Mindfulness for Law Librarians
Roadmap

• What is Mindfulness?
• Why Should I Care?
• Types of Mindfulness Practices
• Interactive Exercises
What is Mindfulness?

- Mindfulness is the basic human ability to be fully present, aware of where we are and what we’re doing, and not overly reactive or overwhelmed by what’s going on around us.

- Paying attention, on purpose, in the present moment without judgment.

- PRESENCE
Why Should Law Librarians Care?

• Mindfulness =
  – Great productivity tool
  – Force multiplier

• Mindful employees are
  – Focused employees
  – More creative employees
  – Able to accept criticism better
  – Less stressed employees, which leads to
    – Happier employees
    – Less sick employees who take less time off

• Google’s Search Inside Yourself Leadership Institute
• Mindful Leadership Summit – leading from the Inside Out
Benefits of Mindfulness to YOU

• Better balance of personal & professional life.

• Easier, more fulfilling relationships when people feel heard & appreciated.

• Less stress, more peace of mind when you live in the present moment.

• Better creativity. A quieter mind has room to come up with good ideas.

• Increased productivity & quality of output. Being present & undistracted allows us to focus our efforts & reach our highest levels of performance.
Breathing – Don’t I Already Do This?

• >10 breaths per minute creates a state of stress.
  – 3 seconds IN, 3 seconds OUT can change your state!

• ≤ 4 breaths per minute creates state of meditation.
  – 8 seconds IN, 8 seconds OUT
Mindful Breathing

• Long Deep Breathing

• Suspending the Breath
  – Elongate inhale affects sympathetic nervous system.
  – Activating / stimulating.

  – Lengthen exhale affects parasympathetic nervous system.
  – Relaxing.
WHAT GETS IN THE WAY OF BEING HERE NOW?

... outside influences such as:

- Regrets about the past or worry about the future
- Judgments about self or others
- Preconceived notions about people or events
- Thinking about too many things at once
- Closing your mind to other points of view
- Needing to be right and look perfect
- Self-doubts and insecurity
Mindful Breathing

- Right Nostril Breathing – uplifting, energizing, warming
- Left Nostril Breathing – calming, reflecting, cooling
- Alternate Nostril Breathing – balancing, centering
Meditation

• Dictionary definition: to reflect upon, ponder or contemplate

• One pointed focus

• Methods:
  – Breathing
  – Mantra*
  – Chanting
  – Use of imagery
  – Gazing
  – Focused movement
    • Walking meditation
    • Yoga

• Controlled breathing is how I learn how to empty & fill myself; it is GATEWAY to meditation.
Feeling Overwhelmed? Remember RAIN

• **R**ecognize what’s going on
  - What are my typical distractions?  
  - Am I trying to multitask?

• **A**llow the experience to be there, just as it is
  - Accept that you will go in and out of Being Here Now

• **I**nvestigate with kindness
  - Where am I making progress? Increasing your time in Be Here Now by even a small amount can have a dramatic impact on your quality of life

• **N**atural Awareness, which comes from not identifying with the experience
When you sit a long time at your desk, **WHAT HURTS?**

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Seated Stretches to Alleviate “Sitting Strain”
Yoga, Friends. This is YOGA.

- Pranayama *breath work*
- Neck rolls
- Cat-Cow Stretch
- Arms Overhead Stretch *with interlaced fingers and palms turned up*
- Crescent Side Stretch *pull away on wrist to ease carpal tunnel*
- Forward Bend *or arms against desks. Stretch fingers taut and move thumb back and forth (CT)*
- Open Chest Stretch *(Seated Yoga Mudra)*
- Wrist Stretch *fingers point back at you*
- Eagle Arms
- Cow Arms
- Spinal Twist
- Knee Squeeze *with hands UNDER thigh to release lower back*
- Standing or Seated Pigeon
- Seated Warrior(s)
- Mediation *use gong or timer app*
Your Presence is your Power.
Gratitude is a Gateway to the Moment.

The real gift of gratitude is that the more grateful you are, the more present you become.

Robert Holden

What am I thankful for right NOW?
QUESTIONS?

wendy.maines@thomsonreuters.com
Additional Resources: AALL & Articles

- Mindfulness in Law Librarianship Caucus
- Zen & the Art of Multitasking: Mindfulness for Law Librarians
- Why Harvard Says Mindfulness is a “Must Have” for Business Leaders
- Evidence for Mindfulness: A Research Summary for the Corporate Skeptic
Additional Resources: Office Yoga Websites

- Yoga Journal’s website provides a wealth of information about all things yoga including:
  - 15 Days of yoga at your desk.
    [http://www.yogajournal.com/officeyoga/day1/](http://www.yogajournal.com/officeyoga/day1/)
  - More office appropriate stretches:


- Other Instructive Websites with pictures of the postures:
  - [http://yoga.about.com/od/yogasequences/tp/deskstretches.htm](http://yoga.about.com/od/yogasequences/tp/deskstretches.htm)
  - [http://yoga.about.com/od/yogasequences/tp/Chair-Yoga-Poses.htm](http://yoga.about.com/od/yogasequences/tp/Chair-Yoga-Poses.htm)
Additional Resources: Apps & Downloads

- Headspace App (free)

- Insight Timer App (free)

- Podcast: Mrs. Mindfulness - https://soundcloud.com/mrsmindfulness

- Free 5 min (or more) time download. Each timer starts and finishes with three bell strikes with nothing but silence in between:

- Free Zen Timer download. Randomly sounds a chime to remind you to be in the moment or take a stretch at your desk.