

Teens

MIndfulness: How We Sabotage Our Attention Exercise

Brief Description/Purpose

Simple paper and pencil type exercise to identify the self-sabotaging things we do to scatter our attention, and potentially damage our brains' ability to focus.

Age Appropriate

Teens, Adults

Ideal Group Size

Any size. Can be used by individuals, in small groups, or entire large group.

Time For Exercise

Variable, but 15 to 30 minutes

Topic/Subject

Multi-tasking, attention, mindfulness

Detailed Instructions If Needed

Explain:

Recent research suggests that the less we focus, the more likely it is that our brains will become less able to pay attention or focus in the future. Thus there's concern about the multi-tasking that has come with the Internet, and social media, for example.

Mindfulness involves calming the mind, and flitting our attention around increases stimulation and over-stimulation.

We all do things that scatter our attention, and "remove ourselves from the moment", a kind of self-sabotage.

In this exercise you are going to identify your self-sabotaging habits.

Guide:

On a piece of paper, write down at least five things or habits you use that actually cause you to split your attention and increase stimulation, and draw your mind into chaos. Here are some examples:

- *Moving rapidly from window to window on your computer.*
- *Trying to do multiple things all at the same time (be specific).*

Teens

- *Checking your email while doing something else.*
- *Having the television on while dining.*

If Done In Groups:

Share your self-sabotaging behaviors in your group. Try to answer the following questions:

Why do you think we all do this kinds of things?

Have each group member share with the group ONE habit s/he will commit to change and eliminate.

Cautions/Hints

This is a great exercise to do on one's own, and of course, it's supremely flexible if you are leading a mindfulness group or simply want to include this exercise in a session on stress, mental health, etc.

Unique solution ID: #1054

Author: Robert Bacal

Last update: 2015-03-09 13:31