

Certificate in Meditation Teaching and Holistic Human Development.

Module Three Foundations in Human Happiness

CONTENT

- The psychology of happiness
- The pursuit of happiness
- Optimism
- Subconscious programming and reprogramming
- States of mind
- Fundamentals of self-image
- Guided meditation (creative visualisation)

ACTIVITY

Please continue to practice the muscle relaxation exercise and Zen Meditation every day.

The personal experience you gain through this regular practice will be immeasurable to you when it comes to instructing other people about managing stress and teaching Meditation.

Please complete the Stress Management Journal Part 2 this week.

The Psychology of Happiness

What is happiness?

It is a state of mind -feelings such as contentment, satisfaction, pleasure and joy.

An assortment of philosophical, religious, psychological and biological approaches have been taken to define happiness and identify its sources. Philosophers and religious thinkers often define happiness in terms of living a good life, or flourishing, rather than as simply an emotion.

The word *happiness* was used to translate the Greek Eudaimonia and is still used in virtue ethics. Today, however, terms such as *well-being* or *quality of life* are usually used to signify the classical meaning and *happiness* is reserved for the emotional experience that philosophers historically called *pleasure*.

Happiness forms the foundation of Buddhist teachings, which focuses on obtaining freedom from suffering by following the *Eightfold Path*. In the Buddhist view, ultimate happiness is only achieved by overcoming craving in all forms (or being free from attachment to outcomes.)

Aristotle saw happiness as “the virtuous activity of the soul in accordance with reason”. In Catholicism, the ultimate end of human existence consists in “blessed happiness”, described by the 13th Century philosopher-theologian Thomas Aquinas as a Beatific Vision of God's essence in the next life.

The psychological approach of *positive psychology* describes happiness as consisting of positive emotions and positive activities.

In most religions, happiness is the eternal reward for those who meet a certain criteria (that is, to behave in the way defined as good or virtuous in this life will guarantee happiness in an eternal afterlife.)

While the exact measurement of happiness is difficult, researchers have developed tools, like the ***Oxford Happiness Inventory*** through which physiological links to happiness can be

measured through a variety of techniques and survey research can be based on self-reported happiness levels.

Some research has identified a number of connections with happiness. These include:

- Religious involvement
- Parenthood
- Marital status
- Age
- Income
- Interaction with other happy people

Positive psychology is the study of optimal human functioning. Its emergence is linked with an attempt to respond to the methodical bias that has been fundamental to psychology's historical emphasis on mental illness rather than on mental wellness.

Humanistic psychologists such as Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers developed theories along these lines, but without any solid practical evidence to support them. However, the pioneering research of a new generation of psychologists has led to a renewed interest in this more positive approach (focusing on mental wellness rather than mental illness), providing firm scientific foundations for the study of human happiness and optimal functioning, thus adding a positive side to the predominantly negative discipline of psychology.

Researchers have found that about 50% of one's sadness depends on one's genes. This has been shown by studying identical twins and learning that their happiness is 50% synchronized even when growing up in different locations with different families.

About 10-15% is a result of a range of measurable variables, such as socioeconomic status, marital status, health, income, and others. The remaining 40% is understood to result from actions that individuals participate in for the distinct purpose of becoming happier. These actions may vary between different people. For example, while extroverts may benefit from placing themselves in situations involving large amounts of social interaction, introverts are more likely to benefit from solitary activities.

Regular exercise has also been shown to increase one's level of well-being significantly, particularly martial arts which provide the dual benefits of physical exercise and also improve self-confidence.

The Oxford Happiness Inventory was developed by Michael Argyle as a broad measure of psychological wellbeing. This method measures happiness as a collective of self-esteem, sense of purpose, social interest, kindness, sense of humour and aesthetic appreciation.

Argyle's work has been criticized for lacking an academic model of happiness and because it is considered that certain aspects overlap. Some studies suggest that happiness cannot be measured effectively at all.

Though it may be impossible to measure happiness objectively, physiological connections to happiness can be measured through a variety of techniques.

For instance, psycho physiologist RJ Davidson developed reliable **fMRI** and **EEG tests** that compare individual levels of happiness.

Stefan Klein, in his book *The Science of Happiness*, links the dynamics of neurobiological systems to the concepts and findings of positive psychology and social psychology.

