

You are welcome to use these slides for your own information, in your clinical work with patients, or in sharing insights with your clinical staff (e.g. staff meeting). However, you are not permitted to use these slides at any professional conference or give them to others who did not attend my presentation as I do not want anything taken out of context or have my slides circulating to those who did not hear my presentation.

People can listen to the presentation on the UCLA Gambling Studies YouTube channel:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DYYrZ6G7oW0&t=1457s>

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rory Reid". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Rory" and last name "Reid" clearly distinguishable.

Rory C. Reid, Ph.D., LCSW, ICGC  
Asst Professor of Psychiatry  
Research Psychologist  
UCLA Department of Psychiatry

# Mindfulness Applications for Problem Gambling

---

Dr. Rory C. Reid, Ph.D., LCSW, ICGC-II  
Asst Professor of Psychiatry, Research Psychologist  
Licensed Clinical Social Worker  
International Certified Gambling Counselor

---

Department of Psychiatry and Biobehavioral Sciences  
Resnick Neuropsychiatric Hospital  
University of California Los Angeles

Email: [roryreid@ucla.edu](mailto:roryreid@ucla.edu)



David Geffen  
School of Medicine



Health System

# What is Mindfulness?











- Mindfulness is a **philosophy** and a practice of cultivating increased awareness of our moment-to moment experience in a non-judgmental way.
- The **practice** of mindfulness, although based on many principles of Buddhism, was medicalized by Dr. Jon Kabat-Zin and has been applied to a variety of psychological and medical issues.



## Attention

1. Self-regulation of attention so that it is maintained on immediate experience, thereby allowing for increased recognition of mental events in the present moment.

## Attitude

2. Adopting a particular orientation toward one's experiences in the present moment, characterized by curiosity, openness, and acceptance.

Bishop, et al, 2004., *Clinical Psychology: Science and Practice*, 11(3), 230-241.



- Mindfulness is often cultivated through meditation practices.
- Meditation is a vehicle to cultivate a wide array of mindful moments that enhance our ability to **regulate attention** and **reorganize our experience** with the present moment in a way that often leads to **increased insight and awareness**.
- Strengthening by straining, stressing, and stretching muscles.
- Enhancing attention creates mental stress...it wouldn't be rare to find a lot of grunting or groaning during the process. Encourage patients to believe in themselves and search for “hidden tigers”



Mindfulness is often cultivated through meditation practices. Don't get confused. People often say mindfulness is meditation. This would be like saying taking a road trip as part of a vacation is synonymous with just traveling in a car. While a car is the vehicle through which one is able to visit various destinations that contribute to the overall vacation experience, we would be amiss to limit the description of a vacation to simply just riding in a car.

Anyone whose been on a road trip knows there are a 1000 small breath-taking moments where we experience majestic views. Similarly, meditation is a vehicle to cultivate a wide array of mindful moments, experiences, and increased levels of new awareness.

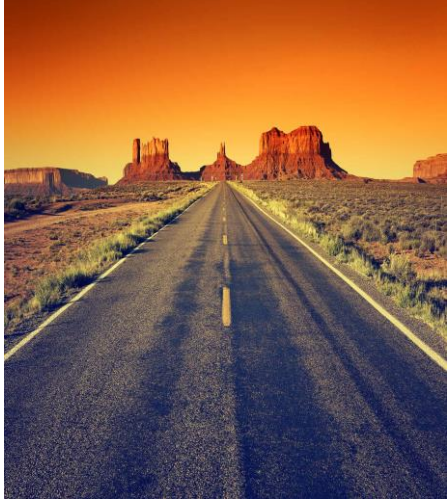


# Mindfulness is Often Cultivated through Meditation Practices





# Mindfulness is Had in the Experience of Being Present with the Present





# Generalizing Mindfulness Principles to Problem Gambling: Lessons from Karate Kid



MOVIECLIPS.COM

## Problem Gambling

## Mindfulness

Shame	→	Self-Compassion
Boredom	→	Awareness
Stress Proneness	→	Letting Go of Stories
Impulsivity	→	Noticing, Curiosity
Entitled, Ungrateful	→	Gratitude, Humility
Emotionally Reactive	→	Emotionally Present, Curiosity
Intolerance for Discomfort	→	Reorganize Relationship with Suffering
Critical, Judgmental	→	Open, Non-Judgmental
Rumination	→	Reflection
Anxiety/Depression	→	Letting Go, Being Present
Tug of War with Cravings	→	Non-Judgmental Acceptance
Special Status to Thoughts	→	Thought is Just a Thought, Letting Go
Thought Suppression, Compartmentalizing	→	Open, Integration
Disconnecting, Inattentive, Dissociative	→	Attentive, Present

# Mechanisms of Action: How Does Mindfulness Exert an Effect on Problem Gambling?

1. **Increases tolerance for uncomfortable feelings;** learning to be present, curious, open, and non-judgmental of emotions
2. **Stress coping** through letting go of the stories that give rise to stress and regulating breathing helps reduce stress
3. **Reorganizing relationships with cravings;** letting go of thoughts about cravings, being present in the body, curious about cravings, open, non-judgmental

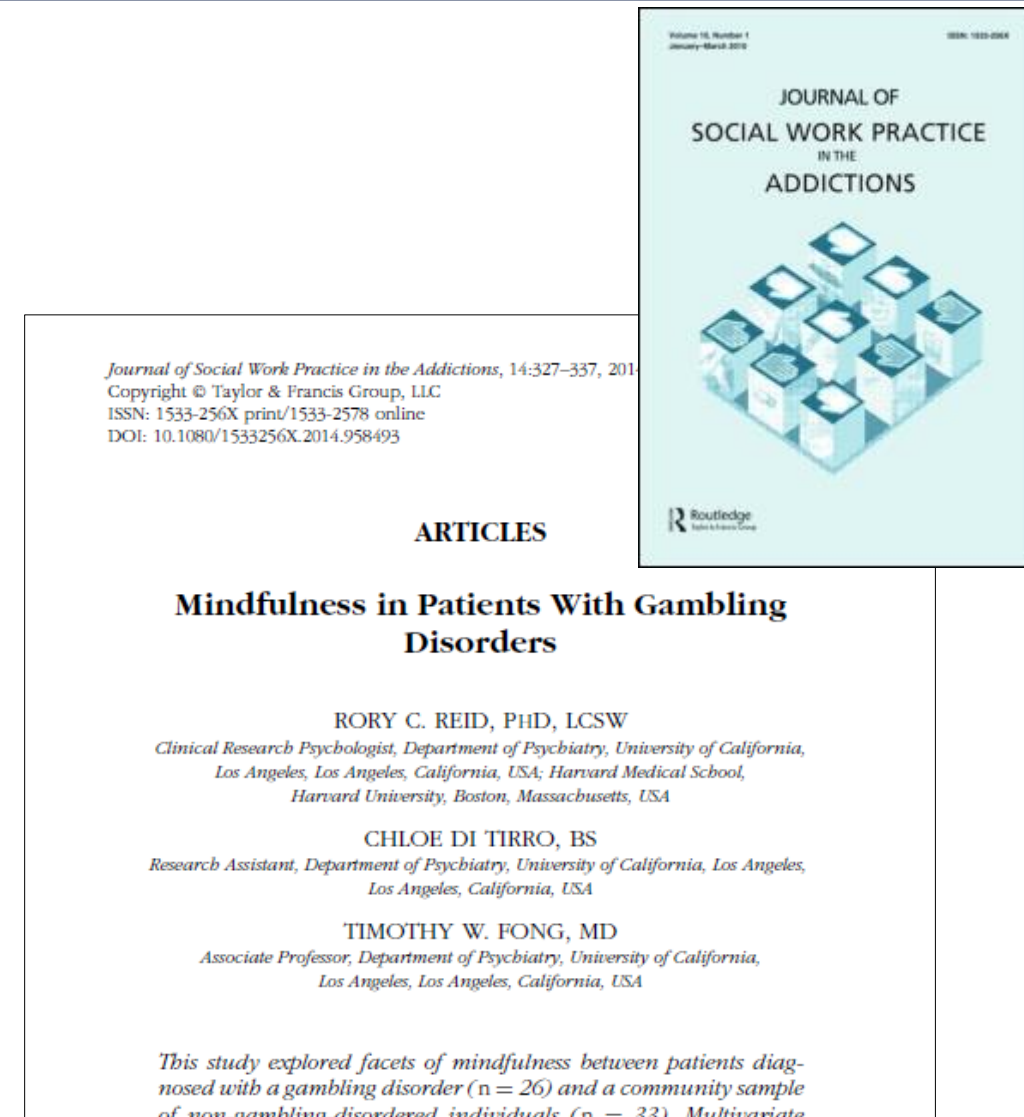


# Mechanisms of Action: How Does Mindfulness Exert an Effect on Problem Gambling?

4. **Enhances ability to regulate attention**, sustained focus on whatever is happening at the moment; letting go of distracting thoughts and refocusing attention again and again
5. **Reduces impulsivity** through helping people be present with the “**space**”, increasing levels of self-control, and reducing the effect of emotional dysregulation on impulsive responses

