

# ***PLUGGED INTO MINDFULNESS***

Report on Evaluation  
Breathwork & Mindfulness Training

Provided to:  
Butler County Addiction Counselors

Prepared for:

***Healthy Body – Peaceful  
Soul, Inc.***



***October 2020***

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## Background

*Healthy Body – Peaceful Soul Inc. (HBPS)*, provided a series of training sessions to addiction professionals in order to teach mindfulness techniques that might be used to reduce personal stress and minimize “burnout” as well as provide the professional counselors and recovery specialists participating in the training with techniques they might use with clients. An eleven-week course was provided (one session each week) during the summer of 2020. Due to the COVID 19 pandemic, the course was delivered online using Zoom software for video conferencing.

The course was sponsored by the Butler County Drug and Alcohol Program. The course outline is provided for reference in Appendix A.

## Methodology

The evaluation was conducted by an independent evaluator and was designed to assess the degree to which participants in the program increase their understanding of the concepts and practice of mindfulness as a result of the training. Additional information was also secured from the participants that can inform any future training sessions with similar groups. Twenty-seven pre-test surveys were completed, and twenty-eight post-test surveys were completed. Pre-test and post-test surveys were matched by birth date and four of the pre-tests had no matching post-test resulting in twenty-three matched pairs. The twenty-three participants who completed both the pre-test and post-test were used for the evaluation. These participants attended an average of 10.1 sessions; and the range of participation by these professionals was between 8 and 11 sessions.

A pre-test – post-test design was used to collect evaluative data. Participants completed an on-line pre-test survey at the beginning of the eleven-session course and then completed the post-test survey after completion of all sessions. A Likert type scale was used to provide a quantitative measure of participant responses to statements. Eleven statements included in both the pre-test survey and post-test survey were scored on a scale from 1 to 5 with a value of 5 assigned the most desired response and 1 assigned to the least desired response. The quantification of the responses allows for both a pre-post item analysis of statements as well as statistical test<sup>1</sup> to determine the significance of any increase in scores observed in the post test as compared to the pre-test.

In order to gain additional insight into how the course participants benefitted from the “*Plugged Into Mindfulness*” course, additional information was secured from participants through the post-test survey about how the mindfulness training contributed to their personal and professional growth. This qualitative data is discussed under the sub-heading “Additional Findings”.

## Evaluation Findings

### Overall Gain in Post-Test Scores

All 23 course participants included in the evaluation scored higher on the post-test than they did on the pre-test. The maximum possible score on the 13 items included in the pre-test, post-test

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<sup>1</sup> A paired sample t-test was used to determine the level of statistical significance in the means of the pre and post test samples.

analysis is 55 (11 items X rating score of 5). The average score across all 23 participants on the pre-test items was 38.0 and the average score on the post-test was 43.7. This is an increase in average raw score of 5.7 points or a 15.0% increase in average post-test score when compared to the average pre-test score.

In order to confirm the statistical significance of the increase in post-test scores (i.e. difference not due to chance) and the level of such significance, a matched pair t-test was completed comparing the pre-test and post-test means. Results of the statistical analysis confirms the increase in post-test scores is significant at the .005 level. We can therefore be confident that the “*Plugged Into Mindfulness*” course increases knowledge about mindfulness practices and self-efficacy<sup>2</sup> of participants as measured by the 11 items assessed. Results of the paired two-sample statistical analysis of means is included in Appendix B.

### Item Analysis and Discussion

Examination of the differences in how participants rated the individual items included in the pre-post analysis provides additional information about which items are more or less impacted by the mindfulness training.

The extent to which participants in the “*Plugged Into Mindfulness*” training increase their raw score on the post-test as compared to the pre-test is determined in part by the degree to which they are familiar with and practice mindfulness techniques prior to participating in the eleven session course. When the pre-test rating is relatively high for a test item there is less opportunity to increase that rating (raw score) on the post-test. Given this, the percentage of increase (difference in pre-test and post-test score divided by pre-test score) is more informative than the actual increase in the raw score of the post-test over the pre-test.

There was an increase in the average score of course participants for all 11 items assessed. Based on the 1 through 5 rating scale, the average increase in raw score ranged from 0.17 to 0.91. The percentage increase ranged from 7.9% to 24.1%.

