

Mindfulness-Based Childbirth and Parenting (MBCP): Bringing Mindfulness to Women and Families, Decreasing Disparities and Increasing Resiliency



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Intentions

- Understand the definition of mindfulness and practice mindfulness as taught in MBCP-Mindfulness-Based Childbirth & Parenting
- Understand how mindfulness practice reduces stress for patients and for clinicians
- Understand the applicability of MBCP for all communities and its potential for reducing health disparities

We have no conflicts to
disclose.

“Health disparities are **preventable differences** in the **burden of disease, injury, violence, or opportunities to achieve optimal health** that are experienced by **socially disadvantaged populations.**”

-CDC, 2015





US Health Disparities Exist:

- Unintended pregnancies
- Preterm birth
- Infant mortality
- Maternal mortality
- Prenatal care
- Maternal mental health

Racial Disparities in Perinatal Outcomes

CDC Health Disparities and Inequalities Report-2011

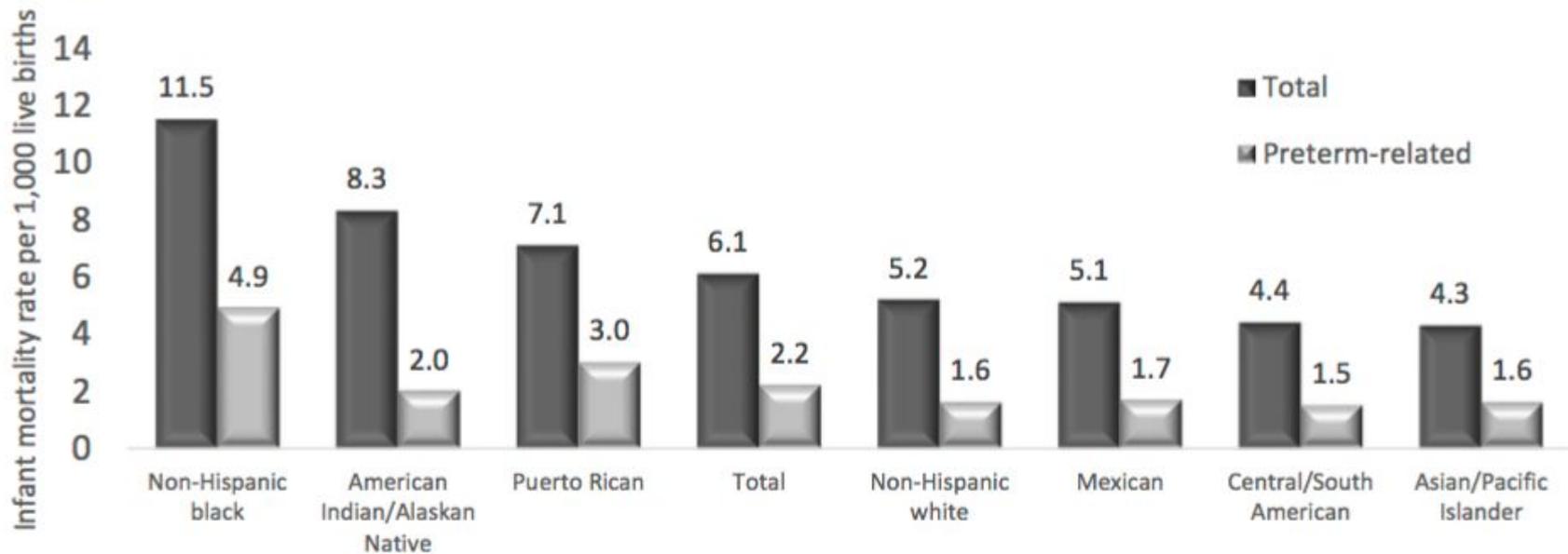
- Approximately one of every five infants born to non-Hispanic black mothers in 2007 was born preterm, compared with one of every eight to nine infants born to non-Hispanic white and Hispanic women.
- The 2007 preterm birth rate for non-Hispanic black infants was 59% higher than the rate for non-Hispanic white infants and 49% higher than the rate for Hispanic infants.

Massachusetts Births 2013

- Preterm births: 8.5 % for non-hispanic white women, 11.2 for non-hispanic black women, 9.1 for hispanic women.

Racial Disparities and Infant Mortality

Figure 2: Total and Preterm-related Infant Mortality by Mother's Race/Ethnicity, United States, 2010.⁵



HAPPINESS COACH: living in the present gains a clever Facebook following

It's all in your mind

Kate Matthews
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A TRUCK smash almost took his life, now mindfulness coach John Shearer from Grafton is helping other people to make the most of theirs.

With a fan base of more than 165,000 Facebook followers around the world, a number up by 15,000 in the last week, Mr Shearer said he isn't surprised by the interest the idea has generated.

"Mindfulness has made me a much more peaceful person, much more passionate," he said.

"It is simply being present: When you're present, you're focused on what's happening now rather than what has happened, which can lead to depression, or what might happen in the future, which can lead to anxiety."

Ironically it was a near-death experience more than 30 years ago that led to John's interest in the practice of mindfulness.

On June 9 1982, John was revived after being involved in a horror accident, leaving him with multiple injuries and years of depression.

