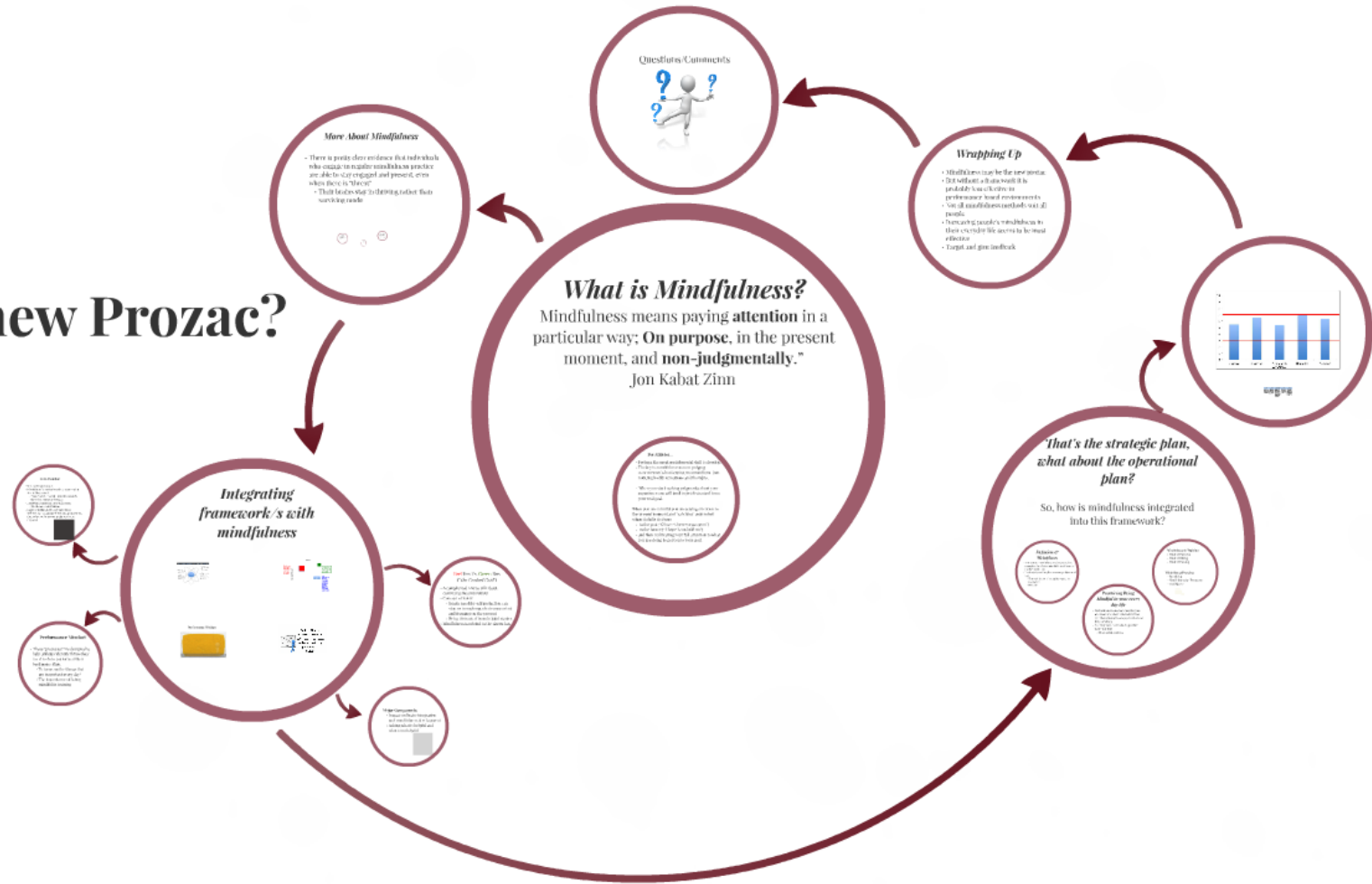


Mindfulness: The new Prozac?

Rod Corban (PhD)
rod.corban@gmail.com





What is Mindfulness?

Mindfulness means paying **attention** in a particular way; **On purpose**, in the present moment, and **non-judgmentally.**”

Jon Kabat Zinn

- Not all people
- Increase their effectiveness
- Target

What is Mindfulness?

Mindfulness means paying **attention** in a particular way; **On purpose**, in the present moment, and **non-judgmentally.**”

Jon Kabat Zinn

For Athletes...

