

The Wheel of Awareness: Managing ADHD Through Mindfulness:

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Objectives

- Understand how the ADHD brain works
- Understand how Mindfulness aids brain functioning through integration
- Practice strengthening the "muscle" of awareness by experiencing a portion of the "Wheel of Awareness"

First: Let's Clear our Minds

- Feel your feet on the floor
- Close your eyes or do a half gaze at a blank spot on the wall or floor
- Take 2-3 slow deep breaths
- Remind yourself that you are here
- Do a brief sweep of your body focusing on one area at a time from feet to head
- Take 2 more deep breaths and gently open your eyes come back to our conversation

What did you notice?

How the Brain Works

- Brain processes internal and external information at 3 levels of the brain:
 - The brain stem, (the physical processes like heart rate and blood pressure)
 - The limbic system (The emotional brain)
 - The neo cortex (the thinking brain where the executive functions occur)
- Multiple brain structures and processes and levels should *work together* to detect, process and respond to stimuli

*Difficult for the ADHD brain which detects and accesses information in a less efficient, less organized way
...Hyperactivity; impulsivity and inconsistent attention*

The ADHD Brain

Challenges with Executive Functioning:

Management network of the brain that prioritizes, connects and *integrates* information.

Impacts the starting, stopping, shifting, sustaining and integrating other information (as well as emotional and behavioral regulation.)

(*The Whole Orchestra* -Thomas Brown, Ph.D)



So what is Mindfulness?

- A moment to moment awareness of our selves and what is around us without rejecting or grabbing onto what is occurring
- Seeing the present moment as it is occurring without any judgment

When do we experience It?

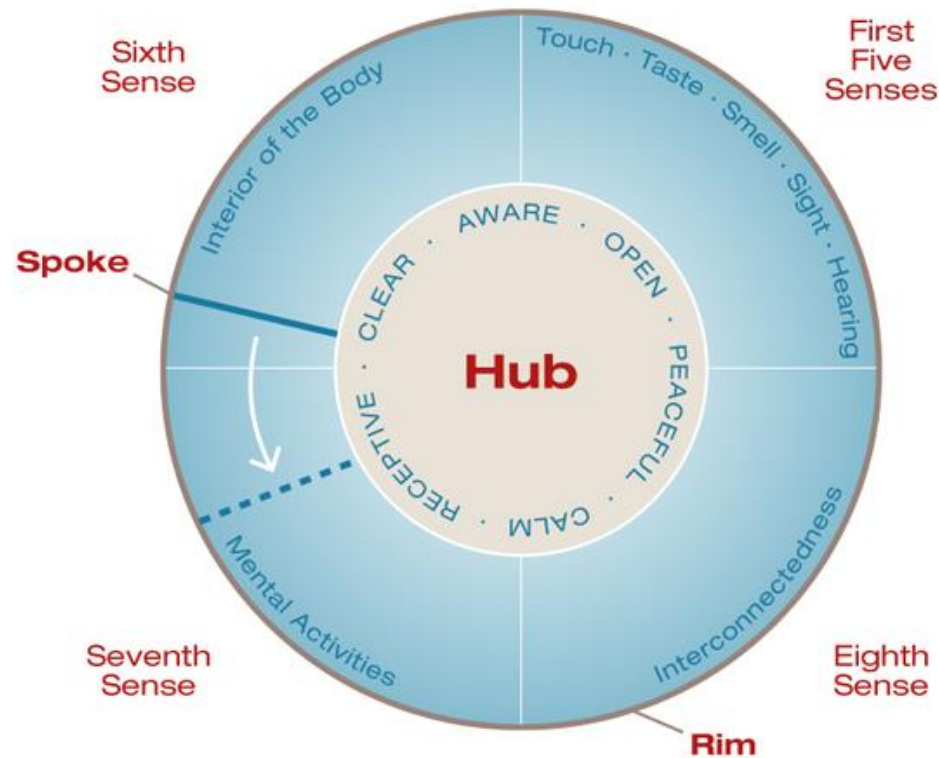
- When we are mindful we are present; aware of what is occurring within us and around us.
- What are some strategies or activities that you use already that help you be mindful?
- Mindfulness Meditation is simply a collection of formal practices in which we are intentionally focus and quiet the mind

Mindfulness Practice Improve ADHD Symptoms

- Self awareness in the moment
- Teaches us to pay attention
- Impulse control – we train the brain to pause
- Frustration tolerance
- Emotional regulation
- Improves Working Memory Capacity While reducing Mind Wandering*

➤ *Psychological Science Journal: July 12, 2012

One Practice: The Wheel of Awareness



How to use the Wheel Meditation

- Take a few deep breaths to get centered
- Close your eyes or do a half gaze at floor or wall
- Turn your attention to your 5 senses one by one
- Continue moving your attention segment by segment around the wheel.
- Takes about 12-24 minutes.

