

Lightly Peaceful: Facilitating College Transition Through Instagram Delivered Mindfulness Experiences

[Home](#) > [Graduate School of Arts and Social Sciences](#) > [Mindfulness Studies Theses](#) > 40

[< Previous](#) [Next >](#)

MINDFULNESS STUDIES THESES

Lightly Peaceful: Facilitating College Transition Through Instagram Delivered Mindfulness Experiences

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Abstract

This creative project is an investigation into the feasibility and efficacy of offering mindfulness experiences to college freshmen through Instagram, a popular social media platform. Research indicates that many college freshmen struggle with issues such as depression, social isolation, anxiety, substance abuse, poor academic performance, overeating, etc., all of which may increase the likelihood of dropping out of college or the establishment of long-term dysfunctional coping patterns. Mindfulness has been noted to mitigate many of the difficulties associated with making the transition from high school to college; however, very few studies investigate the effects of offering mindfulness experiences through social media applications. The research that is available in this area is limited in scope and focus, and frequently complicated by design issues. Thus, with a dearth of research available, it seems that there is a genuine need to create a mindfulness resource for college students that is delivered through the use of social media in order to investigate the efficacy of this delivery mechanism. Since over ninety percent of college students engage with social media regularly, the hope is that offering mindfulness through Instagram will be both appealing and engaging for students, thus enhancing participation. The goal is to create an enjoyable forum where students can learn about mindfulness and engage directly with mindfulness practices or experiences in order to enhance coping skills during this challenging period. Ultimately, the prediction is that regularly practicing mindfulness will mitigate the severity of the adaptive struggles that college students experience, perhaps resulting in higher levels of subjective happiness, improved decision-making skills, lowered incidences of substance abuse, decreased loneliness or isolation, better grades, and higher retention rates.

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Mindfulness meditation is bridging the gap between science and spirituality. Mindfulness means “the awareness that emerges through paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally to the unfolding of experiences moment by moment.” (Joh Kabat-Zinn). It is an active process involving staying aware of the external environment and the internal bodily sensations in the present moment without judgment, positive or negative. This can lead to going through the motions of living without conscious awareness. For example, if you ask them what they ate for lunch they may not be able to tell you. This is not simply because of poor memory, but more likely because they were not paying attention at the time. Peaceful Mind Peaceful Life is dedicated to furthering inner peace and wellness by educating and inspiring individuals and creating community through mindfulness practices, online resources, and programs. [Learn More About Our Mission.](#) Wellness Series at Boca Raton Regional Hospital. This special series designed to empower women to live life fully is under the direction of Barb Schmidt, noted meditation teacher and mindfulness activist. It will feature Barb and guest speakers discussing a range of topics that can enhance inner peace, happiness and well-being. [Read More.](#) Barb Schmidt Fellowship. College Resource Center. [Meditation & Mindfulness for College Students.](#) [Financial Aid Guide.](#) [Meditation & Mindfulness on Campus A Student Guide to Going Zen.](#) Kenya McCullum is a freelance writer with extensive experience covering topics such as education, the workplace, health, and legal issues. She has an M.A. in Communication and when she worked as a teaching assistant in graduate school, she developed a passion for helping students succeed. Mindfulness is a remedy for these distractions that promotes living in the present and focusing on what’s going on right now. In addition to increasing awareness, mindfulness helps people avoid being overwhelmed and overly reactive to what they’re experiencing from one moment to the next. This allows them to submerge themselves into the college experience. Students living on campus can enjoy a taste of independence and the many advantages that are associated with campus life. This includes being closer to classes and on-campus activities. Studying, stress, or the excitement of social activities and events may cause students to lose sleep. It is important that freshmen make the effort to get a full night’s rest and to eat healthy meals for both their academic and physical health. [Proper Diet, Rest and Exercise Enhance College Experience: An article from Nutrition ATC](#) about eating properly and getting enough rest. The article discusses how doing both and exercising can improve the college experience and help students maintain a healthy weight.