Abraham Maslow (1908 - 1970) attempted to amalgamate a large body of research related to human motivation. Prior to this, researchers generally focused separately on different factors, such as biology, achievement, self-image or power to explain what motivates, directs and sustains positive human behaviour.

Maslow developed a hierarchy of human needs based on two groupings: *Deficiency Needs* and *Growth Needs*.

Within the deficiency needs, each lower need **must be met** before moving to the next higher level. Once each of these needs have been satisfied, the individual will move on to the Growth needs and act to remove any deficiency, if at any time in the future, a deficiency is detected.

It is important for counsellors to understand where on the hierarchy their clients are, so they can support them in exploring their needs and working towards having those needs met, so they can progress to the higher levels, beyond the deficiency needs.

ACTIVITY

Watch the video presentation, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?list=UUnR65cTBA1F3s8UGSjkSWEA&time_continue=2&v=xslxJJXnnHM

PLEASE NOTE: Maslow's work has received wide peer acceptance, despite a complete lack of scientific evidence to support his hierarchy. His paper has become one of the most popular and often referred to theories on the subject of human motivation.

ACTIVITY

Please read and consider, 'A Theory of Human Motivation' by AH Maslow. Many people find Maslow's paper to be very heavy reading, but it is an important theory that has made a major contribution to the study of happiness and it is worth the effort required to comprehend it.

Summary:

1. A great deal of research has gone into attempting to define what happiness is and what circumstances are required to initiate and maintain happiness.
2. The generally accepted conclusion is that people need to have a group of basic needs met in order to experience any degree of happiness.

The Pursuit of Happiness

Throughout history, physiologists and philosophers alike have sought to define and explain the formula for attaining happiness. All people have an innate desire to attain happiness and the pursuit of happiness is the motivation for almost every object we strive to possess and every activity we choose to undertake. However, very often the pursuit of happiness is based on the assumption that there is *an ideal* we need to meet or a thing we must obtain, before we can be happy.

For example:

- When I have enough money, I will be happy
- When I move into a bigger house, I will be happy
- When I get a better job, I will be happy

Because of this defective assumption, many people spend their lives chasing after things and experiences they believe will make them happier but most of the time these things fail to bring them happiness at all and often, their acquisition simply creates a further need as the person strives to raise the bar...even more money, an even bigger house, a still better job.

Regardless of external circumstances, the only thing that can deliver and sustain genuine happiness is the pure intention and choice to be happy. This is evident in the lack of happiness displayed through an epidemic of depression in our modern societies, where most people do have their base needs met but still feel they are not happy.

Quantum physics suggest that thought is creative or at least magnetic, so that the thoughts we choose to focus on become vibrations that attract like vibrations in the physical world attracting matching experiences to us. So that the person who is always worried about debt will inadvertently be attracting more debt and the person who is always thinking kind thoughts will attract acts of kindness toward themselves from others.

The Buddhist philosophy with its foundation in human happiness, offers the theory that suffering and change are the only constants in life and acceptance of this, along with making the choice to simply be happy is the path to a happy life.

Optimism

Optimism is an outlook on life where one maintains a view of their environment as a positive place and their personal situation as a positive one. It is the opposite of pessimism.

Optimists generally believe that people and events are innately good, so that most situations will work out for the best. Alternatively, some optimists believe that regardless of the external world or situation, one should choose to feel good about it and make the most of it.

This version of optimism is not concerned with the quality of the external world; it is an internal optimism where a person chooses to experience their own emotions in a positive way.

Subconscious Programming and Reprogramming

From the time we are born (possibly even before,) information is entered into our subconscious minds like data being entered on to a computer. Most of this information is accurate and important for our survival. For example: don't touch fire - it is hot – it burns (good advice!)

But some of the information we receive is erroneous. Not necessarily because we are fed false information intentionally but because:

1. We have insufficient experience to distinguish true from false (particularly before five years of age), and
2. The people responsible for putting the information into our brains are generally unaware of the extent of what they are doing and often still working off erroneous programs themselves.

The people responsible for placing these programs into our subconscious are our parents, teachers and others with whom we have had close contact. These days television and other forms of media also assist in programming the young mind, which is a pretty frightening thought when you consider that children under five have little ability to distinguish fact from fantasy!

