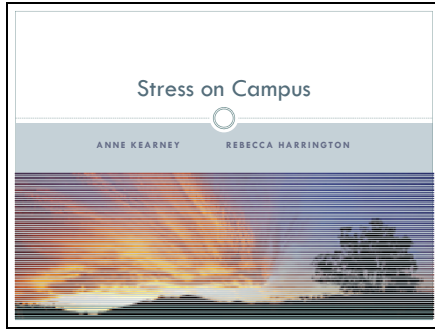


# Stress in College

Rebecca Harrington and Anne Kearney

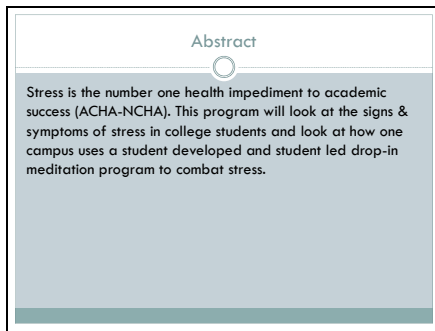
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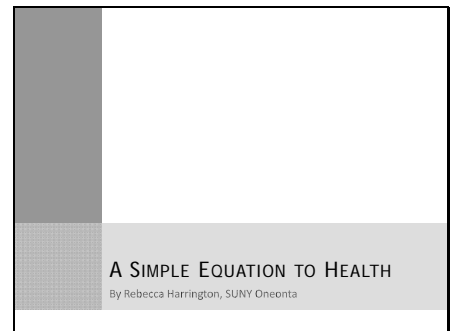
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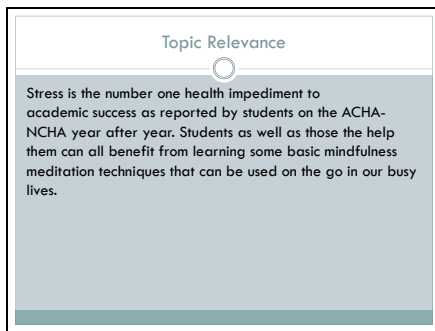
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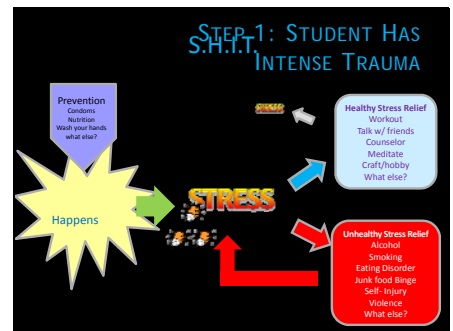
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Slide 3



Slide 6




# Stress in College

Rebecca Harrington and Anne Kearney

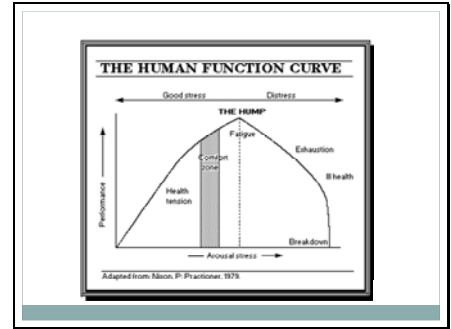
Slide 7

### Stress Facts

- Forty-three percent of all adults suffer adverse health effects from stress
- 75 to 90 percent of all physician office visits are for stress-related ailments and complaints
- Stress is linked to the six leading causes of death ~ heart disease, cancer, lung ailments, accidents, cirrhosis of the liver, and suicide
- Stress can be acute or chronic




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### Acute Stress:

- ~ Can be thrilling and exciting
- ~ Usually doesn't have enough time to do extensive damage
- ~ Normally, our bodies rest when the stressful event is over
- ~ Too much short-term stress can lead to physical or emotional symptoms



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### CRISIS

危機

The Upper Character Connotes DANGER

The Lower Character Represents OPPORTUNITY


The term "stress", as it is currently used was coined by Hans Selye in 1936, who defined it as "the non-specific response of the body to any demand for change".

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### Chronic Stress:

Chronic stress is grinding stress that wears people down day after day, year after year:

- ~ the stress of unemployment
- ~ dysfunctional families
- ~ chronic illness
- ~ abusive or violent environments
- ~ the relentless pressure to perform (educational programs, etc.)



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### Learning Objective #1

Describe the effects of stress on the college student population

- increasing mental health issues on college campuses (Anne)
- AUCCCD data (Anne)
- ACHA data (Rebecca)
- multi-tasking/busy lives of college students (Rebecca's intern, maybe in NSSI data?-Anne)

# Stress in College

Rebecca Harrington and Anne Kearney

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### During this Millennial Child Era:

- 160 % increase in asthma cases
- Significant rise in obesity and ADD
- Significant rise in young adults prescribed medication
- **\*\* They have been described as the "Trauma Generation" \*\***
- They have grown up with 9-11, V-Tech, unprecedented natural disasters

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### ACHA-NCHA Data

American College Health Association-National College Health Assessment II

- Q. 45: Within the last 12 months, have any of the of the following affected your academic performance
  - This did not happen to me
  - I have experienced this issue but my academics have not been affected
  - Received a lower grade on an exam or important project
  - Received a lower grade in the course
  - Received an incomplete or dropped the course
  - Significant disruption in thesis, dissertation, research or practicum work.