“Gambling-disordered patients exhibited significantly lower levels of mindfulness, emotional regulation, stress coping, and impulse control compared to the non-gambling-disordered group. Overall, gambling severity was negatively associated with higher levels of mindfulness and positively linked to indices of emotional dysregulation, stress proneness, and impulsivity. Correlations between mindfulness and emotional dysregulation and impulsivity were much stronger than those between mindfulness and the severity of disordered gambling behaviors.”

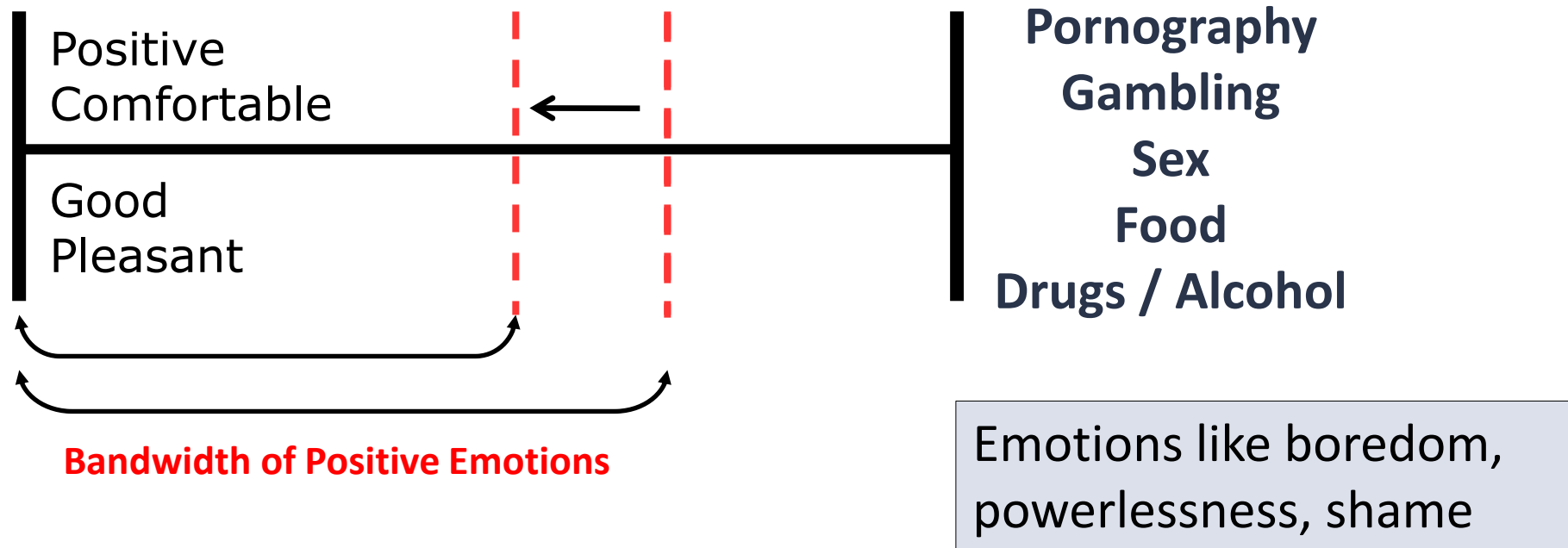
*“Gambling-disordered patients exhibited significantly lower levels of mindfulness, emotional regulation, stress coping, and impulse control compared to the non-gambling-disordered group. Overall, gambling severity was negatively associated with higher levels of mindfulness and positively linked to indices of emotional dysregulation, stress proneness, and impulsivity. Correlations between mindfulness and emotional dysregulation and impulsivity were much stronger than those between mindfulness and the severity of disordered gambling behaviors.”*





**Increases tolerance for uncomfortable feelings;** learning to be present, curious, open, and non-judgmental of emotions, self-awareness

# Increasing Tolerance for Unpleasant Experiences



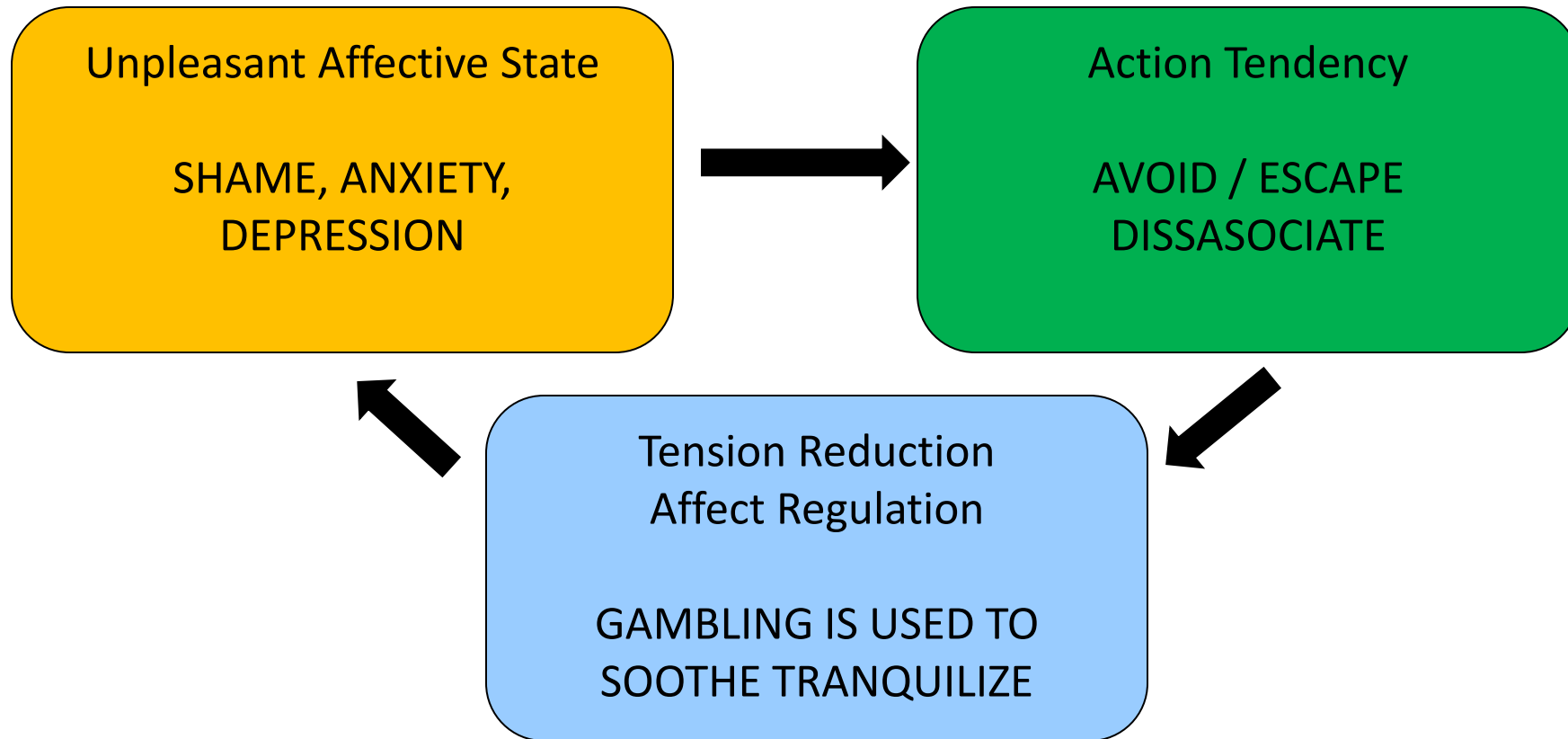
Emotionally avoidant people become numb and detached from both good and bad feelings. True, they've avoided pain and negative emotion, but they've also diminished or extinguished their ability to feel positive emotions.