The recovery process included "lots of medication and shock treatment".

In 1997 John overcame his

depression, but it wasn't until 2009 that he discovered the theory mindfulness, made popular by Dr Russ Harris and his book *The Happiness Trap*.

It struck a chord with John and he attended seminars and then trained with Dr Harris to become a therapist, expanding on his previous work as a counsellor with the Smith Family. Since moving to Grafton in 2009, John has established a private practice from his home providing one-on-one coaching and group sessions, in between part-time youth work for Juvenile Justice.

Go to facebook.com/mindfulnesscoach or mindfulnesscoach.com



Mindfulness coach John Shearer with *The Happiness Trap* that changed his life. PHOTO DEBRAH NOVAK

BENEFITS OF MINDFULNESS

THE Benefits of Mindfulness, according to John Shearer, fall broadly into three areas: wellbeing, mental benefits and therapeutic benefits.

Wellbeing benefits include having more energy and an increased zest for life, while mental benefits include an increased self understanding and stability of the mind.

Therapeutic benefits are seen in areas such as depression, anxiety, schizophrenia and pain, all of

which can be improved with a mindfulness practice.

Mr Shearer recommends practising mindfulness regularly, at least once a day for a few minutes at a time until it becomes automatic.

"Still your mind and focus on your breath. Listening is just one of the senses but one of the most powerful ones," he said.

"Listen intently and what happens as life presents itself." Mr Shearer said practising

mindfulness helped to reset the mind and focus on personal values.

"Just imagine you're at your own funeral; your loved ones are talking about you. Visualise what they are saying about you," he said.

"As a father it would be hearing my children say 'Dad always had time for me'; then this is what you value, so make an action plan based on these values and plan to go to beach or playground this weekend."

Photographs by / Peyton Power / Steve M

THE MINDFUL REVOLUTION

The science of finding focus in a stressed-out, multitasking culture

BY KATE PICKERT

HOW TO TAME
CONSTANT CRAWLING

FORGET SELF-ESTEEM
Try a Little Self-Kindness

Why Your Workplace
Needs Mindfulness

mindful

taking time for what matters

The Game Changer

How Seattle Seahawks Coach Pete Carroll is Reshaping NFL Culture

HIGH ANXIETY
One woman's journey to find peace of mind

15 Tips for Better Relationships at Home, at Work & in Love

DECEMBER 2014
mindful.org

PHOTO: BENJAMIN WOOD / GETTY IMAGES
Pete Carroll

What is Mindfulness?

“the awareness that arises from paying attention, on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally.”

-Jon Kabat-Zinn, PhD

“paying attention to WHATEVER is happening in the moment with kindness”

-Mindful Schools

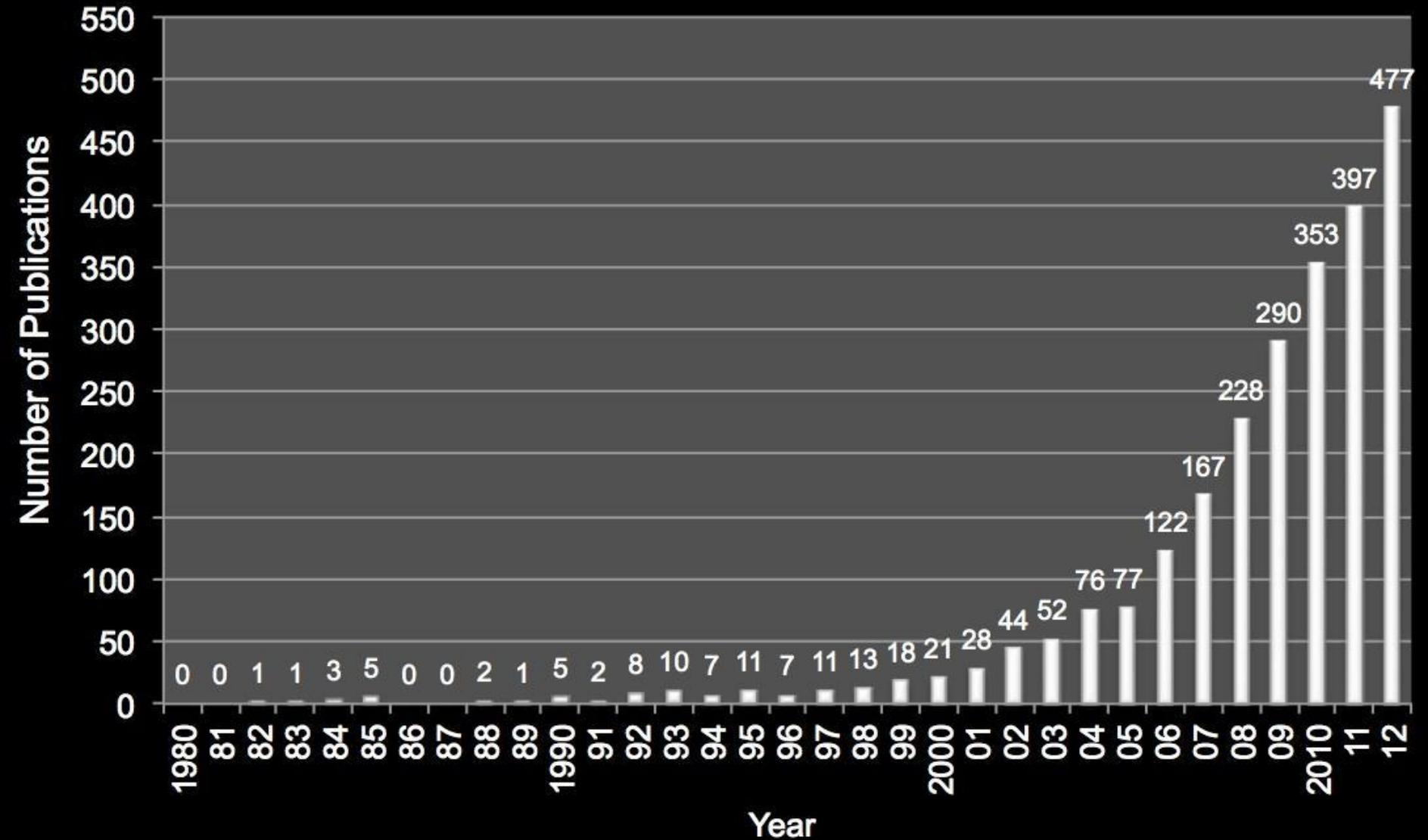
What is Mindfulness?



Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)

- Founded in 1979 by Jon Kabat-Zinn, PhD
 - University of Massachusetts Medical Center
- Systematic and intensive training in mindfulness meditation
- Medical and psychological diagnoses
- Over 20,000 patients at UMass
- Numerous clinical trials over last decade
- Now widespread in the US and abroad

Mindfulness publications by year, 1980 - 2012



Source: DS Black (2013). Mindfulness Research Guide. www.mindfulexperience.org

Benefits

- Decreased anxiety, depression and irritability
- Reduction of key indicators of stress and hypertension
- Reduces impact of chronic pain, addiction
- Bolsters immune system, improved brain function
- Better and more fulfilling relationships
- Less reactivity, greater adaptability and acceptance



Stress in the Perinatal Period

Stress is a Significant Factor in the Etiology of:

Preterm birth

Postpartum depression

Postpartum increases in marital conflict

Quality of mother-infant attachment

Child abuse/neglect

Long-term impact of stress and the developing baby

A Contributing Factor in:

Adult cardiovascular disease

Obesity

Diabetes

Autism?

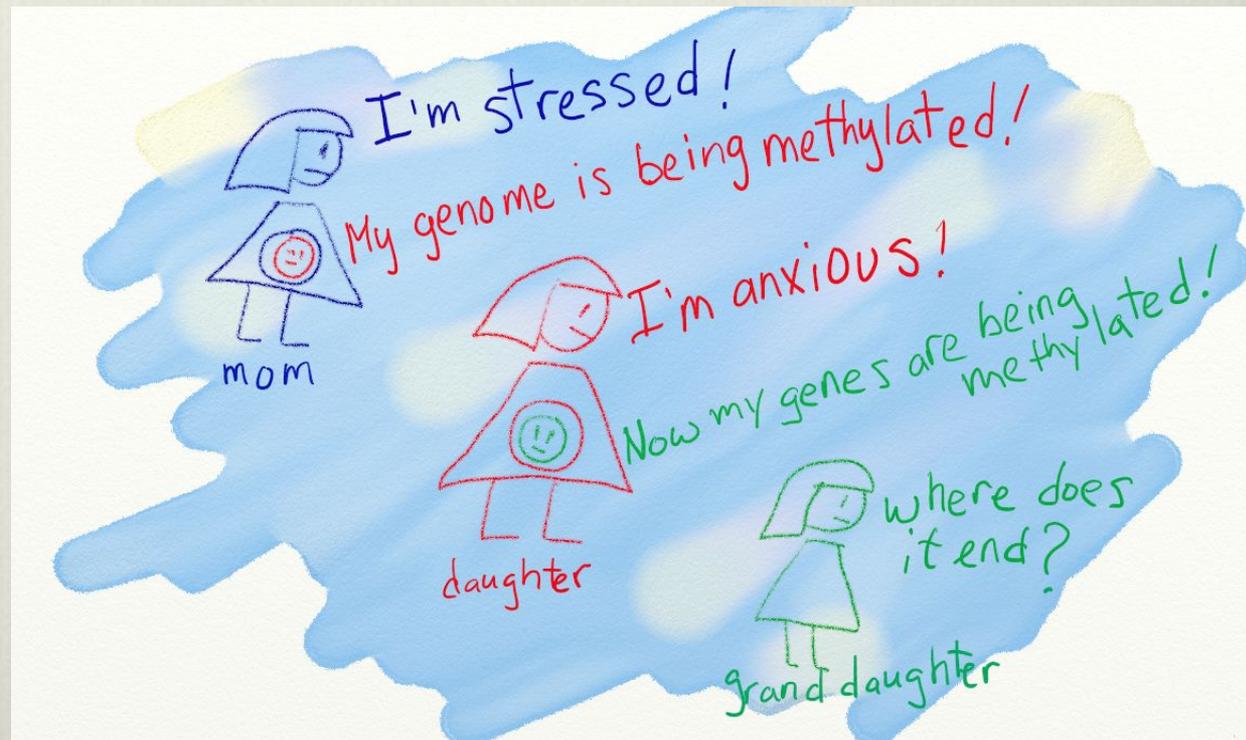


Photo credit:
specialneedsdigest.com

Maternal stress is linked to:

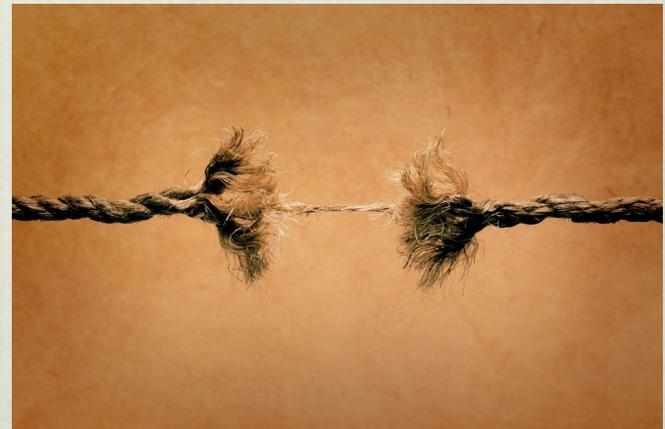
Cognitive, behavioral and emotional
problems in the child

“The magnitude of the long-term effects of antenatal maternal anxiety/stress on the child is substantial. Programs to reduce maternal stress in pregnancy are therefore warranted.”

Van den Bergh et al., 2005

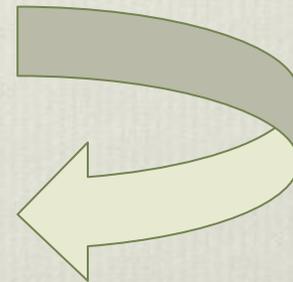
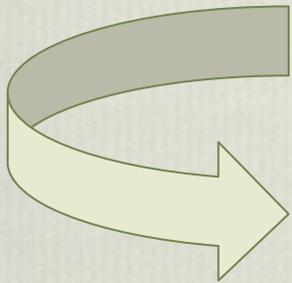
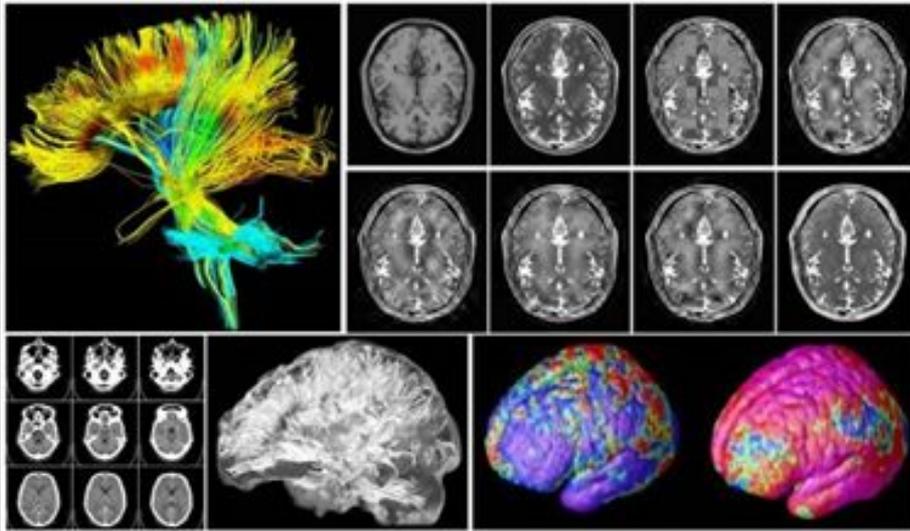
50% increased risk of stillbirth for the approximately 21% of all women and 32% of non-Hispanic black women who experience 3 or more significant life event (SLE) factors during the year prior to delivery

Hogue et al., 2013





Connecting the Dots



Mindfulness-Based Childbirth and Parenting (MBCP)



MBCP: 4 Intentions

- 1) To teach mindfulness meditation for decreasing stress during pregnancy
- 2) To offer mindfulness skills for working with pain and fear in childbirth
- 3) To encourage mindfulness life skills for parenting with wisdom, kindness and connection from the moments of birth
- 4) To make available the learning of mindfulness skills for interrupting intergenerational patterns of suffering

MBCP Program

- 9 week course
- 3 hours per session
- Daily home practice
- Silent daylong retreat
- Reunion after birth



Basic mindfulness practices

- Body Scan
- Sitting Meditation
- Yoga
- Walking Meditation
- Loving-Kindness Practice
- Mindfulness in Daily Life



Adaptations for pregnancy

- Being with Baby
- Physiology of Labor
- Mindful Pain Practices
- Mindful Speaking and Listening Inquiry
- Newborn needs, breastfeeding and mindfulness
- Thread of mindful parenting throughout MBCP
- Creation of community