If we imagine the human brain to start out as an empty computer and consider the amount of information that needs to be programmed into it to prepare the human for surviving in the world, we realize the brain's huge capacity for storing information.

Because there is so much information and because much of it is not needed all the time, a great deal of it is stored in the subconscious mind.

It would simply be impossible to function if everything we ever learned, from how to feed ourselves to how to drive a car, was present in the forefront of our conscious minds all the time. So, it is stored away in our subconscious ready to be retrieved the instant it is required.

Much of the information stored away in our subconscious minds has been there so long and was entered so subtly that we don't even realize it is there. Then when a situation arises that requires some type of responsive reaction, the information is triggered, and we know what to do...We remember what to do; how to respond.

For many people some erroneous information, stored in the subconscious mind, is the root cause of reactive behaviours and negative thought patterns which limit their ability to experience happiness.

As a very basic example a child might grow up in a house with parents who use 'put downs' in an attempt to control or discipline the child. So, the child may have grown up hearing that they were stupid, an idiot or hopeless. In the young child's brain, this information is considered no less valid than any other information; like hot water burns.

Deep in the person's subconscious mind is the ingrained belief that they are stupid. While their logical conscious mind might argue the point and they may know they are not stupid on an academic level, the subconscious mind does not *think*, it simply stores information.

When this person is an adult the pre-programmed subconscious belief, (that they are stupid,) still exists in the recesses of their mind and often this kind of erroneous programming will cause behavioural patterns that will cause problems on a range of levels. Most predominantly affecting the person's sense of self-worth (and limiting the person's ability to achieve happiness as is demonstrated through Maslow's hierarchy of human needs.)

Because on an unconscious level they believe they are 'not good enough', they will make life choices that support the underlying unworthy self-belief, rather than making choices based on what they really want for themselves (or choices they might make if they had a more positive underlying self-image.) They may take jobs they dislike and could do better than or attract relationships with people who confirm their subconscious negative opinion of themselves by continuing to tell them they are stupid or worthless.

When we understand which subconscious programs are working against our happiness rather than for our greater good we can begin the process of deleting the erroneous programs and replacing them with more positive, self-affirming thought patterns.

Teachers Note:

In your capacity as a Holistic Counsellor, it will sometimes be important to know how to help your clients identify the erroneous subconscious programming that is limiting their capacity to experience lasting happiness. There are several methods for achieving this and they will be covered in a later module.

Many (less holistic) forms of counselling involve exploring these old programs in depth and often come close to reliving old trauma in an attempt to expose the original information to the adult mind with its greater ability to separate fact from falsity. The person can then make the conscious decision not to continue to believe the old erroneous program.

While there are pros and cons to these types of methods the main pitfalls are:

1. Often the program is so deeply ingrained, thinking past it is considered too difficult a task.
2. When we get into exploring old programs, how they came to be and who put them there, we can open a Pandora's box of guilt and blame and
3. It can be a long and painful process when all we really want is to get over it and be happy...now!

Holistic Counselling addresses the whole person and while it does not invalidate the clients past experience or seek to bury old trauma, it looks for ways to help the client move **forward** rather than dwell on the past.

We need to understand the negative subconscious programs that are causing problems in our client's life and to help the client recognise the programs also. Once we have an understanding of what the old program is we simply assist them to choose a more positive, empowering program to replace the old erroneous one.

This sounds very simple and in truth, it is!

Rather than rehashing old pains we assist our clients to decide what they **do** want in their lives and help them chart a course toward attaining it.

In seeking to be happy most people will begin by blaming outside factors; other people, past experiences or plain old bad luck for their unhappiness.

It is important that being happy and achieving life goals are recognised as two very separate things; a person who will only be happy when they buy a new house will not necessarily be genuinely happy when and if that goal is reached. They may feel happy for a short time but eventually they will be looking for another external stimulus to create a feeling of happiness for them. They will also spend all the time between setting out on the goal to achieving it waiting for, rather than experiencing, happiness...and that could be a very long time!

At the same time a person could want to buy their own home and look forward to that, be excited about it but not have their long-term happiness dependant on it ever happening.