# Contrast Helps Us Appreciate Differences through Comparisons

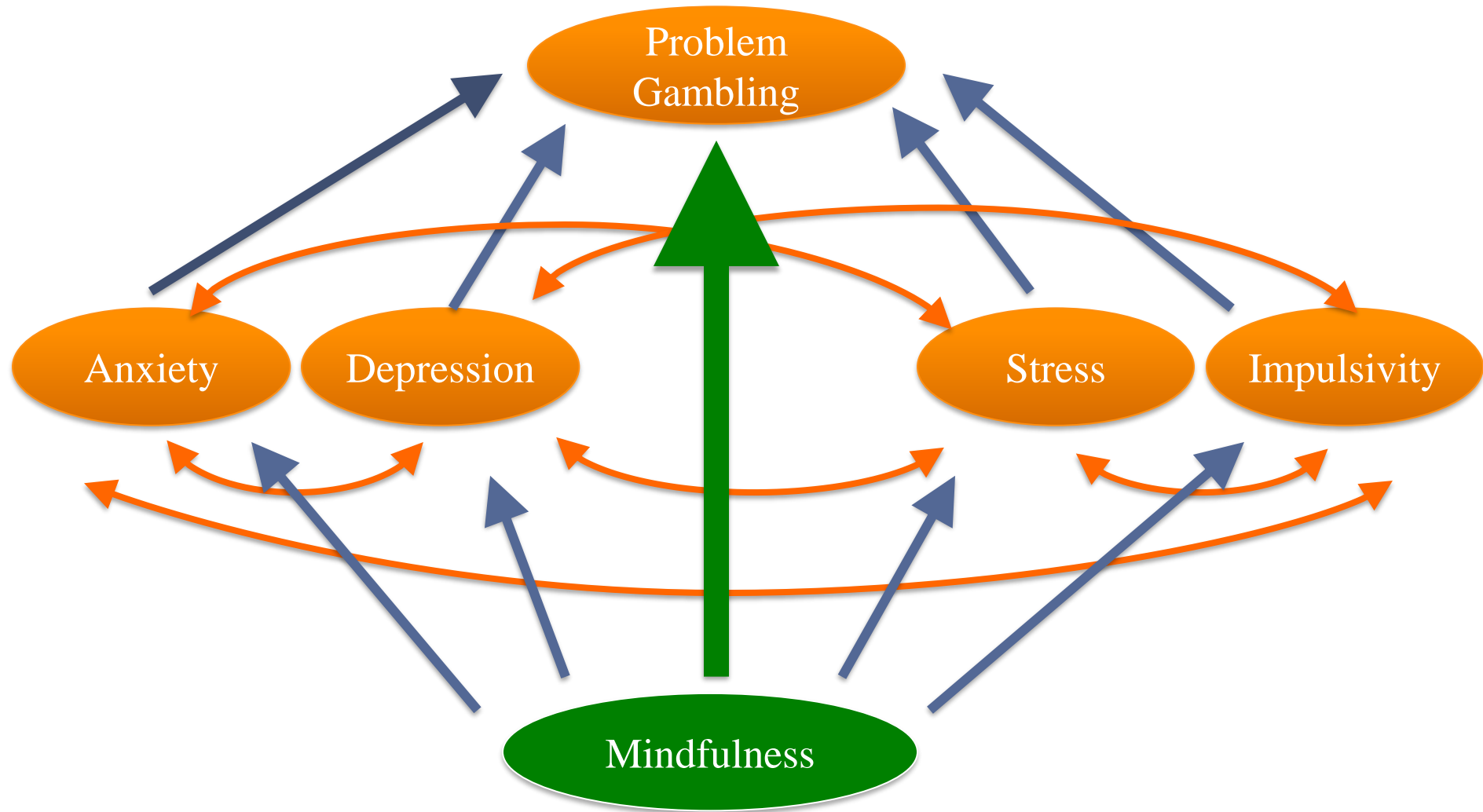




# Affect Regulation or Tension Reduction Model



# Affect Regulation, Mindfulness, and Problem Gambling



**Stress coping** through letting go of the stories that give rise to stress and regulating breathing helps reduce stress

*Persistent and recurring problematic gambling behavior **leading to** clinically significant impairment or distress...*