MBCP in MetroBoston

"This class has changed the way I experience my whole life. Sounds like a really big statement to make, but it's true! I can find joy so much more easily, don't become stressed as much, can tolerate pain/frustration/disappointment so much better. I feel like a more free, happier version of myself. COULD still be some residual hormonal glow, but I felt this way before I gave birth too"

"A wonderful service for families and evolving family units"

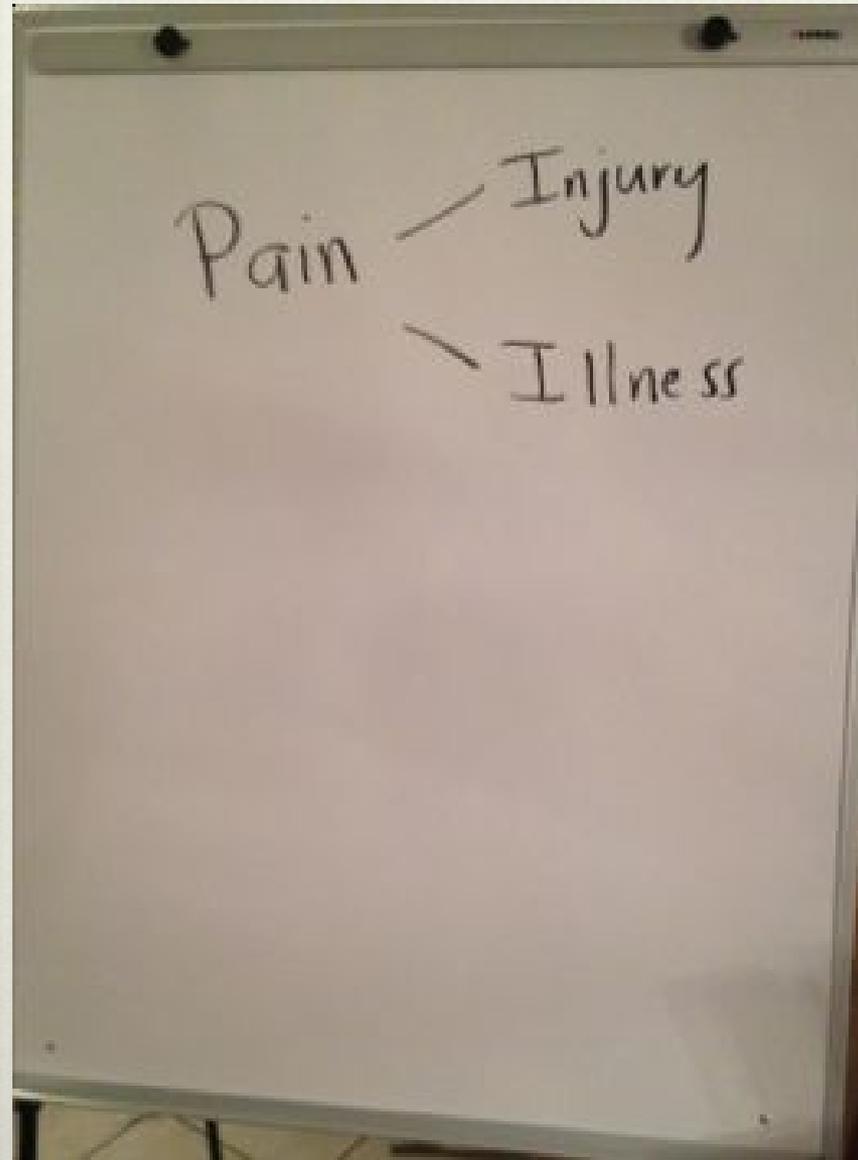
"In the postpartum period, it has stayed with me in lots of ways. Sometimes I look for a long time at my baby's face, and I don't feel the need to read or move on to a more "productive" activity... You said that it is a form of meditation to be so present with her, and so instead of letting myself move on to another activity, I stay with her, and try to be still and go deeper."

"This is a difficult time for my family --relationship-wise, financially, etc. *Despite this*, I've noticed the ability to be more present in parenting and in moments of my life in general"

"I had a lot of trouble with the concept of being kind to oneself...that was an insight in itself"