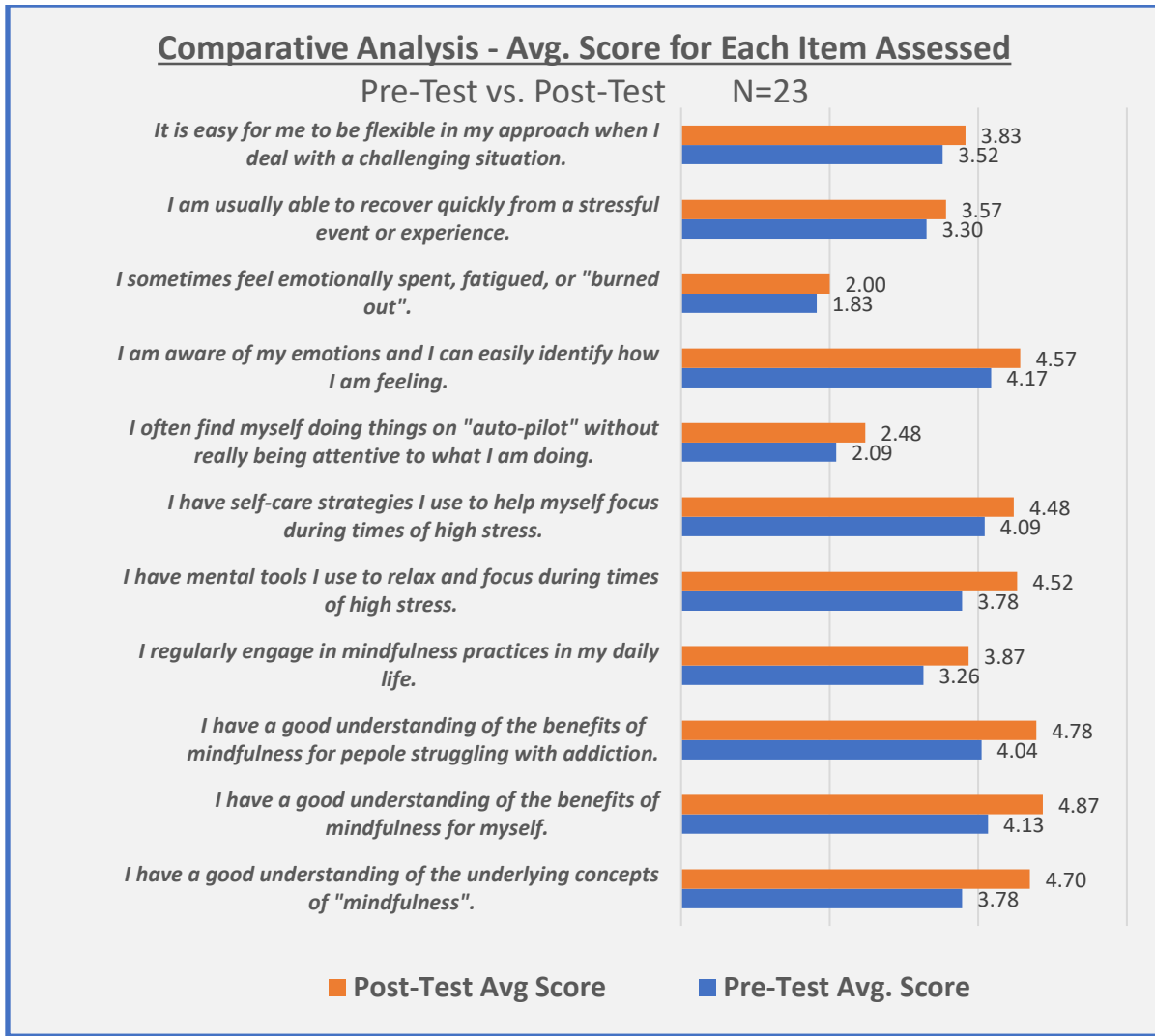
The most notable gains in knowledge were related to understanding of underlying concepts of mindfulness and understanding the benefits of mindfulness for themselves and for people struggling with addiction. There were also notable gains reported by the participants related to: (1) regularly engaging in mindful practices in their daily life and in (2) feeling like they have the mental tools to relax and focus during times of stress.

A summary of the change in raw score is provided on the following page (Chart 1) for each of the 11 test items.