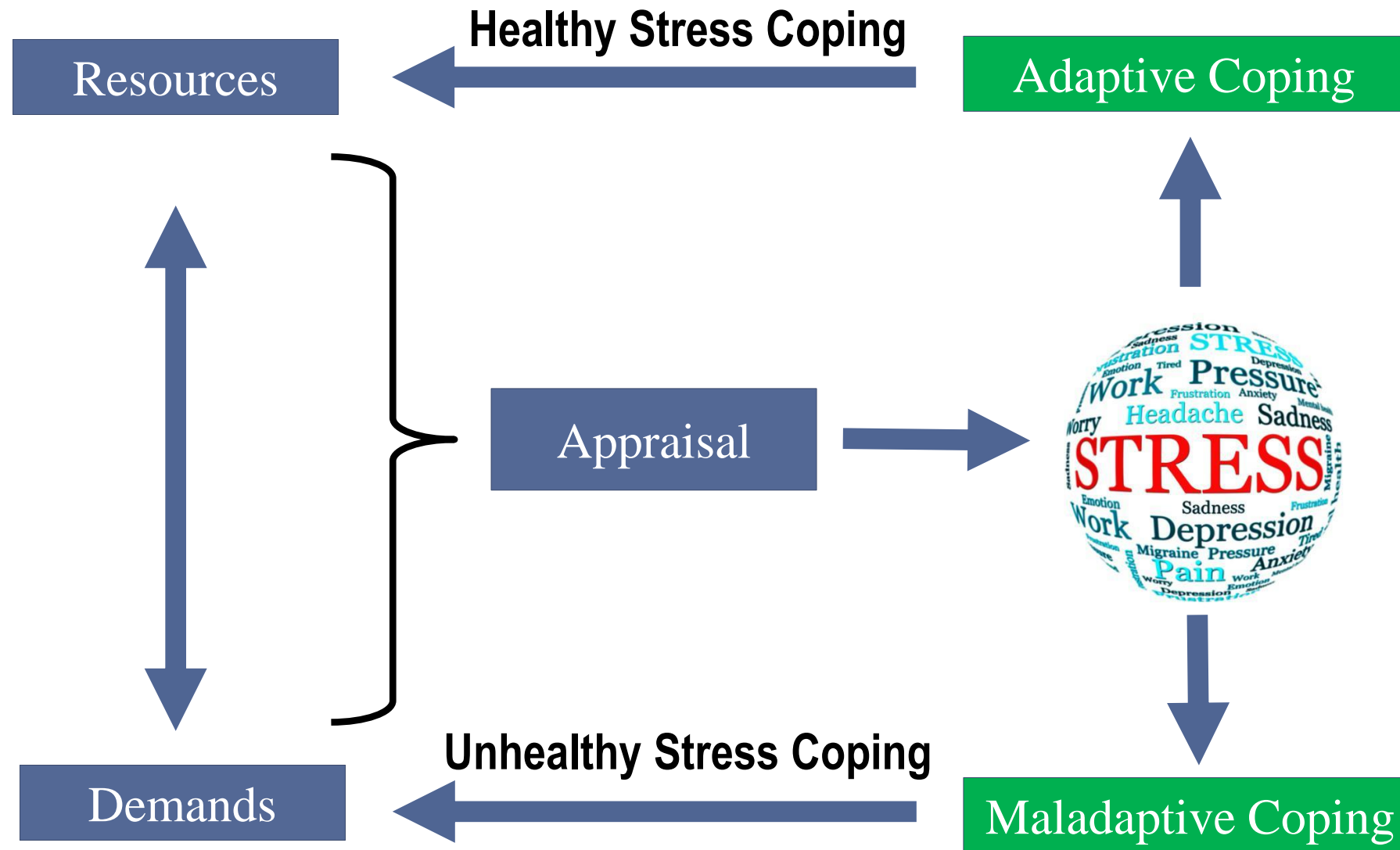


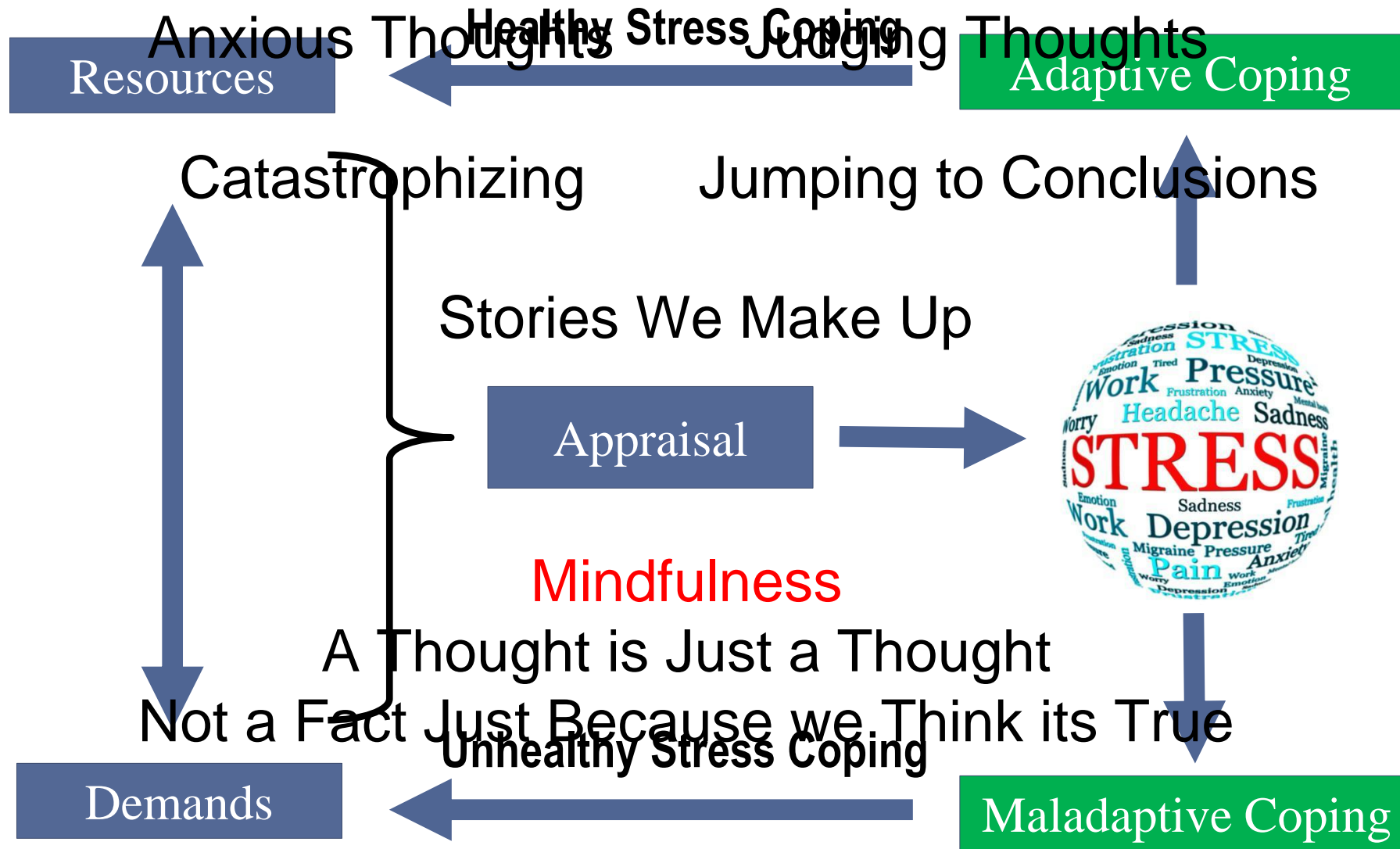
## **CIRCULARITY**

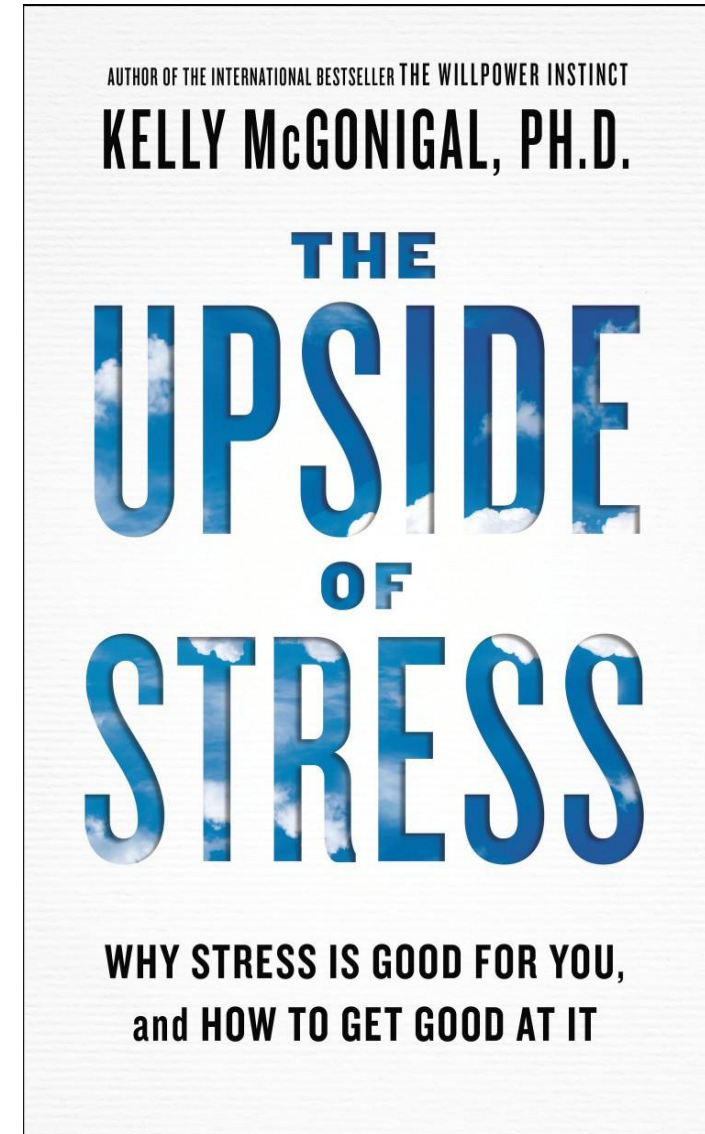
*Often gambles when  
feeling distressed*



# Mindfulness and Stress







**Reorganizing relationships with cravings;**  
letting go of thoughts about cravings, being  
present in the body, curious about cravings,  
open, non-judgmental





“...acceptance was found to reduce the extent to which participants experienced loss of control when exposed to food cues. This finding is not only practically relevant, but interesting from a theoretical point of view as well. After all, acceptance requires one *not* to control cravings, which paradoxically leads to higher levels of perceived control.”



Alberts, Mulken, Smeets, & Thewissen (2010). Coping with food cravings. Investigating the potential of a mindfulness-based intervention. *Appetite*, 55, 160-163.







# Reorganizing Relationships with Cravings

- Addictive cravings are powerful and can be intense
- Patients often get into a tug-of-war with cravings
- Patients often give special status to cravings
- Patients have an adversarial relationship with cravings



**Reorganize relationship with craving** to co-exist: Neither avoiding nor indulging, just being present in a non-judgmental, curious manner.

