Creating an Oasis for Yourself and Others

A Wellness Webinar for UCANR Statewide Program Personnel and Volunteers

May 13th 2020, 10-11 AM
Marisa Coyne
Academic Coordinator for Volunteer Engagement, UC Master Gardener Program

Gemma Miner
Academic Coordinator for Volunteer Engagement, 4-H Youth Development Program
Agenda

• 10:00 AM – 10:10 AM - Welcome
• 10:10 AM – 10:25 AM - Anne Iaccopucci on Mindfulness
• 10:25 AM – 10:40 AM - Marcel Horowitz on Planning for Happiness
• 10:40 AM – 10:55 AM - Missy Gable on Therapeutic Horticulture
• 10:55 AM – 11:00 AM - Closing
• 11:00 AM – 11:15 AM – Post-Meeting Q+A
UC Agriculture and Natural Resources (UCANR)

- UC ANR office in Davis, CA
- 58 UC Cooperative Extension offices
- 9 Research and Extension Centers
- 6 Statewide Institutes
- 6 Statewide Programs
The UC Master Gardener Program, UC 4-H Youth Development Program, and UC Master Food Preserver Program engage over **26,000 volunteers** annually.
An Oasis is ...

• A fertile spot in the desert where water is found
• A wet, green habitat for plants and animals

Source: dictionary.com, San Diego Natural History Museum
An Oasis is ...

• A fertile spot in the desert where water is found
• A wet, green habitat for plants and animals
• A place of abundance
• A place that offers quiet and solitude
• A place that provides for one’s basic needs

Source: dictionary.com, San Diego Natural History Museum
“We need an oasis in the midst of crisis, and a destination afterward.”

Source: Kristin Grimm, NAAEE, Spitfire Strategies
Anne Iaccopucci
Academic Coordinator, 4-H Healthy Living on MINDFULNESS
Defining

MINDFULNESS

BE IN THE PRESENT MOMENT.
DEFINING MINDFULNESS

MINDFULNESS IS:

01 Noticing/Awareness
02 Openness/Curiosity
03 Non-judgment
04 Acceptance
MINDFULNESS PRACTICES HELP INDIVIDUALS:

Reduce stress and anxiety, and help give children tools to cope with the stress and anxiety they experience (Garey 2017; Taren et al. 2015).

Feel more connected and express compassion and gratitude to others (Broderick and Frank 2014; Schonert-Reichl and Lawlor 2010).

To focus and concentrate, make decisions and therefore show improvements in academic performance (Kuo and Taylor 2004; Zenner, Herrnleben-Kurz, and Walach 2014).
Mindfulness can improve an individual’s ability to make decisions, regulate emotions, problem solve, and control impulses.
Hippocampus

Mindful practices increase cortical thickness and can improving memory, learning, and one’s response to stress.
Neuroscience and Mindfulness

Amygdala

Mindfulness actually reduces the size of the amygdala which results in less reactivity to stress.
IF IT'S SO GOOD, WHY IS IT HARD?

#DISTRACTIONS

Teens say social media distracts from homework (57%), people (54%), sleep (29%), and time spent in-person (42%).
MINDFULNESS IS BRINGING AWARENESS TO EVERYTHING YOU DO IN YOUR LIFE.

- Gina M. Biedel
Practicing Mindfulness

Write down all the thoughts that come to your mind (one line per thought).
Promoting Healthy People and Communities

- Mindful eating
- Affirmations
- Identification and management of emotions
- Being present in the current moment
- Yoga
Meeting Community Needs

• Delivery of programming that specifically builds competencies in social-emotional health and wellbeing.

• Provided a virtual platform for the youth and families to engage in our programming.
Meeting Community Needs

https://ucanr.edu/sites/UC4-H/files/267083.pdf
Meeting Community Needs
Try it yourself!

• Visit https://campus.extension.org/
• Search for Virtual Mindful Me in the course catalog
• Enter the enrollment key: California
• Explore the menu of video lessons
• Enjoy!

Lesson 1 - Mindful Eating: Is This Apple Red?
Lesson 2 - Affirmations: You Are Great
Lesson 3 - The Gift of Presence: Giving Presence
Lesson 4 - Describing Feelings: Welcome Feelings
Lesson 5 - Mood Management: Smile Tag
Lesson 6 - Mood Management: Practice Focus
Lesson 7 - Quiet Listening: Finding the Quiet
Lesson 8 - Quiet Listening: Creating the Quiet
Lesson 9 - Quiet Listening: Being The Quiet
Lesson 10 - Yoga: Balance, Flexibility, and Strength
Marcel Horowitz
Advisor, Youth, Families and Communities on
PLANNING FOR HAPPINESS IN
STRESSFUL TIMES
Planning to Plan

You will need a piece of paper and writing utensil(s) for this activity
Predetermined

POLL: What percent of your level of happiness/depression is predetermined? 90% / 75%/ 50%/ 30%/ 10%

~10% is predetermined
~90% can be altered
Plan

Fold a sheet of paper into four quarters
What makes you feel successful or good about yourself?
What gives you a sense of meaning?
How can you leverage your body to produce more “feel good hormones”?
What do you enjoy doing, seeing or hearing?
What creates a sense of “flow”?
Pride

Write at least one thing you will do in each area tomorrow.

Purpose

Physiology

Pleasure
Try it yourself!

• Use the 4-Ps framework to identify goals or focus areas for the coming week
• Invite other members of your household to join you in this process
• Be gentle with yourself if meeting all goals is not possible
Missy Gable
Director, UC Master Gardener Program on
THERAPEUTIC HORTICULTURE
Think to yourself:

Did these pictures elicit any emotions for you?

What were they?
Gardening has Health Benefits

There is a connection between people and plants that has to do with our historical reliance on plants for food, water and shelter.

Plants = Survival

The vestige of our close historical connection with plants is the many physical and mental health benefits of gardening, being outdoors, and or simply appreciating a view of nature. Today, we employ gardening as a healing modality.
Physical Health

Improves:
• Joint health
• Flexibility
• Fine-motor skills
• Physical activity

Reduces:
• Blood pressure
• Heart rate
• Muscle tension
Mental Health

• Increase in serotonin, decrease in noradrenaline
  – Example: prison gardening

• Improved emotional well-being
  (similar effect as biking, walking or dining out)

• Feelings of purpose, expectations for the future, productivity, happiness, and others
Community Health

Idea for taking action:

• Start or continue to garden, whether you have a patio or multiple acres, it all counts!

• Share with your neighbors

• Encourage others
Try it Yourself!

• For Current UC Master Gardener Volunteers:
  – Continue to build your gardening knowledge through Continuing Education
  – Include research-based information about health and wellness in your public education events

• For All:
  – Commit to spending time each week in nature
  – Reach out to your local UC Master Gardener Program for resources and information
  – Read about the great work being done across our state and across programs on our blogs and social media
Thank You!

Anne Iaccopucci
Academic Coordinator, 4-H Healthy Living

Marcel Horowitz
Advisor, Youth Families and Communities

Missy Gable
Director, UC Master Gardener Program
Creating an Oasis for Yourself and Others

Thank you for joining us!

A recording of this event will be available on the UC Master Gardener Program and UC 4-H Youth Development YouTube Channels.