The person who waits for specific achievements or circumstances to bring happiness lives yearning for something they already have inside them; ***the emotion of happiness***. The new house does not come with the benefit of happiness attached to it. The feeling of having achieved a goal allows the person to recognise the emotion of happiness within them.

ACTIVITY

Please complete the **Happiness Survey**. Interview three different people and record your findings on the module submission form.

States of Mind

It would appear the attainment of happiness is twofold: While research concludes that people are happy when their base needs are met, we also know that happiness is a state of mind.

When happiness is attained through an internal process, rather than through external stimulus, people are more likely to stay happy as their happiness is not dependent on changeable circumstances.

Their happiness is a choice and becomes a habit. These people are more likely to have their base needs met as a result of *being* happy rather than in order to *make* them happy because they have more positive attitudes and a greater sense of self-worth which causes them to expect and reach for a better quality of life. They are more motivated, more optimistic, calmer and more in control of their lives.

Therefore, they are more likely to find themselves in situations that present better opportunities and are better equipped to recognise and pursue those opportunities. They are also better at coping with adversity and have more effective problem-solving skills.

Our emotions are a barometer with which we can measure the health of our attitudes (or states of mind.) When we experience negative emotions, we know that our attitude needs repair.

When we experience positive emotions, we know that our attitudes are on track and generally we will be feeling happy – This is regardless of outside influences or external circumstances.

Emotions we recognise as positive = Healthy state of mind or positive attitude

- Joy
- Love
- Peace
- Excitement
- Exhilaration
- Contentment
- Calm
- Happiness

Emotions we recognise as negative = Unhealthy state of mind or negative attitude

- Sadness
- Loneliness
- Anger
- Frustration
- Hatred
- Fear

USING THE EMOTIONAL BAROMETER

Positive thinking is a skill that can be learned and when utilised properly, the result is a happier person. Of course, it is unrealistic to assume that a person will never again experience sadness or have times where they are not happy but through developing a positive mind set and keeping a healthy attitude, those times will be much less frequent and significantly shorter.

When we maintain a positive mindset, we have the ability to recognise any decline in the health of our attitudes and can make running repairs.

Fundamentals Of Self Image

Self-image is essentially the beliefs we hold about ourselves. The beliefs we have in our conscious, intellectual minds can be very different from those beliefs stored away in our subconscious minds.

The path to creating a more positive attitude requires us to do two things. Firstly, to understand old erroneous programs that sabotage our ability to think positively and

secondly to choose the way we *want* to feel about ourselves and reprogram our subconscious minds with these new beliefs.

In effect, we need to detect faulty programs and override them with new more productive programs.

Teachers Note :

Some negative self-images are obvious, and we will hear people make negative comments about themselves quite openly. Many others are deeply hidden away from even ourselves. Yet, hidden as they are, they still greatly impede our ability to fully experience lasting states of authentic happiness.

As mentioned earlier, Holistic Counselling is focused on moving forward and so while it is important to recognise these negative programs and part of that will be recalling past experiences which will usually be of a negative nature, it is important that we assist our counselling clients to find, recognise and move on.

The purpose of recognising old invalidating program is so that we can choose new positive programs and replace them (and we can do that without even really understanding the old ones!). Not so that we can get stuck in the past.

While past experience is important and has helped form who we are today: *It is in the past*. Our goal as Holistic Counsellors is to assist our clients to live happily in the **now** and create the futures they want for themselves.

ACTIVITY

Please find some quiet time in a beautiful, peaceful spot for yourself this week. Spend an hour or more just with yourself, just being and doing what you want. Reflect on being you. Report on what you did and how it felt on your submission form.

Guided Imagery Meditations - Creative Visualisation

Guided Imagery Meditation is possibly the most common form of Meditation used in western society. It is when your imagination is lead on a journey with the purpose of achieving healing and realizations through focused thought and reflection. In this practice you could have a guide or teacher speak or read a creative visualization to you, listen to a professional on a CD or read your own creative visualization onto a recorder and play it back to yourself.

The idea is to let go of any thought you may have and allow your subconscious mind to follow the words that are spoken. Many people prefer guided mediation because even if you fall asleep you will still benefit from the guides words, subconsciously. It is also very

well suited to people who are very visual and have very active minds as it gives the mind something to do, rather than struggling to quiet or control the mind. It allows the mind to leave the daily or mundane or troublesome thought patterns behind and focus on the experience of the visualisation.

