FOSTERING CONTEMPLATIVE LIFE SKILLS ON A COLLEGE CAMPUS OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

DARTMOUTH COLLEGE
Present moment.
Beautiful moment.
The William Jewett Tucker Foundation is Dartmouth’s Center for Service, Spirituality, and Social Justice. We are busy but we make room for reflection, mindfulness, learning, and practice.

MPG meets weekly across many traditions for an hour to meditate together; to discuss a shared reading; and to discuss our practice.

We collaborate with one another to foster contemplative practice among students, staff, and faculty.
CAMPUS COLLABORATIONS—STUDENT AFFAIRS, STUDENT GROUPS, FACULTY

- Sitting—Any activity can include a contemplative strand—bell, raisin, photo, poem, cushion, testimonial, writing prompt, markers.
- Tucker Leaders in Community—mindful pizza, meditation, self care, cultivating community as first year students.
- Health Promotions—Mindful Motivational Interviewing; student MBSR; mindful drinking?
- Dean of the College area—Mentoring With Purpose summit and discussion groups.
- Dartmouth Center for the Advancement of Learning—faculty development (Arthur Zajonc, David Levy)
- Ethics Center—Multiple speakers in lectures; classes; retreat days; meals together.
- Toughest: With HR to offer MBSR for staff and faculty. Actually just advertised 3-session offering.
SPIRITUALITY AND THE INNER SELF

- Office of Religious and Spiritual Life connections with contemplation and mindfulness: prayer, worship, meditation, pilgrimage and service.

- Supporting and Deepening contemplation across campus
  “There is no place on campus where I can go to cry.” (Dartmouth student)
  Student Mindfulness Group with faculty and staff advisors
  “Journey Inward-Journey Outward” group
  “Actively Moving Forward” student bereavement group
  “Dartmouth on Purpose” (Dean’s Office)

- Bridge building among various mindfulness efforts on campus.

- Co-sponsoring special programs to bring curricular and co-curricular together—Jon Kabat-Zinn, Tibetan monks, and upcoming visit with Joan Halifax.

- Supporting all of this is our own group practice.
CONTEMPLATIVE PRACTICE AND OUTDOOR PROGRAMS, ATHLETICS, EXERCISE

- Over 95% of incoming students participate in 4-day trip in local wilderness – developing initial relationship with the local environment at Dartmouth.

- Sensory awareness training currently utilized in some Outdoor Programs courses – i.e. traditional skills, tracking, navigation.

- Goals for Outdoor Programs: specific trips and courses incorporating training in mindfulness and sensory awareness, allowing formal recognition and training in this aspect of outdoor experience.

- Goal for Athletics: Training in mind-body awareness, mindfulness and other contemplative disciplines for performance enhancement available to interested athletes.

- ‘Mindful exercise’ – mind-body awareness infused in exercise culture on campus, leading to more integrated, beneficial exercise and reduction of exercise disorders and injuries.
ASSESSMENT AND ASPIRATIONS: A MORE MINDFUL CAMPUS

- Assessment: Nascent. Tucker Foundation Survey available
- Faculty and staff are oriented to their work mindfully
- Space and time are set aside for reflection and meetings are conducted mindfully
- Student orientation is mindful
- Community service, leadership, and physical and leisure activities have a mindful thread
- Students learn loving kindness in residence halls
- Students contemplate their futures mindfully
- Faculty and staff inside and outside of classrooms model mindful approaches...
QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, RESOURCES

• “Meditation Transforms Roughest High Schools,”
  http://www.sfgate.com/opinion/openforum/article/Meditation-transforms-roughest-San-Francisco-5136942.php#src=fb
• Tara Brach, Radical Acceptance, 2003; True Re
• The Bringing Theory to Practice project of the American Association of Colleges and Universities, http://www.aacu.org/bringing_theory/index.cfm
• Christopher Germer, The Mindful Path to Self-Compassion, 2009
• Thich Nhat Hahn--all
• Jon Kabat-Zinn, Mindfulness for Beginners, 2012; Wherever You Go, There You Are, 2005
• Jack Kornfield, The Wise Heart, 2008
• Mary Pipher, Writing to Change the World, 2006
• Rodro Rinzler, The Buddha’s Brain, 2012
• Tim Ryan, A Mindful Nation: How a Simple Practice Can Help Us Reduce Stress, Improve Performance, and Recapture the American Spirit
• Sharon Salzberg, Lovingkindness, 1995
• “Wake Up International Tour”