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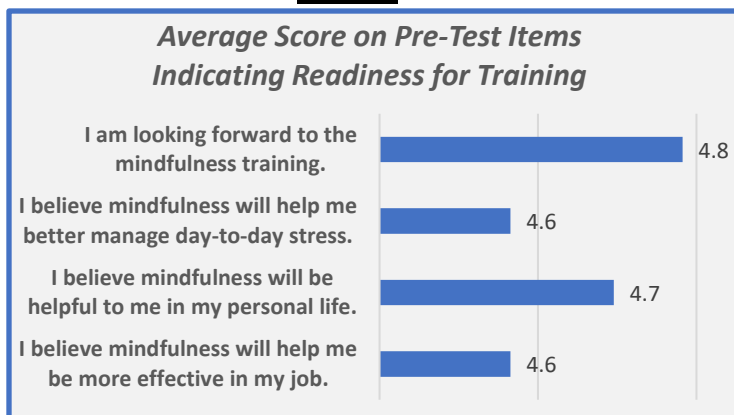
<sup>2</sup> For purposes of the evaluation “participant self-efficacy” is defined as the extent participants believe mindfulness concepts and practices improve their well-being and ability to effectively manage life and work situations.

**Chart 1**



Expectations and Readiness to Participate

**Chart 2**



Prior to starting the Plugged into Mindfulness (PIM) training, participants were asked four questions about their expectations for the mindfulness sessions. These questions are indicators of interest and readiness to engage in the training.

Chart 2 summarizes the average scores of the 23 participants included in the evaluation on these 4 items. Scores

ranged from 4.6 to 4.8 on the five point Likert type scale indicating nearly all the participants were looking forward to participating in the training and expected it to be beneficial for them personally and professionally.

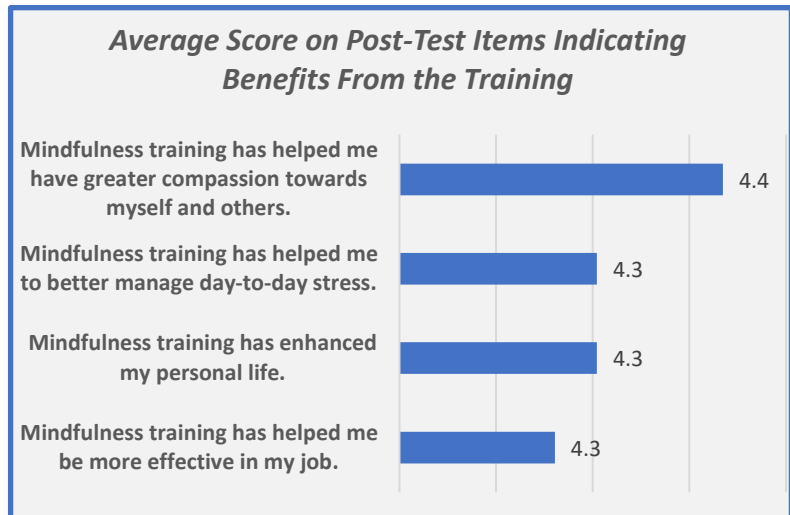
### Perceived Benefit from the Mindfulness Sessions

When all training sessions were completed, the participants were asked about how they have benefitted from the mindfulness sessions.

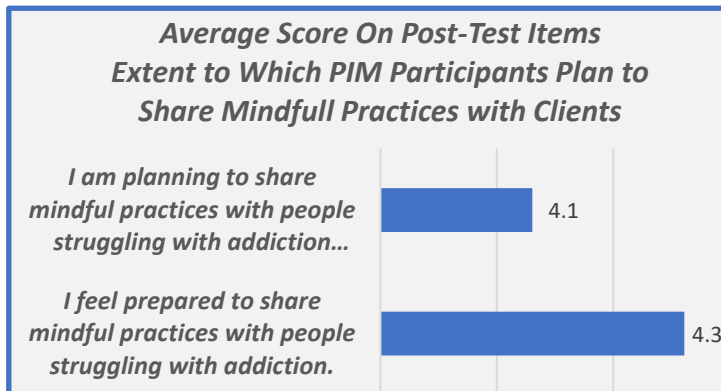
**Chart 3**

Average scores across all 23 participants indicate a strong level of agreement with each of the statements describing potential benefits.