- Perhaps the most useful mental skill to develop.
- The key to mindfulness is non-judging awareness of what is going on around you, just noticing bodily sensations and thoughts.
- When you start making judgments about your experience you will tend to get distracted from your real goal.

When you are mindful you are paying attention to the present moment and “catching” your mind when it shifts its focus

- to the past (“Oh s@#t here we go again”)
- to the future (“I hope I can hold on”)
- and then redirecting your full attention to what you are doing to get you to your goal.

Red Box Vs. Green Box ("The Control Grid")

- A complicated way to talk about *controlling the controllables*
- Concept of Safety
 - Inmate need for self protection can stop us from doing what is important and focusing on the present.
 - Being distracted by unhelpful stories

For Athletes...

- Perhaps the most useful mental skill to develop.
- The key to mindfulness is non-judging awareness of what is going on around you, just noticing bodily sensations and thoughts.

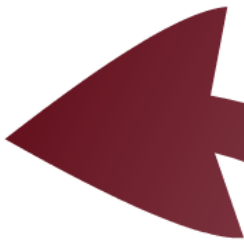
- When you start making judgments about your experience you will tend to get distracted from your real goal.

When you are mindful you are paying attention to the present moment and “catching” your mind when it shifts its focus

- to the past (“Oh s@#t here we go again”)
- to the future (“ I hope I can hold on”)
- and then redirecting your full attention to what you are doing to get you to your goal.

More About Mindfulness

- There is pretty clear evidence that individuals who engage in regular mindfulness practice are able to stay engaged and present, even when there is “threat”
 - Their brains stay in thriving rather than surviving mode



Mindfulness Misconceptions

- It requires meditation
- It is a relaxation technique
- It is a stress reduction technique
- It is a stand-alone "therapy"



Muddy/Muck Mindfulness

- Mindfulness is more than just a technique
- It is an outlook on life
- Western (commercial use) has just gone straight to the technique

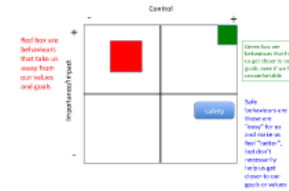
[http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio/
player/bo4xmqqd](http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio/player/bo4xmqqd)



Mindfulness as part of an overall framework

- Effective use of mindfulness is typically associated within a broader framework
 - ACT
 - Dialectical Behaviour Therapy
 - Compassion Focused Therapy