Class 3 – The White Board



Pain — Injury

— Illness

fear

Pain — Injury

— Illness

↳ Transformational

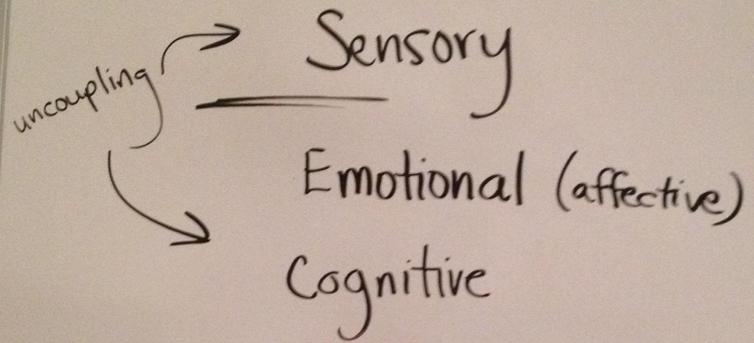
Pain

Sensory

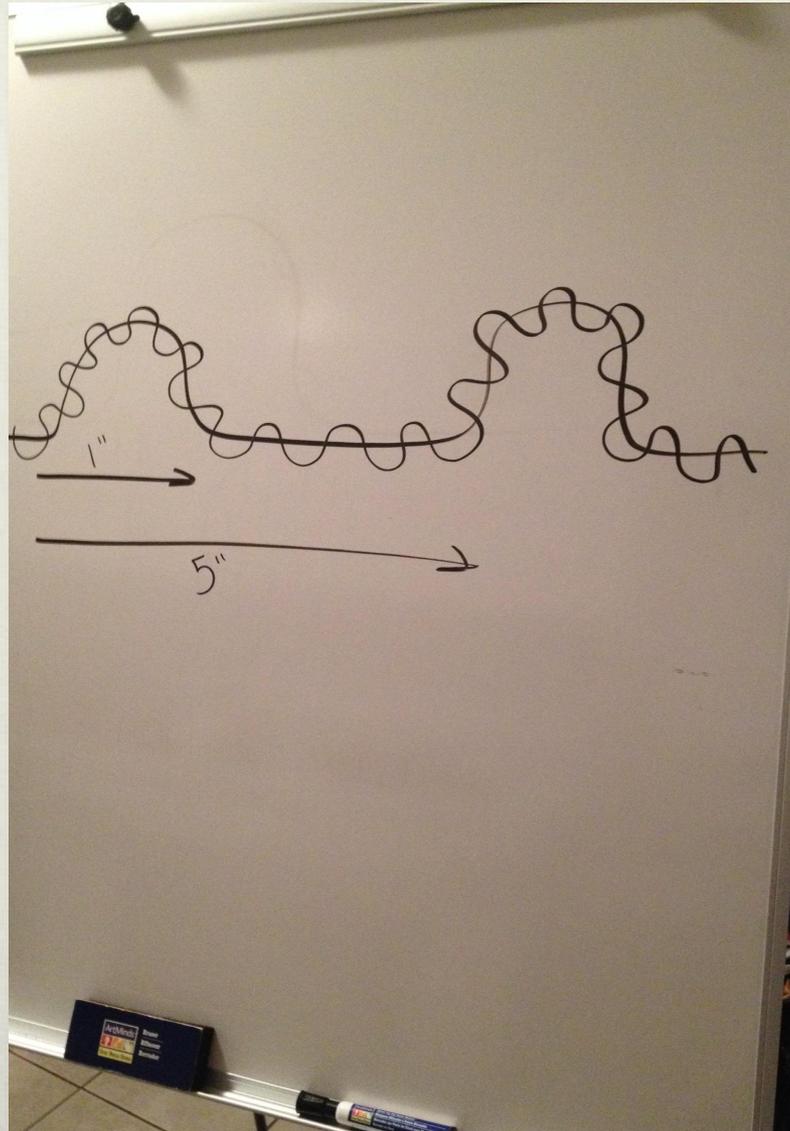
Emotional (affective)

