



Presentation

Stewart Forsyth and Holly Dixon: Saturday 6th June

Title of Presentation: Active mindfulness: Bringing mindfulness into your life

Presenter Name: Stewart Forsyth and Holly Dixon

Abstract:

We introduce Active Mindfulness – bringing mindfulness into exercise. Both practices contribute to psychological and physical well-being (Strohle, 2009 – reduced negative affect as result of exercise; Ekelund, 2015 – positive effects of activity on longevity). For example mindfulness and exercise are two of the five of the Mental Health Foundation’s Ways to Wellbeing - Connect, Give, Take Notice, Keep Learning, Be Active.

Exercise and mindfulness practices are seen as difficult to establish and maintain by many, yet are also likely to result in increases in positivity and to enhance wellness. Killingworth and Dilbert (2010) in an innovative activity-tracking study demonstrated that different activities were associated with different levels of positivity, and that across activities, those that were experienced mindfully were experienced more positively. Despite the energy demands of exercise, Killingworth and Dilbert’s respondents rated this the second-highest positivity inducing activity.

There is a long tradition of activity-based mindfulness with some recent research (eg, Larky et al, 2009) indicating that Qigong and Tai Chi can have positive health impacts, including reduced negative affect. This initiative aims to integrate mindfulness and exercise – with the goals of enhancing short-term positivity and enhancing the potential longer-term benefits of exercise. The approach includes training simple practices to contribute to continued application of mindfulness in other aspects of life with the potential to contribute to longer term positivity and wellness.

This presentaton outlines the content of the 10-week course and includes some preliminary results.

Presenter Biography:

Stewart Forsyth

Stewart works as a executive coach and organisational development consultant to help people and organisations develop agility in their navigation of an increasingly turbulent world. He is also an enthusiast for the outdoors and leads and participates in a variety of activities, including leading “Active Mindfulness Outdoors” sessions – a lot more gentle than this might sound. Stewart is passionate about personal development and works from an ACT-based approach in coaching, and a positive psychology based approach in consulting and activity generally.

Holly Dixon

Holly is a masters student who dedicates her time to uncovering ways individuals can strengthen their psychological resources to live the best life possible. She has both an academic and personal interest in mindfulness and the benefits it offers, as well as the influence that other positive psychological states such as gratitude, social connection, and compassion have on our wellbeing. Holly loves to be engaged in activities that support and motivate people, and ‘Active Mindfulness’ provides one such avenue. Holly aims to go further with her academic career, and use her knowledge to offer additional programs within the community.