Mindfulness may recruit brain regions not implicated in executive deficits

# Numerous Studies Investigating Cravings and Mindfulness

**NIH Public Access**  
**Author Manuscript**  
*Psychol Addict Behav.* Author manuscript; available in PMC 2014 June 01.  
Published in final edited form as:  
*Psychol Addict Behav.* 2013 June ; 27(2): 366–379. doi:10.1037/a002

**Craving to Quit: psychological models and mechanisms of mindfulness training as treatment**  
Judson A. Brewer<sup>1,\*</sup>, Hani M. Elwafi<sup>1</sup>, and Jake H. Davis<sup>2</sup>  
<sup>1</sup>Department of Psychiatry, Yale University School of Medicine, N

**ELSEVIER**  
**Clinical Psychology Review**  
Volume 59, February 2018, Pages 101–117  
Review  
**Mindfulness and craving: effects and mechanisms**  
Katy Tanner

[Drug Alcohol Depend.](#) Author manuscript; available in PMC 2014 Jun 1.  
Published in final edited form as:  
[Drug Alcohol Depend.](#) 2013 Jun 1; 130(0): 222–229.  
Published online 2012 Dec 21. doi: [10.1016/j.drugalcdep.2012.11.015](#)  
PMCID: PMC3619004  
NIHMSID: NIHMS430593  
PMID: [23265088](#)

**Mindfulness training for smoking cessation: moderation of the relationship between craving and cigarette use**  
Hani M. Elwafi,<sup>1</sup> Katie Witkiewitz,<sup>2</sup> Sarah Mallik,<sup>1</sup> Thomas A. Thornhill, IV,<sup>1</sup> and Judson A. Brewer<sup>1,\*</sup>  
► Author information ► Copyright and License information [Disclaimer](#)

The publisher's final edited version of this article is available at [Drug Alcohol Depend](#)  
See other articles in PMC that [cite](#) the published article.

**Abstract** [Go to: ☑](#)

**Background**  
Smoking is the leading cause of preventable death in the US, while abstinence rates remain modest. Smoking has been shown to be perpetuated by operant conditioning, notably negative reinforcement (e.g., smoking to relieve negative affective states). Mindfulness training (MT) shows promise for smoking cessation, by potentially altering an individual's tendency to smoke in response to craving. The purpose of

0/10550887.2018.1442617

disorder (IGD) is characterized by signs and symptoms similar to disorders, and associated with psychosocial impairments. Research on craving-related cognitions and coping may be implicated in IGD; therefore, target these underlying mechanisms. Mindfulness-based treatment is

**Enhances ability to regulate attention,**  
sustained focus on whatever is happening at  
the moment; letting go of distracting thoughts  
and refocusing attention again and again

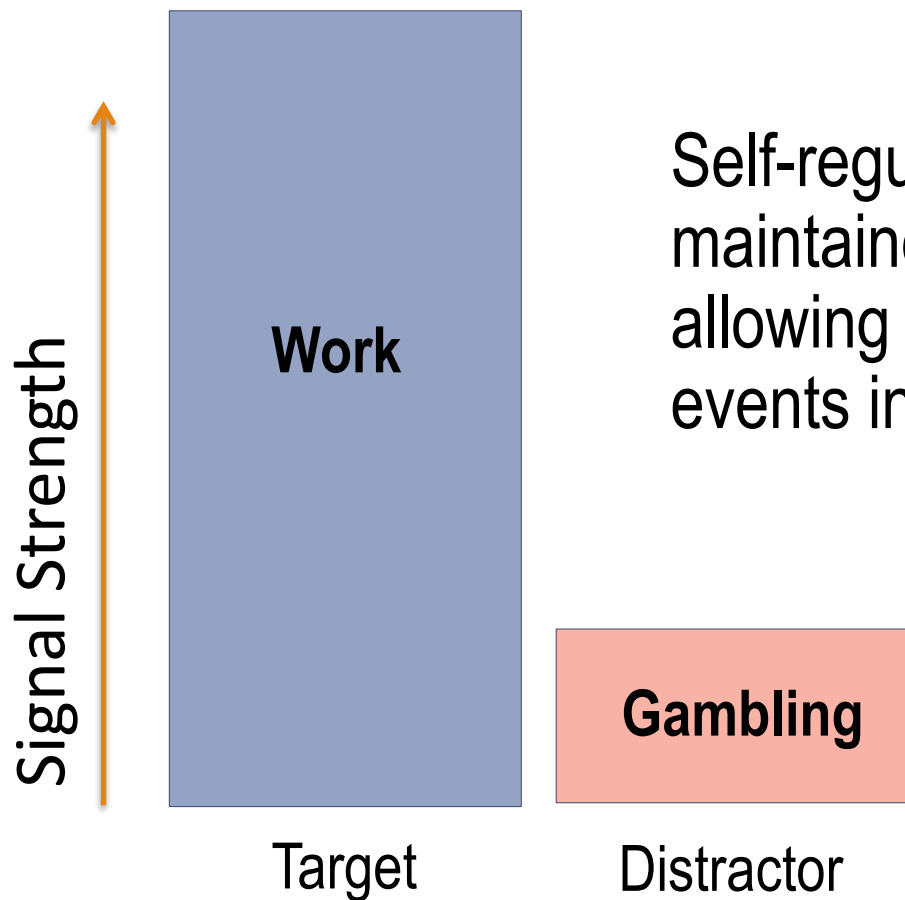


# Gambling Disorder as an Attentional Problem

Inability to **sustain attention and vigilance** on the target stimuli, and **inhibit focused attention** to the distractor stimuli.

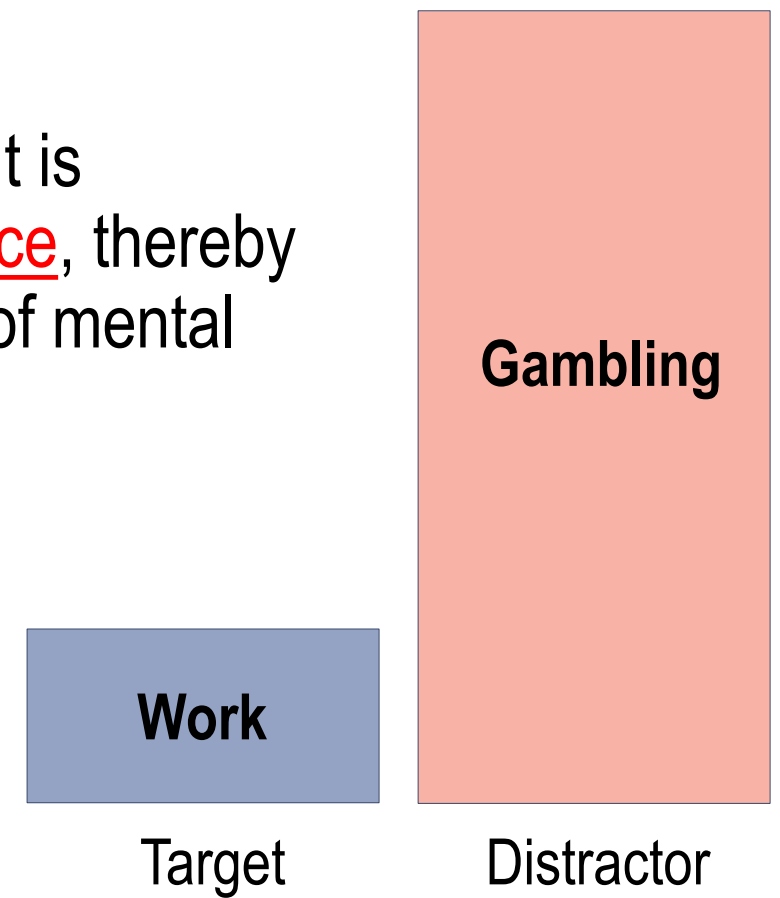


## Attentive Condition



Self-regulation of attention so that it is maintained on immediate experience, thereby allowing for increased recognition of mental events in the present moment.