Those addiction counselors participating in the training were also asked on the post-test about how prepared they felt to share the mindful practices they had learned with clients.



**Chart 4**



22 of the 23 participants (95.7%) either agreed or strongly agreed that they felt prepared to share mindful practices with people struggling with addiction.

17 of the 23 participants included in the evaluation (73.9%) indicated they were planning to share the practices with the people they work with.

### Additional Findings from Post Survey

Participants were also asked if they had any suggestions about how the mindfulness training might be improved in the future, and some participants took this opportunity to make open-ended comments about how much they liked the PIM training while others had more specific suggestions. A list of all verbatim comments is included as Appendix C.

### Conclusions

- ✓ The *Plugged Into Mindfulness* training increases participant understanding of the underlying concepts and personal benefits of practicing mindfulness techniques.
- ✓ The training increases the regular practice of mindfulness techniques.

- ✓ Participant self-efficacy related to belief in one's ability to enhance personal well-being and effectively manage stress experienced in life and work situations is improved through the training.
- ✓ Course participants believe the training has helped them have greater compassion toward themselves and others and they believe the training will help them be "more effective" in their job.
- ✓ The smallest gains in self-efficacy were in areas related to feeling fatigue and "burn out" and feelings of being on "autopilot" without being attentive to the moment. This may be due to some reluctance to strongly agree with these types particular outcomes until they have an opportunity to experience how the mindfulness training may impact their future endeavors.
- ✓ All but one of the participants included in the evaluation report they feel prepared to share mindful practices with people struggling with addiction.
- ✓ The effectiveness of the training is confirmed through statistical analysis of pre-post scores and differences in pre-test and post-test scores are significant at the 0.005 level.

## Appendix A – Plugged Into Mindfulness Course Outline

Thursday, January 24, 11am to 1pm

- Intro to Mindfulness
- Science/Neuroscience behind mindfulness practices
- Introduction to breathing practices for managing stress
- Difference between breath awareness and breathing techniques
- Deep breathing; 4:8 breath, with sound and without
- For next class, read through Mindfulness Theory section in manual and p. 47 in Kabat-Zinn; home practice homework

Thursday, January 31, 11:30am to 1pm

- Mindfulness Theory - acceptance & non-attachment
- Body Scan
- Internal Awareness
- Discuss readings; For next class, read in Kabat-Zinn to p. 80

Thursday, February 14, 11:30am to 1pm

- How mindfulness can help ease pain and suffering
- Direct experience and reaction chain
- Discuss Flow activities and informal practice
- SOBER breathing space
- Walking Mindfulness Meditation
- Discuss readings; for next class, read in Kabat-Zinn to p. 126

Thursday, February 21, 11:30am to 1pm

- Internal Awareness & Planes of Contact practice
- Revisiting the practice of acceptance and non-attachment in life as mindfulness
- Positive thought practice
- Discuss readings; for next class, read in Kabat-Zinn to p. 169

Thursday, February 28, 11:30am to 1pm

- Mountain Meditation
- Lake Meditation
- Loving Kindness meditation
- How do these help you cope with challenge?
- Discuss readings; for next class, read in Kabat-Zinn to p. 216

Thursday, March 7, 11:30am to 1pm

- Informal Practice: reporting on home/daily practice
- Obstacles of seated practice
- Breath - movement practice
- Discuss readings; for next class, read in Kabat-Zinn to p. 270



Thursday, March 14, 11:30am to 1pm

- Discussion of self-care practices other than mindfulness
- Mindful yoga movements
- Breath awareness
- Discuss readings; make sure you've read up through The Importance of Your Practice in manual

Thursday, March 21, 11:30am to 1pm

- Breathwork practices
- Square, alternate nostril
- Breath awareness practice
- Internal Awareness / Planes of Contact
- Troubleshooting

Thursday, March 28, 11:30am to 1pm

- Basics of sharing mindfulness
- SOBER breathing
- Acceptance / Non-attachment
- Practice Share time
- Read research and articles Joni emails

Thursday, April 11, 11:30am to 1pm

- Mindfulness for Recovery outline
- Troubleshooting
- Practice Share time
- Oral Quiz on mindfulness, research, breath, science