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### 2010 AUCCCD Director's Survey

- 11.4% of students seek counseling services
- 40% anxiety
- 38% depression
- 15% suicidal ideation
- 11% substance abuse/dependence
- 9% self injury
- 7% eating disorder

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### Top 10 Issues Experienced by SUNY Oneonta Students

1. Stress (77.5%)
2. Alcohol Use (62.2%)
3. Cold/Flu/Sore Throat (59.7%)
4. Anxiety (49.8%)
5. Extracurriculars (46.2%)
6. Internet Use/Games (45.3%)
7. Work (44.3%)
8. Roommate Difficulties (43.6%)
9. Relationship Difficulties (42.6%)
10. Concern for family/friend (40.6%)

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### Upsurge in #'s and Acuity

- 77% of AUCCCD directors reported that they believe the numbers of students with severe psychological problems has increased over the past year
- Many would describe responding to the demands on counseling centers today as a "daunting task"

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### Top 10 Issues Experienced by SUNY Oneonta Students Resulting in Academic Impacts


1. Stress (26.9%)
2. Sleep Difficulties (23.2%)
3. Anxiety (20.3%)
4. Cold/Flu/Sore Throat (19.1%)
5. Relationship Difficulties (12.7%)
6. Concern for family/friend (11.6%)
7. Work (11.0%)
8. Internet Use/Games (10.6%)
9. Roommate Difficulties (10.3%)
10. Extracurriculars (9.7%)

# Stress in College

Rebecca Harrington and Anne Kearney

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"Stress can be understood as a *perceived* disconnection from our Divine source."  
- Brian Luke Seaward, PhD



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### A Creative Response

- It is essential that colleges think outside the paradigm of traditional psychotherapy to meet these demands. Stress is a public health issue on college campuses.
- Creative programs like Oneonta's [dot.com](http://dot.com) that incorporate mindfulness practices are known to reduce the stress response and provide students with lifelong skills to respond to stress.

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### Learning Objective #2

- Define mindfulness and meditation (Rebecca)
- briefly cover research related to mindfulness & meditation (Anne)
- integration of neuroscience & meditation (anne/rebecca)
- participate in several brief exercises (anne-mindfulness/rebecca-meditation)

Slide 21

### A Word About Technology

Technology is re-wiring our brains.

- When we get buzzed/beeped we are positively reinforced (internal Neurotransmitters released).
- Set aside time without technology & screens.
  - Even if its just a few minutes.
- Multitasking-is not where it is at. It's an expected norm.
  - Your brain can only shift gears so many times a day.

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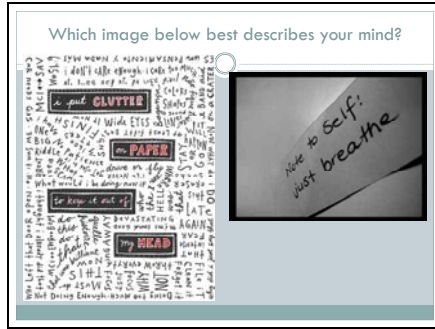
### So, What is Meditation

- A practice of reflection on internal rather than external stimuli
- Increased concentration & awareness
- Living in the present moment
- A tranquil state of mind
- Oldest recognized relaxation technique

# Stress in College

Rebecca Harrington and Anne Kearney

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### Principles for Meditation

- Relax - keep a light and open attitude
- Play - keep a sense of humor
- Clear first - take a minute to clear your mind at the beginning, write down any distractions
- Set intention - set an intention before each practice, for example to learn well or be open
- Welcome distractions — there are always distractions! Welcome them and let them flow by.
- Experiment - some methods work for you, others don't Try and see, life a food buffet
- Patience - give it time. Mental habits like worrying take years to learn, and time to unlearn

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### Why Meditate?

Purposes of meditation vary and include:

- Cultivating a relaxed mind and body
- Focusing the mind
- Enhancing creativity and intuition
- Increasing compassion and gratefulness
- Calming intense emotions
- Achieving higher states of consciousness

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### Altered State of Consciousness

- Different brain waves during meditation vs non-meditative awake states

Brain waves during meditation vs non-meditative awake states

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### Debunking myths

- Meditation is not a religion, although many religions have adopted meditative practices.
- You have to sit still, in an uncomfortable position for hours on end. In reality, you can easily incorporate meditative practices into your daily routine as it is right now.

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### Meditation Research

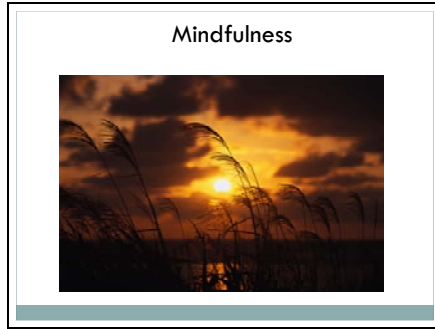
**Mindfulness Meditation Training Changes Brain Structure in Eight Weeks**  
ScienceDaily (Jan. 21, 2011) — Participating in an 8-week mindfulness meditation program appears to make measurable changes in brain regions associated with memory, sense of self, empathy and stress. In a study that will appear in the January 30 issue of *Psychiatry Research: Neuroimaging*, a team led by Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) researchers report the results of their study, the first to document meditation-produced changes over time in the brain's grey matter.