Cognitive

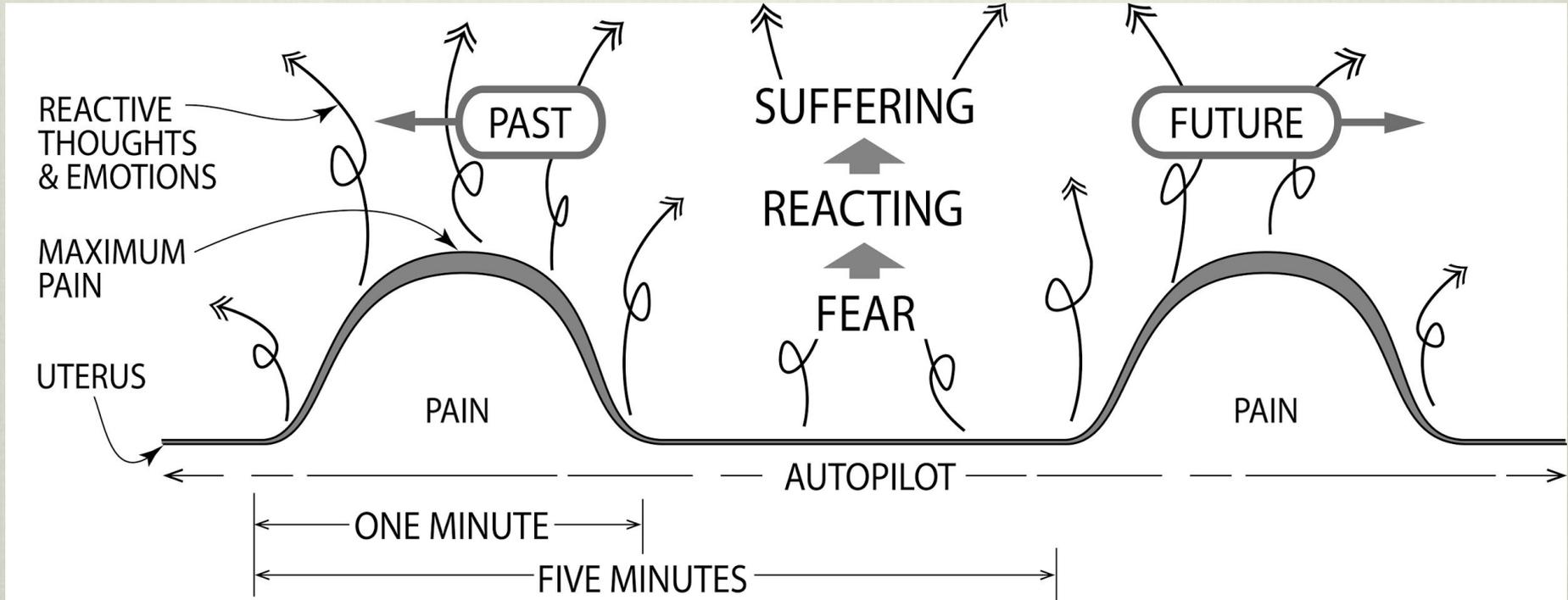
Pain



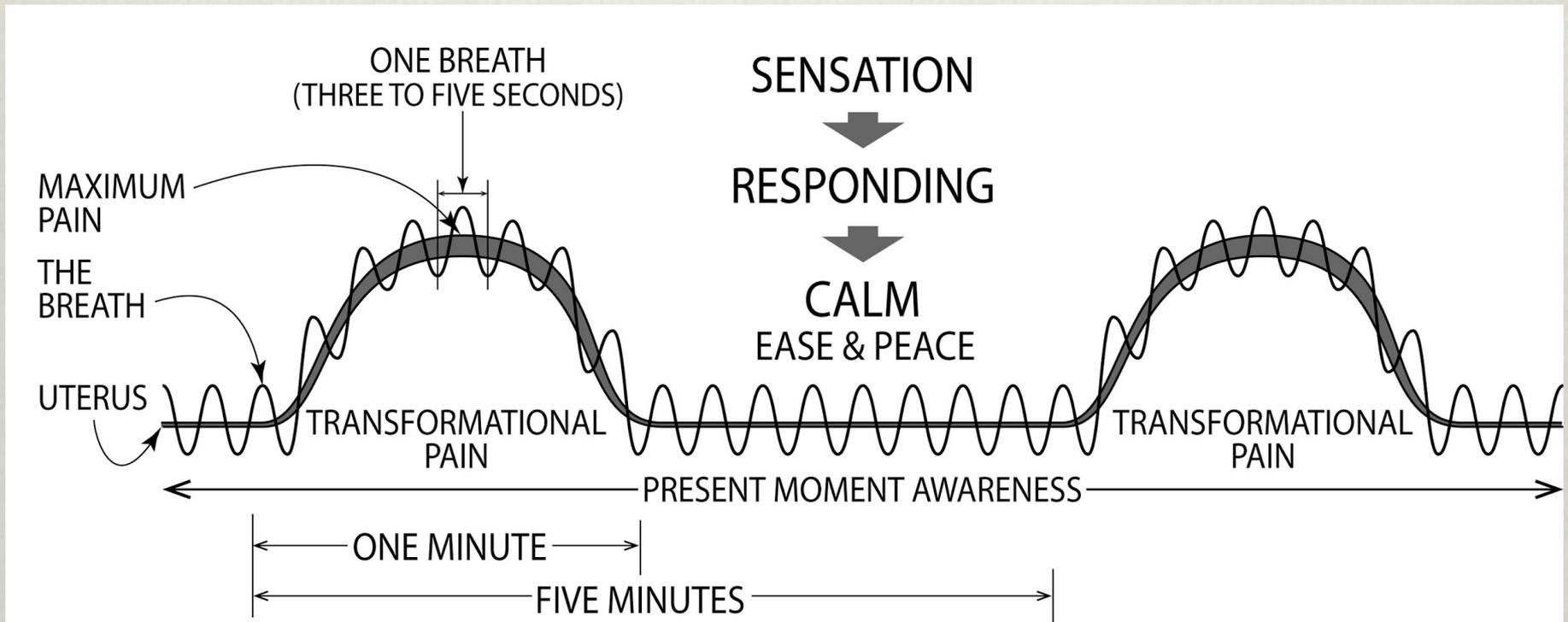
Moment by Moment, Breath by Breath



In the Untrained Mind



Moment by Moment, Breath by Breath





Research

Duncan & Bardacke,
Journal of Child & Family Studies (2010)



INCREASED:

DECREASED:

Positive emotions

Negative emotions

Mindfulness

Depressive mood

~attention/awareness

~non-judging

Pregnancy anxiety

~non-reactivity

Duncan and Bardacke, *Journal of Child & Family Studies* (2010)