Let's Try It!

- Today we will just do the 5 senses portion of the wheel.
- Then Discuss or experience
- Q and A!

How it helps cont.

- This practice helps us to :
 - Practice focusing (deliberately directing attention) systematically to one source of information at a time
 - Monitor and modify our emotions behaviors
 - Be aware* of ourselves and our world
 - Feel connected to ourselves and others

**Being able to self observe is critical for mental health and for self regulation!*

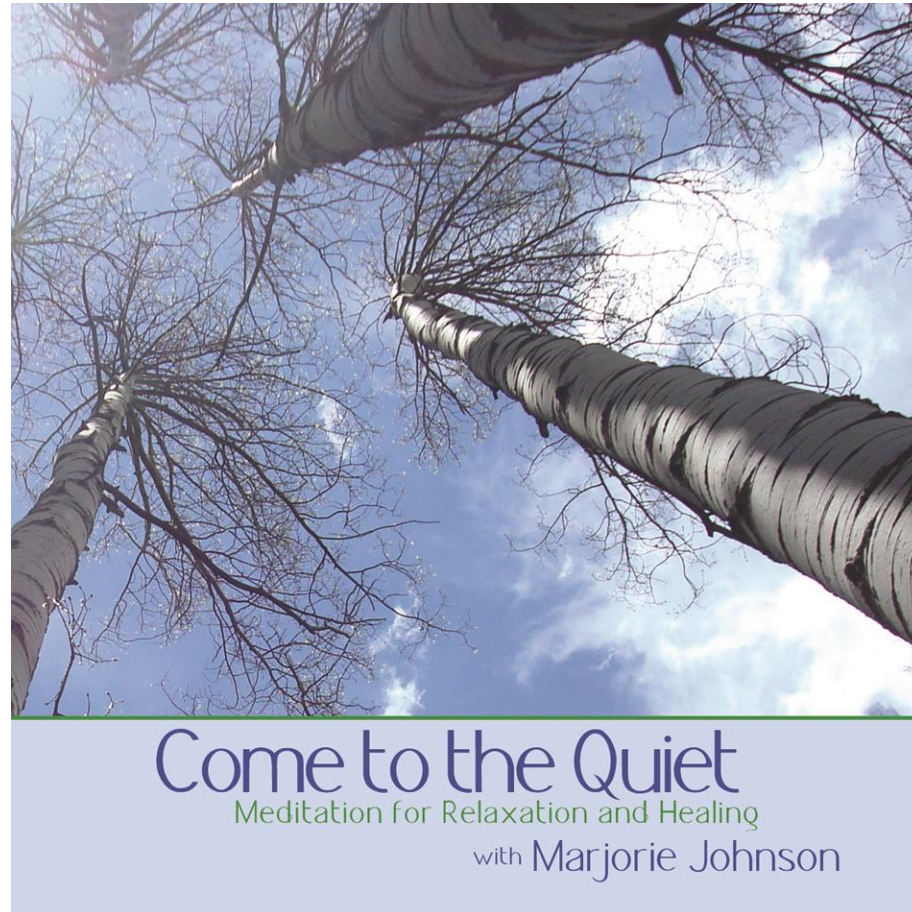
The Wheel of Awareness Is Attention Training

- By systematically exercising the brain's ability to focus on specific input we improve:
 - Integration among parts and processes in the brain
 - Connection to self and others
 - Impulse control: the ability to pause
 - Behavioral regulation: choose
 - Relaxation state

Continue Mindfulness Meditation

- Meditate daily, starting with just ten minutes.
- Mindfulness Meditation is easier to learn with guided prompts.
- Use the Wheel on Dan Siegel's website:
http://www.drdansiegel.com/resources/wheel_of_awareness/

Or order my CD on my websites





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