This style of meditation is often the easiest to learn for beginners as it takes less conscious effort to focus the mind than many other styles. It also fits well with our modern minds programming, which has us accustomed to being entertained.

Guided Imagery Meditation (also known as Creative Visualisation) can help you achieve deep relaxation and release negative emotions or beliefs that are preventing you experiencing peace and feeling calm or relaxed.

When you enter deep relaxation with great deliberation you can touch on experiences and feelings that are usually hidden in seemingly unreachable parts of your subconscious mind. By allowing your conscious mind to be distracted, past experiences can arise to be acknowledged and released. This enables you to become more positive in your contemplation and feelings about past experiences and you can also replace negative programming with more positive mind sets, confidence and higher self-esteem.

Guided Imagery Meditation is an excellent first step into the practice of Meditation and offers all the benefits of many other Meditation styles. The use of visualisation allows the noisy conscious mind to be switched off and the full attention focused in a predetermined direction, making this style of meditation very effective in all types of healing.

Creative Visualisations can also be individually designed to address specific issues and can include affirmations, in the form of mantras, to develop very precise and powerful healing Meditations.

However, Creative Visualisation is not suitable for everyone.

The main reason being that people have different learning styles and some people simply are not visual.

What this means is, some people can imagine something and 'see' pictures like a movie running in their mind. When we say to them, "Imagine you are sitting on a big soft cushion on the grassy bank of a beautiful river" they can see this scene in their mind's eye. They are there!

However, people who are not visual will not see anything and so they will usually not enjoy the Meditation, nor will they get any real benefit from it because they are so busy trying to 'see' something, which their brain is not naturally capable of seeing (imagining in pictures). They may also feel they have failed and that Meditation is therefore not for them. This is a tragedy, as Meditation is for everyone. It is just that not all styles of meditation will suit all people.

You may have heard someone say, "I have tried Meditation and it doesn't work for me." A friend, a client, or a student. Or perhaps it is something you have said yourself!

I have heard this statement spoken with sincerity many times throughout my three decades of teaching meditation. Yet some people absolutely love Meditation and can't imagine getting through a day without it!

Research has proven those people are receiving massive benefits through their Meditation practice; people who meditate regularly are much better at managing the day to day stress of modern life.

They are healthier, more motivated, more energised, more at peace ... they even have more effective immune systems, better relationships and less weight issues than people who do not meditate.

We know that Meditation makes an enormous positive impact on life so why do some people love it and reap the benefits and some others not enjoy it at all and find it useless for them? The answer is so very simple! We all have a particular learning style. Often, we have more than one but usually one learning style is predominant in each person.

There are lots of different models of learning style that have been developed over the years, but we don't need to get too complicated here. We are going to look at what is widely considered to be the simplest and most commonly used model.

This model of the various learning styles is called the VAK or VARK model and it was popularised by Neil Fleming:

Visual learners - These people need to see. They often have very visual minds and can picture things very clearly. They often think in pictures or a combination of pictures and words. We might say they have vivid imaginations.

Auditory learners - These people need to Hear. They often think in words and can have trouble seeing or making pictures in their minds. They are particularly good at giving and following verbal instructions and using language.

Kinesthetic learners or tactile learners - These people need to do, touch or feel. They need to experience. They may think in a combination of words and pictures but are more inclined to think in emotions or feelings. They are often quite artistic and/or physical.

We all fit into one of these groups. Some of us, as I stated earlier, may belong to more than one category but one will be the predominant learning style.

When it comes to practicing (or learning, or teaching) Meditation, these learning styles play a major role in determining which of the many styles of Meditation will best suit the individual.

If you are a visual learner, you will enjoy and benefit most from meditations that are visual, like creative visualization or guided imagery. If you are an auditory learner, you will probably not enjoy nor benefit much from practicing creative visualization. You may not 'see' what you feel you are supposed to see and creative visualization will feel like a chore to you.

Visual learners may enjoy meditating on mandalas or staring into paintings where their imaginations will take them on a beautiful meditative adventure.

