field of management that this workshop is related to include the following: servant leadership (Greenleaf, 1977; 1999); spiritual leadership (Kriger & Seng, 2005; Fry & Kriger, 2009); and positive organizational scholarship (Cameron, Dutton & Quinn 2003), Quinn (2015).

9) Session Description and Plan:

- I. **Introduction: 5 minutes**
- II. **Practice #1: The hands as an extension of the Heart (10 minutes):** An exercise based on several of spiritual traditions (Judaism: Cooper, 1997; Kaufmann & Ginsberg, 2004; Pava, 2003), esoteric Christianity, Sufism: Rumi, 1997)
 1. Practice of sensitizing the hands – 5 minutes
 2. Discussion – 5 minutes
- III. **Practice #2: Increasing the Awareness of the 3 Fundamental Feeling Tones (30 minutes):**
 - Being mindful of Pleasant, Unpleasant and Neutral feeling tones
 - Mindfully meditate for 5 minutes with the breath as the anchor for attention
 - Add in and be aware of the three feeling tones as they arise (10 minutes)
 - Discuss what we each discovered about the feeling tones (15 minutes)
- IV. **Practice #3: Guided Loving-kindness practice (*metta*) (20 minutes):**

For practice instructions on loving-kindness based on Theravada Buddhism (Goldstein & Kornfield, 1987; Hanh, 1997; Salzberg, 1995; Suzuki, 1977) see Appendix 1 below.

Note: we will likely only have time to do steps 1-7, 10, and 11.

- V. Dialogue and Q & A on how to bring these practices into the classroom for different student audiences (25 minutes).

In the *loving-kindness* exercise we will be developing the following values (See Table 2), but especially acceptance, loving-kindness, happiness, compassion and patience. These values have been found by researchers to be important for long-term effectiveness in the workplace (Conger, 1994; Daft & Lengel, 1998; Dalai Lama & Cutler, 2003; Davidson et al, 2003; Fry & Kriger, 2009; Hanh, 1997; Kriger & Hanson, 1999; Kriger & Seng, 2005; Mitroff & Denton, 1999; Wilber, 2000a, 2000b).

Table 1: Instructions for a daily Loving-kindness Practice (see Salzberg, 1995 for a more extended set of instructions)

(Practice for 10 to 20 minutes upon awakening or other time of day – or as long as you feel comfortable)

Steps in the Loving-kindness (*metta*) Meditation:

1. Be aware of the movement of the breath in and out – but do not accentuate the breath or alter it. Gently keep the attention on the movement of the breath using the words 'in' and 'out' only to note the breath more clearly.
2. Do this for several minutes to build concentration and finer awareness. Then:
3. Shift the attention from the movement of the physical breath to the area at the center of the chest where the heart is.
4. On the 'in' breath imagine the breath coming into the heart; on the 'out' breath imagine the breath moving out from the heart.
5. Gradually feel a warm glowing feeling in the center of the chest on each 'in' and 'out' of the breath.
6. On each 'out' breath – let the feeling of loving-kindness spread outwards and silently repeating the following three phrases on each 'out' breath:
 - 'May I be happy.' Feel happiness spread throughout you on each breath.
 - 'May I be peaceful.' Feel peace spread throughout you on each breath.
 - 'May I be filled with love and compassion.' Feel loving-kindness spread throughout you on each breath. Check your body from time to time to see if it is relaxed. Let go of any tension as you note it.
7. Visualize in your mind someone you feel strong positive feelings towards. On each 'out' breath:
 - 'May they be happy.' Feel happiness spread towards them on each breath.

- ‘May they be peaceful.’ Feel peace spread towards them on each breath.
 - ‘May they be filled with love and compassion.’ Feel loving-kindness radiate towards them on each breath.
8. Imagine in your mind someone you feel neutral feelings towards (someone you do not know well but may have met). On each ‘out’ breath:
- ‘May they be happy.’ Feel happiness spread towards them on each breath.
 - ‘May they be peaceful.’ Feel peace spread towards them on each breath.
 - ‘May they be filled with love and compassion.’ Feel loving-kindness spread towards them on each breath.
9. Visualize in your mind a group or organization you belong to (for example the people you are with right now):
- ‘May they be happy.’ Feel happiness spread towards them on each breath.
 - ‘May they be peaceful.’ Feel peace spread towards them on each breath.
 - ‘May they be filled with love and compassion.’ Feel loving-kindness radiate towards them on each breath.
10. Visualize the entire planet earth:
- ‘May all beings on the planet be happy.’ Feel happiness spread outwards on each ‘out’ breath to all beings on the planet.
 - ‘May all beings on the planet be peaceful.’ Feel peace spread outwards on each ‘out’ breath to all beings on the planet.
 - ‘May all beings on the planet be filled with love and compassion.’ Feel loving-kindness spread towards them on each ‘out’ breath to all beings on the planet.
11. Return to watching the breath moving gently in and out of the heart. Feel loving-kindness increase on each ‘in’ and ‘out’ breath.