## Inattentive Condition



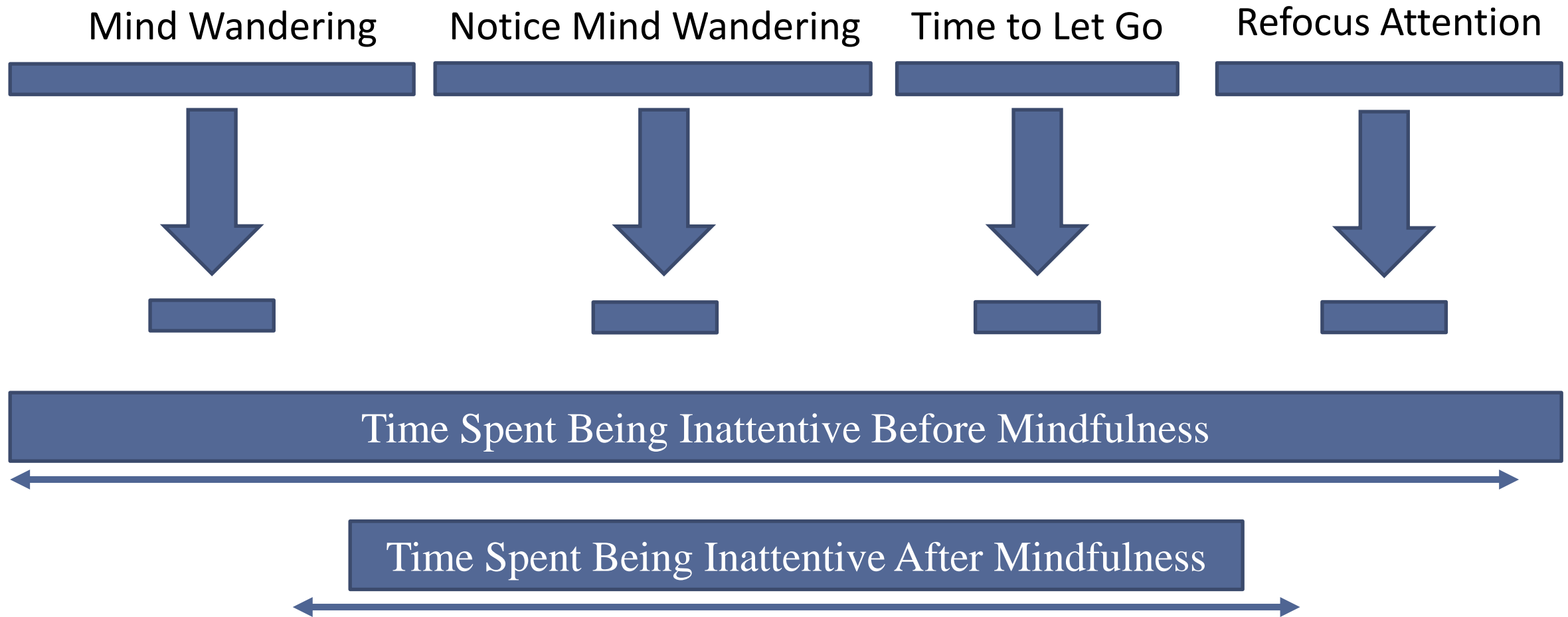
## SO WHAT?

What if mindfulness could help us **focus attention** on things that matter and disinhibit their attention from thoughts, feelings, or urges they may have to engage in problematic gambling behavior?



# Mindfulness and Attention: Self-Regulation of Attention

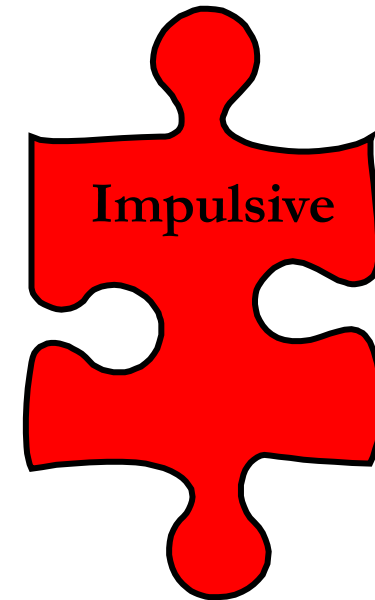
Decreases the amount of time spent mind wandering and increasing the speed in which we return to being present and focusing our attention



**Reduces impulsivity** through helping people be present with the **space**, **increasing levels of self-control**, and **reducing the effect of emotional dysregulation on impulsive responses**

Impulsivity: tendency to act rashly without forethought...

1. Negative Urgency
2. Positive Urgency
3. Sensation Seeking
4. Lack of Premeditation
5. Lack of Perseverance





**Negative Urgency:** Tendency to act rashly in response to negative affective experiences or impulsivity when experiencing unpleasant emotions (e.g. feeling bad, upset, rejected etc...). A few items on this scale capture difficulty resisting cravings and feelings.

**Positive Urgency:** Tendency to exhibit diminished control in the wake of positive emotions (e.g. excited, happy).

**Sensation Seeking:** Items on this subscale measure tendencies to engage in excitement-seeking, novelty, or thrilling experiences. Correlated with greater risk-taking.

**Lack of Premeditation:** Paucity of future directed thinking about consequences prior to making decisions leading to careless choices without purposefully thinking about the ramifications of decisions or weighing the advantages/disadvantages of their actions.

**Lack of Perseverance:** A lack of diligence, persistence, and the ability to follow tasks through completion often manifest by tendencies to quit prematurely, become distracted, difficulties with task completion and are positively correlated with boredom proneness and procrastination.



## Clinical Levels of Impulsivity

Gamblers	48.8%
Hypersexuals	48.0%
Meth Abusers	44.4%

Those with addictions  
constitute a heterogeneous  
population!

**SUGGESTS SUBTYPES**

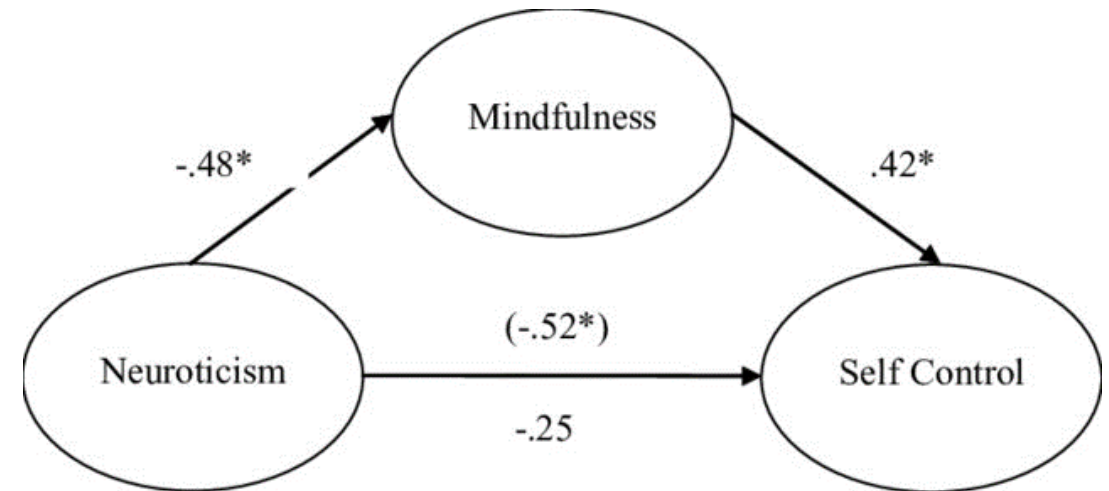
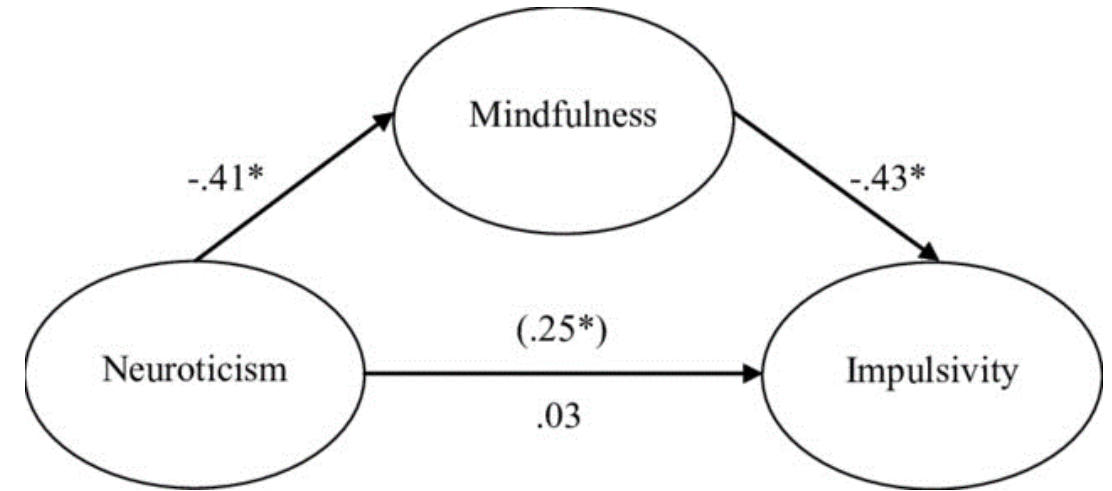