Integrating framework/s with mindfulness



Performance Mindset

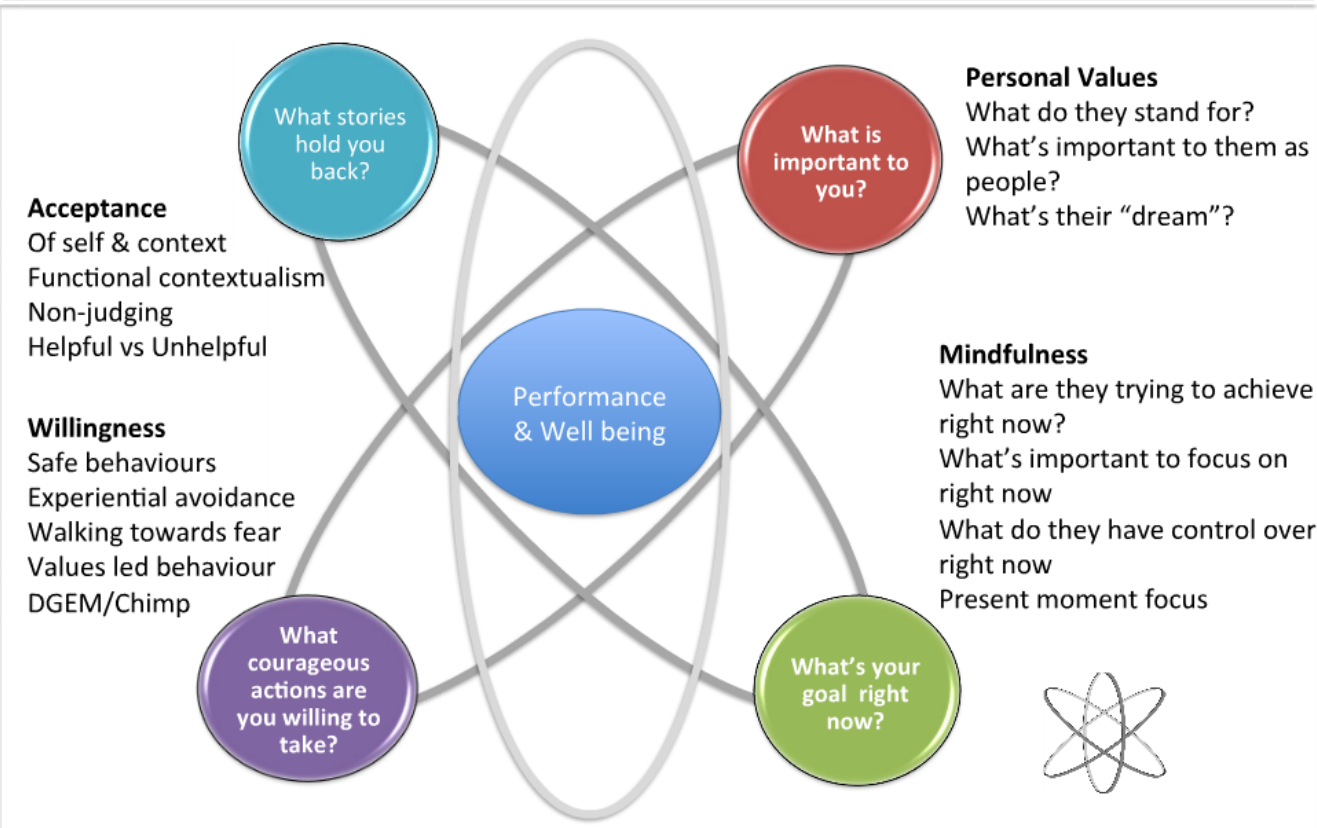


Rod's philosophy around barriers to optimal performance and how to develop psychological flexibility

Major Components

- Impact on brain integration and mindfulness development
- Asking what is helpful and

Atomic structure of performance, psychological growth & well being



Atom Metaphor

- Very ACT based model
- Mindfulness is used primarily as a concept to stay in the present
 - People are distracted (from their goal) by thoughts/stories and images
- Acceptance reinforces non-judgement
 - functional contextualism
- Courage (a take on the ACT concept of Willingness) is about a willingness to experience discomfort in the service of doing what is important



Performance Mindset



Performance Mindset

- These "processes" are designed to help athletes identify things they need to do to perform at their best more often.
 - To focus on the things that are important every day*
 - The importance of being mindful in training

Rod's philosophy
around barriers to
optimal performance
and how to develop
psychological
flexibility