Return to normal breathing. You can practice sending *metta* to yourself or someone else or a group at any time of the day, even for just a few seconds, whenever you remember. Remember you are not trying to change the other person or group in any way. The sending of *metta* is without any conditions or expectations.

Most important: relax and inwardly feel happiness and peacefulness in the process.

Table 2: Underlying Values for Long-term Excellence in the Workplace

1. **TRUST** - Choosing relationships where one has faith in and relies on the character, ability, strength and truthfulness of others.
2. **FORGIVENESS/ACCEPTANCE/GRATITUDE** – Not being burdened by failed expectations, gossip, jealousy, hatred, or revenge. Instead, choosing forgiveness through acceptance and in gratitude.
3. **INTEGRITY** – Behaving consistent with one’s espoused values – ‘walking the talk.’
4. **HONESTY** – Being truthful and basing one’s actions on it.
5. **COURAGE** –Having the firmness of mind, as well as the mental and moral strength, to prevail in the face of extreme difficulty, opposition, threat, danger, hardship or fear.
6. **HUMILITY** – Being modest, courteous, and without false pride. Not being jealous, rude or arrogant nor setting oneself above others.
7. **KINDNESS** – Being warm-hearted, considerate, humane and sympathetic to the feelings and needs of others.
8. **COMPASSION** - Perceiving and understanding the feelings of others. When others are suffering, doing what one can to help decrease it.
9. **PATIENCE** - Bearing trials and/or suffering calmly and without complaint. Remaining constant to a purpose or task in the face of obstacles or discouragement. Not quitting in spite of opposition from others or discouragement.
10. **EXCELLENCE** – Doing one’s best and recognizing, rejoicing in, and celebrating the efforts of others.
11. **HAPPINESS** - Perceiving daily activities and work as intrinsic sources of joy and inner balance.

See: Fry & Kriger, 2009.

10) For Activities and Exercises:

- 1) Materials needed to run the activity: none
- 2) Debriefing questions:
 - a. What have you learned about your heart/mind?
 - b. How can we increase loving-kindness and sensitivity to a wider set of values both in the classroom and in the workplace?
 - c. In what ways do we become attached to prior experience and 'normal science' paradigms?
- 3) Evidence for effectiveness:

The above exercises have been used in a variety of formats, dating back 2600 years in the Theravada Buddhist tradition to the time of the Buddha. There are similar practices in the Mystical Jewish and Islamic (Sufi) traditions. They are linked to and build on the currently increasing use of mindfulness meditation in corporate settings such as Google, Apple, and Oracle. See Kriger & Hanson (1999) and Dalai Lama & Goleman (2003) for supporting sources on the issue of transforming destructive or negative emotions to positive ones. Also see sources on Positive Organizational Scholarship including Cameron, Dutton & Quinn (2003), Quinn (2015) that propose the efficacy of positive emotions in organizations.

11) Implications for Teaching or for Teachers:

Recent research in mindfulness has shown that it has a number of substantial advantages for practitioners (see Lutz et al, 2004; Davidson et al, 2011). The exercises in this workshop will utilize basic mindfulness practices to increase awareness of the Heart and the feelings.

12) Application to Conference theme:

The session fits with the overall OBTC theme of Learning in Community in that the session's overall aim is to impart exercises that can be used to explore the development of higher positive emotions such as loving-kindness, compassion and patience in organizations through individual practice.

13) Unique Contribution to OBTC:

This is intended to be a unique workshop contribution to OBTC 2015 by sharing exercises that to this author's knowledge have not been presented or shared in the OBTC conferences to date.

14) References:

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