## NEUROTICISM AS A RISK FACTOR FOR BEHAVIORAL DYSREGULATION: A MINDFULNESS-MEDIATION PERSPECTIVE

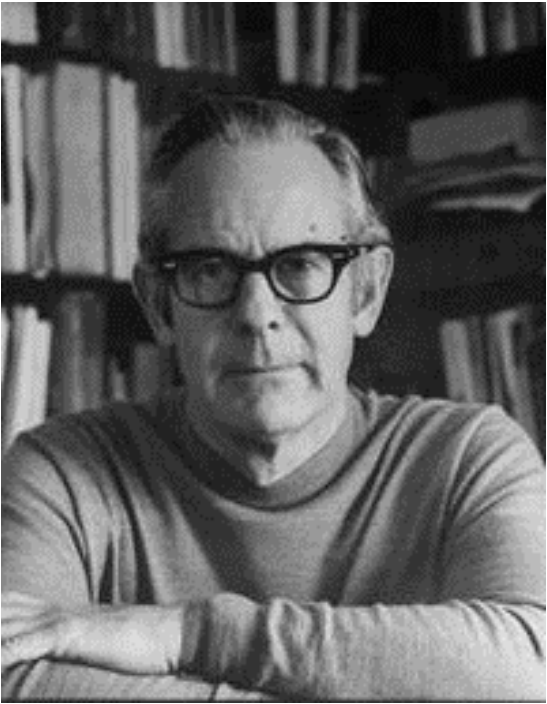
ADAM K. FETTERMAN, MICHAEL D. ROBINSON,  
SCOTT ODE, AND KATHRYN H. GORDON  
*North Dakota State University*



Neuroticism is an individual difference variable reflecting proneness to negative emotional experiences. High levels of neuroticism are often associated with impulsivity and behavioral dysregulation. Three studies, involving a total of 226 undergraduate participants, were conducted in an effort to better understand the relationship between neuroticism and behavioral dysregulation. Based on relevant theory, it was hypothesized that relations between neuroticism and behavioral dysregulation would be mediated by individual differences in mindfulness. As hypothesized, neuroticism was an inverse predictor of mindfulness and higher levels of mindfulness were associated with (a) lower levels of impulsivity and (b) higher levels of self-control, both assessed in dispositional terms. Furthermore, mindfulness fully mediated the relation between neuroticism and these outcomes.



Between the stimulus and response there is a space...



*Between **stimulus** and **response**  
there is a **space**. In that space  
is our **power to choose** our  
response. In our response lies  
our **growth** and our **freedom**.*

—Dr. Rollo May (1963),  
*Freedom and Responsibility Re-Examined*

Mindfulness helps us pay attention to, be present with, and connect with this “space”, and by being aware of the moment in a curious non-judgmental manner, we are more likely to respond in a healthy way to whatever stimuli's may arise. This is the anti-thesis of responding impulsively where we react to a sudden urge or stimulus without forethought. **It's helping us slow down and give pause!**



## Summary Review

- 1. Increases tolerance for uncomfortable feelings;** learning to be present, curious, open, and non-judgmental of emotions
- 2. Stress coping** through letting go of the stories that give rise to stress and regulating breathing helps reduce stress
- 3. Reorganizing relationships with cravings;** letting go of thoughts about cravings, being present in the body, curious about cravings, open, non-judgmental



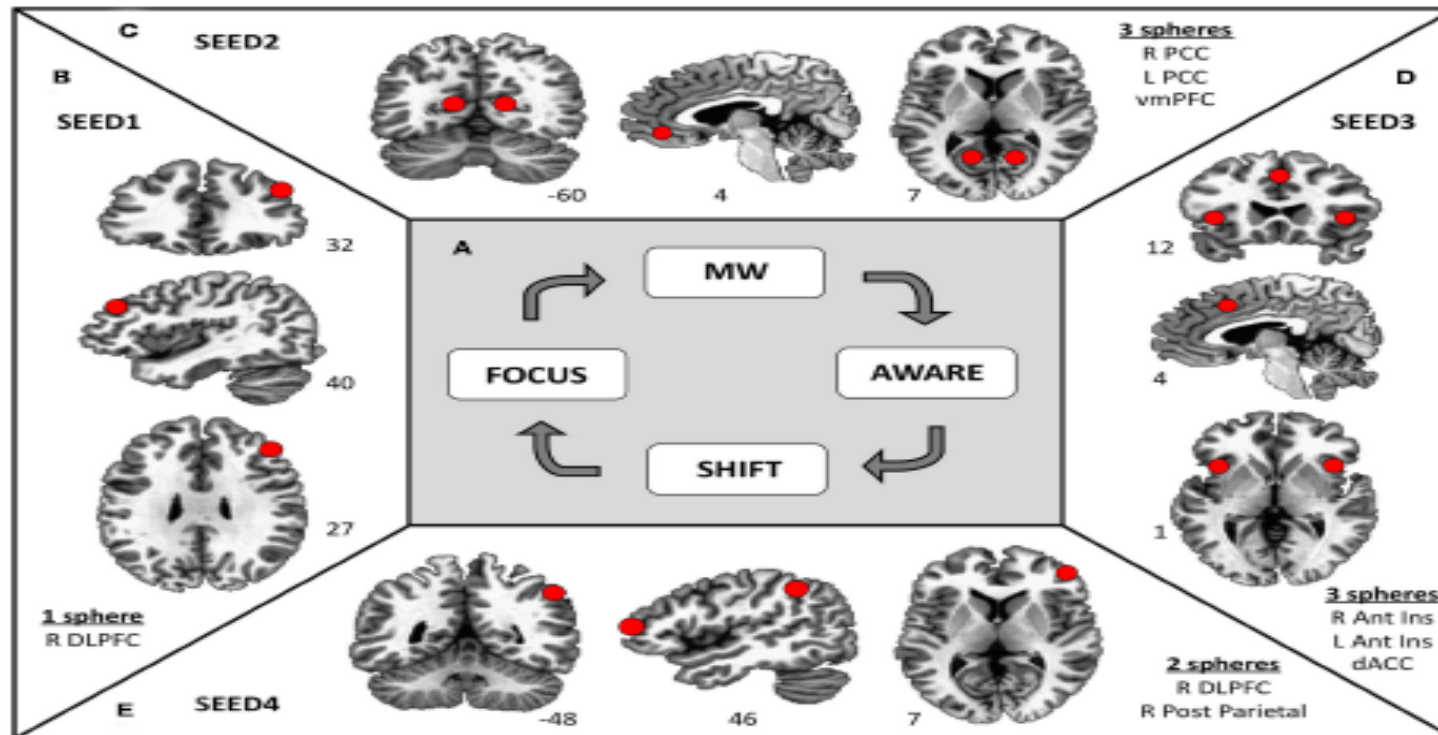
4. **Enhances ability to regulate attention**, sustained focus on whatever is happening at the moment; letting go of distracting thoughts and refocusing attention again and again
5. **Reduces impulsivity** through helping people be present with the “space”, increasing levels of self-control, and reducing the effect of emotional dysregulation on impulsive responses



## Effects of meditation experience on functional connectivity of distributed brain networks

Wendy Hasenkamp\* and Lawrence W. Barsalou

Department of Psychology, Emory University, Atlanta, GA, USA



**Being aware of mind wandering**: This is the practice of being *attentive*, *alert*, and *aware* of moments **when** your thoughts wander from the target stimuli (e.g. breathing). The more we practice being aware, the better we become in being aware sooner when thoughts wander and thus we are able to intervene in a more timely fashion. This reduces the amount of time spend being unaware and entertaining wandering thoughts. The moment we become aware of wandering thoughts is a mindful moment.