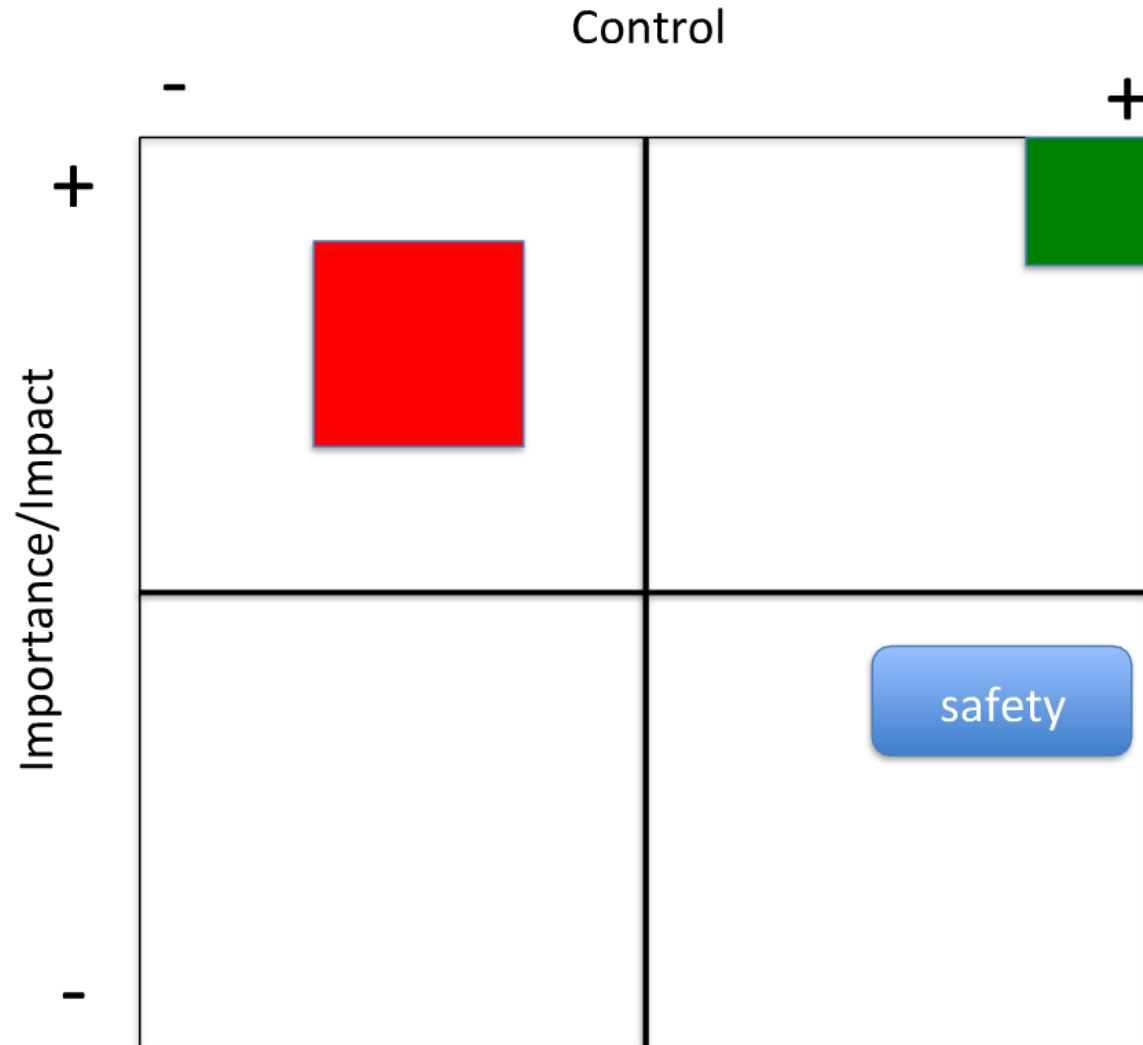


Major Components

- Impact on brain integration and mindfulness development
- Asking what is helpful and what is unhelpful



Red box are behaviours that take us away from our values and goals



Green box are behaviours that help us get closer to our goals, even if we feel uncomfortable

Safe behaviours are those that are “easy” for us and make us feel “better”, but don’t necessarily help us get closer to our goals or values



Red Box Vs. Green Box (*"The Control Grid"*)

- A complicated way to talk about *controlling the controllables*
- Concept of Safety
 - Innate need for self protection can stop us from doing what is important and focusing on the present
 - Being distracted by unhelpful stories
- Mindfulness is related to the Green box

That's the strategic plan, what about the operational plan?

So, how is mindfulness integrated
into this framework?

Defusion & Metaphors

- Defusion is a mindfulness technique and an example of how being mindful doesn't have to involve meditation.
- Looking at your thoughts in a non-judgemental way
 - Through the use of metaphors as seen previously
 - Humour



Practicing Being Mindful in your every day life

- I ask athletes to notice when they are on automatic pilot in their daily lives and then attempt to engage in whatever they are doing
- Use very mundane tasks to practice being mindful
 - The marble exercise



Mindfulness in Training

- Mindful Running
- Mindful Biking
- Mindful Rowing



Mindfulness Exercises

- Breathing
- Mindfulness for Emotions
- HeadSpace



Defusion & Metaphors

- Defusion is a mindfulness technique and an example of how being mindful doesn't have to involve meditation.
- Looking at your thoughts in a non-judgemental way
 - Through the use of metaphors as seen previously
 - Humour



Practicing Being Mindful in your every day life

- I ask athletes to notice when they are on automatic pilot in their daily lives and then attempt to engage in whatever they are doing
- Use very mundane tasks to practice being mindful
 - The marble exercise