Auditory learners like to hear. These people will get the most out of Meditations that incorporate sounds or instructions (words.) They are more likely to enjoy Mantra Meditations (repeating words or a phrase) or meditating to music where they can become lost in the sound, 'riding' the wave of the music. These people can also benefit from Zen style 'listening' meditations where the goal is to concentrate solely on what sounds can be heard or even meditating on the sound and vibration of gongs, chimes or meditation bowls.

A Kinesthetic or tactile learner may really enjoy Concentrative Meditation where they might sit and stare at a candles flame or the oceans waves, allowing their mind to become completely absorbed in the experience of doing. These individuals often also enjoy active Meditations like Walking Meditations or Dance Meditations. A Visual learner however is likely to find Concentrative Meditation boring as their minds want to be 'seeing' something.

When someone has tried Meditation and found the experience to be less than enjoyable, they have probably tried or been shown the wrong type of Meditation for their individual learning style.

The benefits of Meditation are amazing and huge! Well worth incorporating into any lifestyle to improve health and satisfaction in living. Meditation must be something that is not only healthy, but also enjoyable. When we find the right Meditation, that suits us best individually, we find ourselves enthusiastically making time to meditate. We will also start to see for ourselves the many wonderful side effects of Meditation, that the ancients knew, and clinical research has now proven.

There is really only one style of Meditation that suits almost everyone's learning style and that is Zen. This is because Zen is about being in the moment; the NOW. While we may all belong to different groups when it comes to learning styles, we all have one thing in common...we are all here in the now.

Having said that Zen Meditation is suitable for people of all learning styles, does not mean it is always the best Meditation for everyone to practice. There are times when being focused in the present moment is not beneficial and can even be harmful. If someone is in great pain, for example, or if they are in the middle of a traumatic experience and want to use Meditation to calm themselves. Intentionally focusing all your attention on what is actually happening in the present moment, would not be helpful in either of these situations.

Being the widest used, most popular and most frequently taught meditation style in the western world, Creative Visualisation is often responsible for turning as many people away from Meditation as it is in attracting them to it. This is because most untrained teachers choose to teach what they know and enjoy themselves and this will often be guided Creative Visualisation because a significant percentage of people who are drawn to healing as a vocation are also visual learners. So, western Meditation students receive an unrealistic picture about what Meditation really is and those who are not visual by nature will feel it is not for them.

We can teach Creative Visualisation to non-visual learners by teaching them to engage their other senses and not rely heavily on the visual aspect of the Meditation.

One effective way of doing this (and a great side effect is that we assist the student to develop the visual aspect of their mind at the same time) is to ask the student to remember a place they have been to before, and really loved. It may be in a forest, on a mountain top, a beach, a river bank, or even a room! We must not assume that everyone is comfortable in nature. Why would we want to insist that someone comes on a Meditation journey with us into the great outdoors (in their mind) if being outside makes them feel less comfortable?

The thing we are learning here is, while we may love a particular Meditation style or technique ourselves, we must be able to teach a wide range of people how to find the Meditation style THEY will love, and it may be quite different from our own.

When we ask people to remember or recall a place they have been before, it is much easier for them to picture it than it is for them to create a new picture of an imaginary place. We can also engage their other senses and ask them to recall how it smelt, what sounds they heard, how the temperature or air felt on their skin. We can guide them back to a place that their brain already has a memory of.

Another method for teaching Creative Visualisation to non-visual people is to combine it with a sort of Concentrative Meditation.

We can do this by providing visual stimulus through a poster or a picture. For example, you might bring a poster of a beautiful destination (perhaps from a travel agency) to your class and ask your students to look at it and then guide them to imagining they are there, sitting peacefully in the picture...calm...relaxed.

You would ask them questions like:

- What does the breeze feel like on your skin? Is it warm and relaxing or cool and refreshing?
- What sounds can you hear?
- What can you smell? Or, what scents are floating on the breeze?

We ask questions rather than give directions (like smell the jasmine on the warm breeze) because we want our students to be in control of their own inner journey and not just being led by our idea of beautiful or relaxing.

Some people who have had traumatic experiences where they have felt they were not in control or where they were, 'in the hands' of someone they didn't trust or who has harmed them, can really struggle with Guided Meditations.