Effects of a 14-Hour “Mind in Labor” Intervention



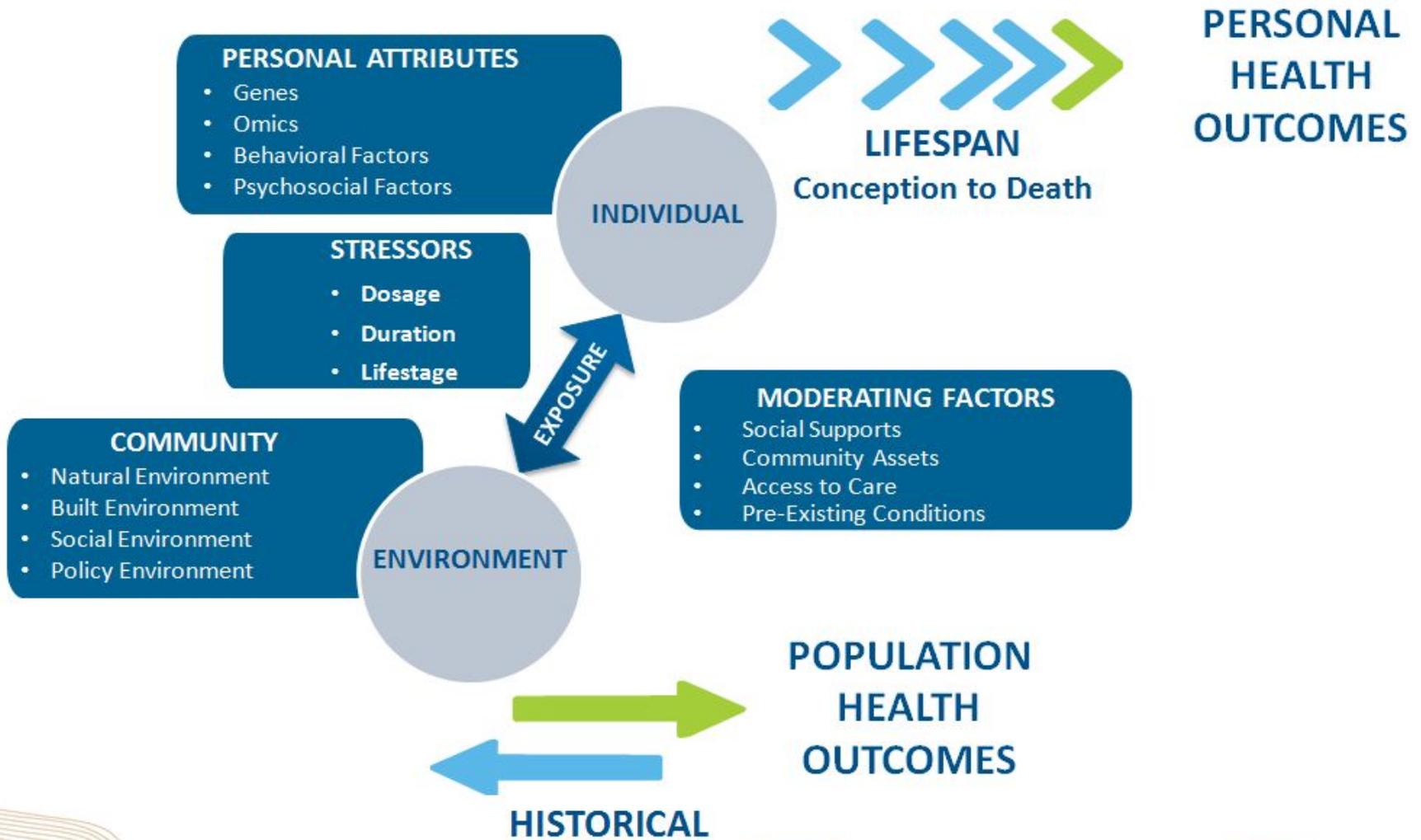
- Increased childbirth self-efficacy
- Significantly lower depression symptoms post-course than controls
- Difference grew in magnitude postpartum ($p=.04$)

Duncan et al. 2014

S.E.S. Disparities

- Stress during pregnancy increasing PP depressive symptoms
- Low-income women more than double the rate of postpartum depression
- Postpartum depression has big emotional and financial costs to families and our society

CONCEPTUAL MODEL



Centering Pregnancy with Mindfulness Skills





“I need this in my life.”

I am “more forgiving to myself and accepting when things don’t go exactly as planned.”

“I feel calmer about the things I can not prepare for and for things that are unexpected.”

“I am learning that the stories that I’ve told myself, about myself, my whole life, aren’t true.”

“I can stop thinking so much when beautiful things are happening.”

MBCP at Family Health Center of Worcester



Early Life Social Environment

Responsive caregiving

SES

Family functioning

Trauma

Buffering
from
supportive
adult

Prenatal antigenic environment

- Placental transfer of antibodies

Immune System

- Cytokine balance/
inflammatory tone
- T Cell maturation and
proliferation

Postnatal antigenic environment

- Transfer of antibodies in
breast milk
- Exposure to allergens

Neuroendocrine Stress Response

- HPA Reactivity
- Hormones/glucocorticoids

Shared
chemical
language, e.g.,
cytokines,
cortisol

Brain Development

- Neurogenesis, neural
plasticity, signaling
- Homeostatic control
- Coordination of stress
response

Individual-
Moderators:
•Genetics
•Coping
•Development

Health & Developmental Outcomes

Infectious
disease risk

Chronic disease
risk

Cognition, learning
& memory

Behavior/emotion
regulation

Psychological
functioning

Mindfulness-Based Childbirth & Parenting for All Communities...



- Photo courtesy of South LA Windows

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Thank you!