Thursday, April 18, 11:30am to 1pm

- Body Scan
- Practice Share time
- Q&A
- Post-Survey

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## Appendix B – Statistical Test Paired Two Sample for Means

|                      | <u>Total Score</u> | <u>Total Score</u> |
|----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
|                      | <u>Pre-test</u>    | <u>Post-test</u>   |
| Subject 1            | 38                 | 47                 |
| Subject 2            | 44                 | 44                 |
| Subject 3            | 34                 | 43                 |
| Subject 4            | 39                 | 40                 |
| Subject 5            | 38                 | 40                 |
| Subject 6            | 44                 | 41                 |
| Subject 7            | 35                 | 43                 |
| Subject 8            | 34                 | 43                 |
| Subject 9            | 32                 | 41                 |
| Subject 10           | 42                 | 47                 |
| Subject 11           | 34                 | 43                 |
| Subject 12           | 45                 | 41                 |
| Subject 13           | 37                 | 47                 |
| Subject 14           | 36                 | 44                 |
| Subject 15           | 36                 | 44                 |
| Subject 16           | 32                 | 44                 |
| Subject 17           | 38                 | 48                 |
| Subject 18           | 29                 | 44                 |
| Subject 19           | 46                 | 46                 |
| Subject 20           | 41                 | 40                 |
| Subject 21           | 39                 | 47                 |
| Subject 22           | 40                 | 42                 |
| Subject 23           | 41                 | 45                 |
| <b>Average Score</b> | <b>38.00</b>       | <b>43.65</b>       |

| <b>t-Test: Paired Two Sample for Means</b> |                 |                  |
|--|-----------------|------------------|
| P=.005                                     |                 |                  |
|  | <i>Pre-test</i> | <i>Post-test</i> |
| Mean                                       | 38              | 43.6522          |
| Variance                                   | 20.18181818     | 6.23715          |
| Observations                               | 23              | 23               |
| Pearson Correlation                        | 0.020256945     |                  |
| Hypothesized Mean Difference               | 0               |                  |
| df   | 22              |                  |
| t Stat                                     | -5.3197358      |                  |
| P(T<=t) one-tail                           | 1.21884E-05     |                  |
| t Critical one-tail                        | 2.818756061     |                  |
| P(T<=t) two-tail                           | 2.43768E-05     |                  |
| t Critical two-tail                        | 3.118824207     |                  |

**Reject null hypothesis of no difference in the paired samples.**

**Gain in scores is statistically significant at .005 level.**

## Appendix C -Verbatim Open-Ended Comments

Nothing needs improved. The presenter was excellent. The book and manual were easy reads and very helpful.

I would like to attend a more in-depth training on mindfulness, and I would suggest the program to be over a longer time frame.

Great session!

1 hour sessions

I'm not sure how this class would have been conducted differently if not for COVID restrictions, however I enjoyed the get-out-of-your-seat portions and would have liked to do more of that. I also feel that our training, while focused on helping clients with Substance Use Issues, would also be beneficial for those struggling with mental health troubles.

It was an excellent training.

More time to practice leading the techniques on others

I will be more intentional in using mindfulness practices both personally and professionally. thank you!

It was more difficult to stay engaged over zoom. I would have liked to do this in person.

I would personally like to take the course again when we are able to re-engage in in person trainings. I think that attempting to engage via computer at my work environment did not allow me to fully engage in the process.

The final three sessions did not seem well organized. The Zoom platform makes it difficult to practice these strategies on each other. The first many weeks of training seemed packed full of useful information, but the last three seemed unnecessary. Overall, I enjoyed this training very much. It has changed my approach. Thank you.

Make sure the flyer doesn't say it will count for PA LPC credits when it doesn't.

No suggestions at this time - I really enjoyed this training and found it very beneficial. Thank you for the information and skills I was able to obtain.

I feel that training could be longer 16 weeks or have a second training for a more in-depth look at practices and techniques. I enjoy small group work so this could be used for smaller peer to peer interaction and practice on peers as we did the last 2 sessions. This would assist in comfortability in leading the group and sharing practices.

I liked the alternative to do virtual training and the flexibility of the trainer and training site. It is necessary during this health crisis. Thank you all.

I appreciated the thoroughness of the training but did feel that it could be shortened. It was a huge time commitment.

Maybe instead of sending the videos to use, playing them within the conference. I clicked mostly agree for a lot of the questions because I'm sure I need practice with the techniques, and it will get easier with time. This was a great training and very satisfied and grateful it was offered!