

**MINDFULNESS TRAINING FOR THE WORKPLACE
WITH STUDENTS AT MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY:
2017-2018—EVALUATION REPORT**

Three cohorts of undergraduate and graduate students at Memorial University—with eight to ten in each group—attended 1.5-hour sessions of a Workplace Mindfulness program once per week for 10 weeks in 2017 and 2018. They all had a work component to their studies: co-op, practicum, or field placement. In between sessions, they applied themselves to mindfulness practice and readings. A total of thirty-seven students began the program; 24 received certificates of completion.

Andrew Safer, Mindfulness Instructor & Trainer and Workshop Facilitator, conducted the weekly sessions. Principal Investigator Janna Rosales, PhD, Visiting Assistant Professor, Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science, and Vashti Campbell, PhD Candidate, Faculty of Medicine, facilitated self-reflective freewriting exercises. Dr. Rosales, Dr. Kara Arnold (Professor, Faculty of Business), and Dr. Megan Walsh (Assistant Professor, Edwards School of Business, University of Saskatchewan) collaborated on the research portion of the project. Ms. Darlene Spracklin-Reid (Instructor, Faculty of Engineering) provided additional project support. Memorial University's Teaching and Learning Framework provided funding support for the two-year project.

“Workplace mindfulness training has made me a more aware individual,” one participant wrote. “I have learned techniques that have improved my listening skills, how I react to stressful situations, and the kindness I show others. Ultimately the training sessions have improved my relationships with others and myself.”

A pre / post evaluation was administered in the beginning and at the end of the program. Following is a sampling of evaluation outcomes (scores were averaged).

Greater disagreement with the statements indicated greater mindfulness:

- When my thoughts overtake me and I feel worried, I don't know how to pause or interrupt this pattern. 35%
- I am keen on multitasking as it allows me to accomplish a lot of tasks. 30%
- When I have difficult thoughts or feelings, I tend to avoid facing them for as long as I can. 26%
- I can't imagine getting through a day without my cellphone. 24%
- I have problems dealing with stressful situations. 20%

Nineteen participants indicated that the program had been very helpful or extremely helpful; 3 somewhat helpful; and 1 not helpful.

The majority (12) said that mindfulness helps during the workday in one of three ways: by enabling them to stay on task and not get distracted, listen and be more attentive in meetings, and deal with stress.

When asked if their colleagues could benefit, 23 said Yes; 0 said No.