**Meditation May Help the Brain 'Turn Down the Volume' On Distractions**  
ScienceDaily (Apr. 21, 2011) — The positive effects of mindfulness meditation on pain and working memory may result from an improved ability to regulate a crucial brain wave called the alpha rhythm. This rhythm is thought to "turn down the volume" on distracting information, which suggests that a key value of meditation may be helping the brain deal with an often-overstimulating world.

# Stress in College

Rebecca Harrington and Anne Kearney

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### Different Types of Meditation (paths)

- Movement Meditation: yoga, tai chi, walking
- Mind-focused: mindfulness, affirmations
- Body-focused: breathing, body scan, progressive muscle relaxation
- Visualizations: guided imagery, visual stimuli
- Others: mantra, object-centered, devotion, loving-kindness, chanting/singing/drumming

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### Detachment - in Eastern culture

~ not indifference, but a letting go of the attachment to emotions that are anchored in fear or anger

~ a letting go of the negativity generated by the ego

A silhouette of a person sitting in a meditative pose, viewed through horizontal blinds, creating a striped effect over the figure.

Slide 35

### Breathing Exercises

Used to center yourself, bring your focus back to you.

- **Deep breathing**
  - Your stomach expands while you breathe in
  - Several types:
    - Count while breathing in and out-to 108
    - 1:2 breathing, exhale for double the time of your inhale-calms anxiety.
    - Mantra-choose words that have meaning to you (peace/love)
- **PRACTICE to make this a habit.**
  - At red lights
  - While waiting in line
  - Before the test gets passed back to you.

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### Mindfulness

Two primary elements:

1. Attention to the present moment
2. Quality of attentive state:
  - Curiosity, openness, acceptance

Why mindfulness?

- Welcoming discomfort as a guest
- Quality of life

A photograph of a person with dark hair sitting in a meditative pose in a room with several lit candles, creating a warm, ambient light.

Slide 36

### Progressive Muscle Relaxation

The tensing & releasing of various muscle groups within the body.

A complex, symmetrical fractal or mandala pattern in shades of purple and blue, with intricate geometric and organic shapes.

# Stress in College

Rebecca Harrington and Anne Kearney

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Explain three steps a campus could use to develop a drop-in meditation program on campus. (Rebecca)

- costs and resources necessary
- development process
- on-going support

(maybe Anne brings up service learning class)

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Visual Meditation

Some people need something to look at while they relax.

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SUNY Oneonta Program: dot.calm

Meditation and Stress Relief  
For the Over-Worked and Super Busy

Slide 39

Guided Imagery

The mind is very powerful.

Exercise #1: Your favorite vacation place/quiet place.  
What do you see, smell, touch, taste, feel-incorporate all of your senses.

Exercise #2: The Waterfall.  
Seeking your inner wisdom.

Guided Imagery

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Background

The Dot.Calm meditation program began in January of 2010 when Health Education intern Leah Dama began working with SUNY Oneonta Health Educator Rebecca Harrington. The program was conceived as a way to address the fact that nationwide college students report stress as their number one health impediment to academic success.

The Dot.Calm program is designed to be a flexible, drop-in meditation service for students, whether or not they have prior experience with meditation. The benefit of this style of programming is that students can utilize the program how and when they need it.

Each Dot.Calm session consists of a short breathing exercise and a guided imagery. Custom made herbal teas are also available at these sessions. The audio tracks used at the sessions are also available to students 24/7 via the Dot.Calm resource page on the Office of Health Educations website.

## Stress in College

Rebecca Harrington and Anne Kearney

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### Resources

- An intern that knew how to make recordings-
  - Garageband software used, audacity is a free software (<http://audacity.sourceforge.net>)
- Scripts –about \$40 was spent on books, free scripts were found on the web
- Music-approx \$200 spent on royalty free music, our campus also subscribes to some (our TV studio folks have it, yours might too).
- Stress cards-assembled ourselves and saved a lot of money!!  
[www.plasticcardmonster.com](http://www.plasticcardmonster.com) ( 1000 cards for \$250) stress sheet material [www.stressmarket.com](http://www.stressmarket.com) (1000 squares for \$50) crazy glue

Slide 46

### Rolling it Out

- Initially lunchtime & 4pm drop in sessions to see student response
- Began in upperclassman halls
- The "BIG" plan 2011-2012
  - Recruiting & training new leaders
  - Web support

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### The Fun Stuff

- Lights, sounds, smells
- Search for Snoezelen resources
  - [www.flaghouse.com](http://www.flaghouse.com)
  - [www.ssw.com](http://www.ssw.com)

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### Human Resources

- Interns
- Peer educators
- Residence life
- Counseling center staff