Mindfulness in Training

- Mindful Running
- Mindful Biking
- Mindful Rowing



Mindfulness Exercises

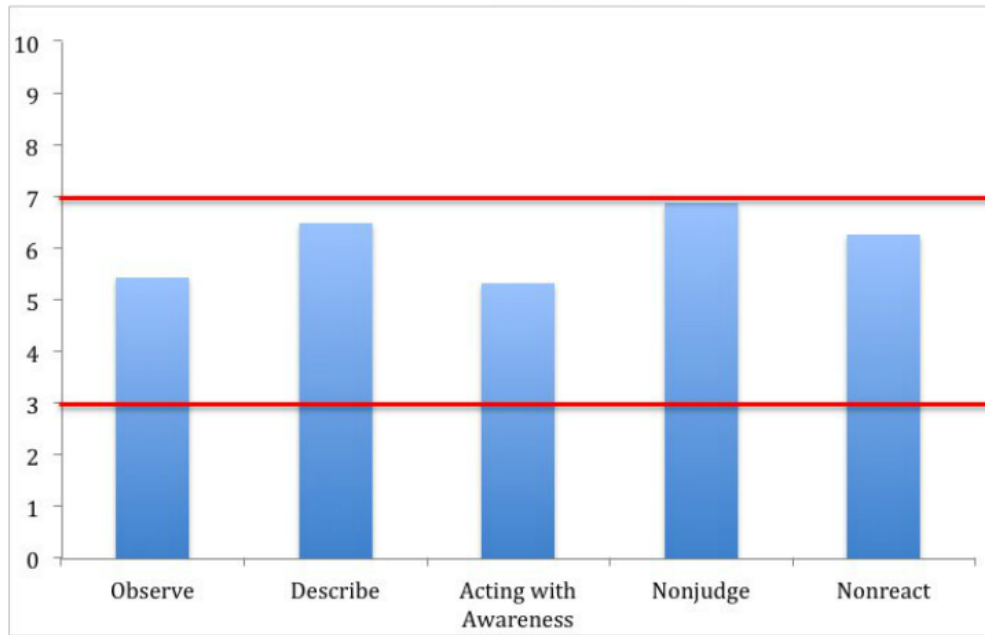
- Breathing
- Mindfulness for Emotions
- HeadSpace



**SMILING MIND
SPORT PROGRAM**

**JUST AS A MUSCLE CAN
BE STRENGTHENED
THROUGH EXERCISE,
MINDFULNESS IS
AN ABILITY THAT
DEVELOPS THROUGH
PRACTICE.**





Item	Mean	SD	Item	Mean	SD
1. I am aware of my thoughts and feelings.	4.5	1.2	11. I am aware of my thoughts and feelings.	4.5	1.2
2. I am aware of my thoughts and feelings.	4.5	1.2	12. I am aware of my thoughts and feelings.	4.5	1.2
3. I am aware of my thoughts and feelings.	4.5	1.2	13. I am aware of my thoughts and feelings.	4.5	1.2
4. I am aware of my thoughts and feelings.	4.5	1.2	14. I am aware of my thoughts and feelings.	4.5	1.2
5. I am aware of my thoughts and feelings.	4.5	1.2	15. I am aware of my thoughts and feelings.	4.5	1.2
6. I am aware of my thoughts and feelings.	4.5	1.2	16. I am aware of my thoughts and feelings.	4.5	1.2
7. I am aware of my thoughts and feelings.	4.5	1.2	17. I am aware of my thoughts and feelings.	4.5	1.2
8. I am aware of my thoughts and feelings.	4.5	1.2	18. I am aware of my thoughts and feelings.	4.5	1.2
9. I am aware of my thoughts and feelings.	4.5	1.2	19. I am aware of my thoughts and feelings.	4.5	1.2
10. I am aware of my thoughts and feelings.	4.5	1.2	20. I am aware of my thoughts and feelings.	4.5	1.2

Nonreact	Describe	Acting with Awareness	Observe	Non Judge
<p>Nonreactivity to inner experiences is a measure of how good you are at being aware of your feelings without having to react to them. In some ways it is akin to the green box. It is your ability to step back from your emotions without getting taken over by them</p>	<p>Measures your ability to describe or label words. Perhaps not that important within a sport setting. In fact could represent someone who over analyses/thinks too much. On the other hand in terms of mindfulness, it can be quite useful to identify what and how you are feeling</p>	<p>This scale could be simply called your ability to concentrate and engage in what you are doing - being present in the moment. This is arguable the most important aspect of mindfulness for an athlete. When I give you exercises in your everyday life that are about taking your time and not rushing through things is aimed at developing this skill. Rather than operating on automatic pilot and just going through the motions, this is about being purposeful and focused on the task</p>	<p>This scale measures your ability to notice or attend to sensations, thoughts or feelings. Noticing your environment such as the feel of the wind on your face, the feel of the water on your skin in the shower etc. How attuned you are to your environment.</p>	<p>This measures your ability to cut yourself some slack in terms of judging your feelings/thoughts as good or bad. It is a measure of how much you struggle with your thoughts and feelings. I often talk about not seeing thoughts or feelings as good or bad, right or wrong, but rather just as thoughts and working out whether they are helpful or unhelpful, this measures your ability to do this.</p>



Wrapping Up

- Mindfulness may be the new prozac
- But without a framework it is probably less effective in performance based environments
- Not all mindfulness methods suit all people
- Increasing people's mindfulness in their everyday life seems to be most effective
- Target and give feedback

Questions/Comments



Mindfulness: The new Prozac?

Rod Corban (PhD)
rod.corban@gmail.com