This is mostly because many teachers take control of the Meditation and tell the students what to see, what to feel and what to smell. (i.e.: You see a field of yellow flowers; you smell the sweet salt air; you hear birds singing; you see a beautiful dolphin approaching; you feel the warm sun on your back.) All beautiful but all of the teacher's creation; not the student's.

So the Meditation becomes a journey that is being dictated to, rather than created in the most perfect and ideal place for the student...within themselves.

Some people associate Guided Meditation with hypnosis (with good reason given the standard way it is taught) and fear they will lose control. We need to let our students know they should never participate in any Meditation which makes them feel uncomfortable.

When we are facilitators, who provide our students with opportunities for their own inner journey and teach them how to create meditative experience that are designed for them by them (i.e. They decide how it smells, feels, sounds and what it looks like) we are truly empowering our students with lifelong skills and offering them the opportunity to experience Meditations that are as close to perfect for them and their individual learning style as possible.

In teaching Guided Meditations, we need to be very cautious about what experience we bring to our students. The idea of hurtling through space (free and unencumbered by the pressures of earth's gravity) may be heaven for one student and absolute hell for another.

It is also important that we do not take people back in time. We as teachers do not know what lies behind our students and you do not want to take anyone back to a time in their lives that is traumatic for them, such as an abusive childhood, for example.

For this reason, you should never facilitate Inner Child Meditation unless you have completed the Postgraduate Course in Inner Childhood Meditation. There is great good and healing that can be done through Guided Meditation, when the teacher is well trained. There is also great damage that can be done when the teacher is unaware.

ACTIVITY

Please write a 3-minute Guided Meditation - **Creative Visualisation**; including cues aimed at teaching a non-visual learner how to creatively visualise. Submit this meditation in your submission form.

ACTIVITY

In order to experiment with different styles of Guided Creative Visualisation available, go to Youtube www.youtube.com and search for 'creative visualization'. You will be presented with a huge array of creative visualization meditations written and presented by a wide range of different teachers. Some are excellent, and some are not so good. Listen to three different guided creative visualisations and report your experiences in your Submission Form. The purpose of this assignment to illustrate what is available on mainstream media and how they vary in quality.

ACTIVITY

Assignment (Required word count: 500 -2000 words)

Please complete the Happiness Survey before you begin this assignment. Using the information contained in this lecture and the research you have done through the Happiness Survey, write an essay on what you believe defines happiness and the best way to achieve it.

You are not required to submit this assignment to your teacher.

Once you have completed your essay, please answer the questions in your Submission Form.

End of module.

Notes

fMRI - Functional MRI or functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI) is a type of specialized MRI scan. It measures the haemodynamic response related to neural activity in the brain or spinal cord of humans or other animals. It is one of the most recently developed forms of neuroimaging. Since the early 1990s, fMRI has come to dominate the brain mapping field due to its low invasiveness, lack of radiation exposure, and relatively wide availability.

EEG - Electroencephalography (EEG), in the broadest sense of the term, refers to the measurement of the electrical activity produced by the brain. In clinical contexts, EEG refers to the recording of the brain's spontaneous electrical activity in the time-domain as recorded from multiple electrodes placed on the scalp. In neurology, the main diagnostic application of EEG is in the case of epilepsy, as epileptic activity can create clear abnormalities on a standard EEG study. A secondary clinical use of EEG is in the diagnosis of coma and encephalopathies. EEG used to be a first-line method for the diagnosis of tumors, stroke and other focal brain disorders, but this use has decreased with the advent of anatomical imaging modalities, such as MRI and CT.

Derivatives of the EEG technique include evoked potentials (EP), which involves averaging the EEG activity time-locked to the presentation of a stimulus of some sort (visual, somatosensory, or auditory). Event-related potentials refer to averaged EEG responses that are time-locked to more complex processing of stimuli; this technique is used in cognitive science, cognitive psychology, and psycho physiological research.

Martin EP Seligman (born August 12, 1942 in Albany, New York) is an American psychologist who also writes self-help books. A world-renowned authority on depression and abnormal psychology, he is well known for his work on the theory of 'learned helplessness', and according to *The Daily Pennsylvanian* is considered the father of positive psychology. He is the director of the Positive Psychology Centre at the University of Pennsylvania.

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