**Noticing where the mind has wandered**: Mind wandering can involve a variety of thoughts including planning thoughts, worrying thoughts, temptations, judging thoughts, making up stories in our minds, daydreaming, self-critical thoughts, etc... The practice of “noting” involves simply noticing where our mind has wandered. We don’t judge mind wandering, it is neither good nor bad. We simply just note the process with openness and curiosity.



**Letting go of tangential thoughts**: Once we note where the mind has wandered, we let go of the wandering thoughts whatever they may be. This practice of letting go is important, especially when our wandering thoughts might lure us to follow them, or make up narratives about them. We must remember, that mind wandering is the antithesis of being mindful. The more we practice letting go and refocusing our attention, the more proficient we will become in our ability to “let go” in real world situations.

**Refocusing attention**: This is the process of refocusing our attention on being present, moment by moment, and sustaining our attention on whatever target stimuli we have chosen. It is this practice of refocusing that we do again, and again throughout the process of being mindful.

# Helping Patients Adopt a Spirit of Mindfulness



# Helping Patients Adopt a Spirit of Mindfulness





# Mindfulness and Problem Gambling

**UCLA** Health

UCLA Mindful Awareness Research Center

About MARC

Classes and Events

Facilitating Mindfulness

Free Programming & Resources

Free Guided Meditations

Subscribe to  
Our  
Newsletter

**marc.ucla**  
mindful awareness research center

Mindful Awareness:  
A Simple Solution to Complex Problems



[CONTACT US](#)[GIVE A FACILITY REVIEW](#)[ADD A REHAB FACILITY](#)[PRO TALK](#)[BLOG](#)[AM I ADDICTED?](#)[INTERVENTION SERVICES](#)

## Pro Talk

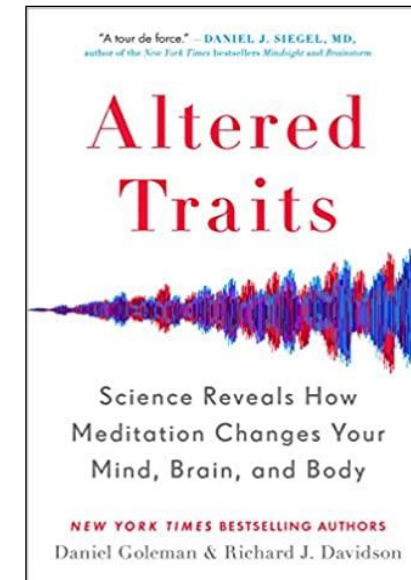
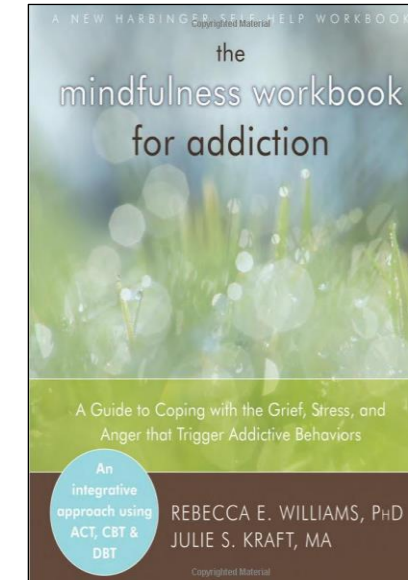
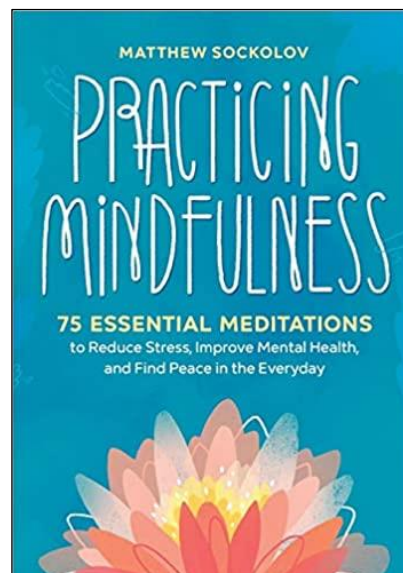
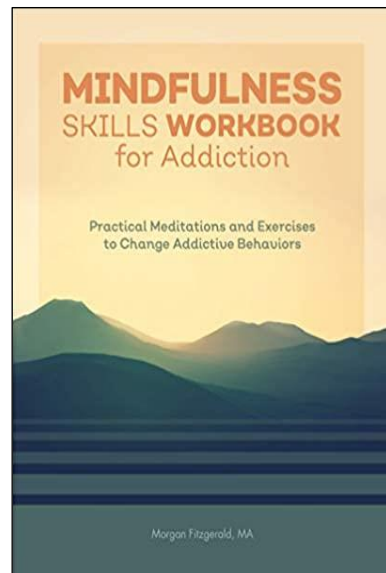
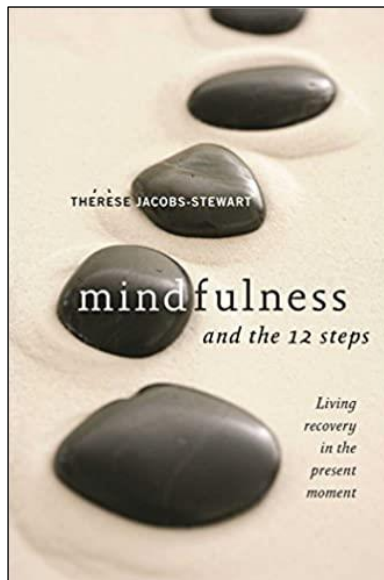
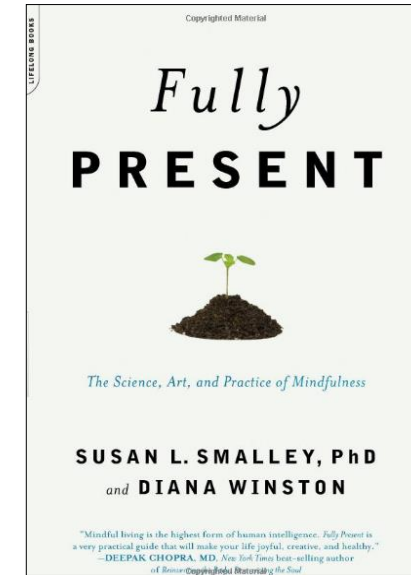
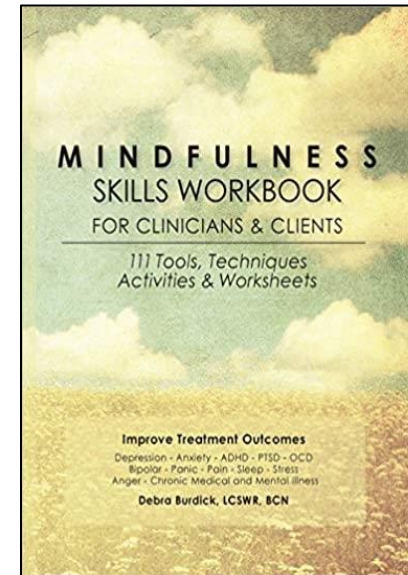
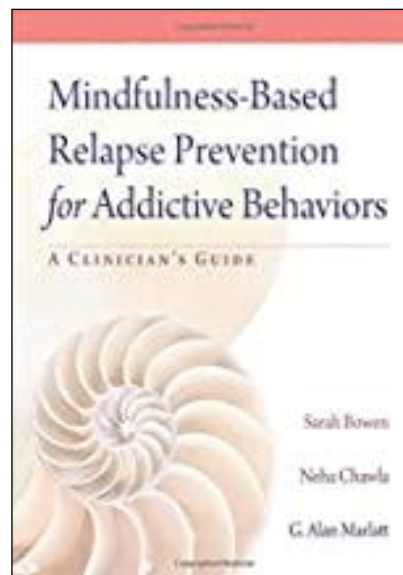
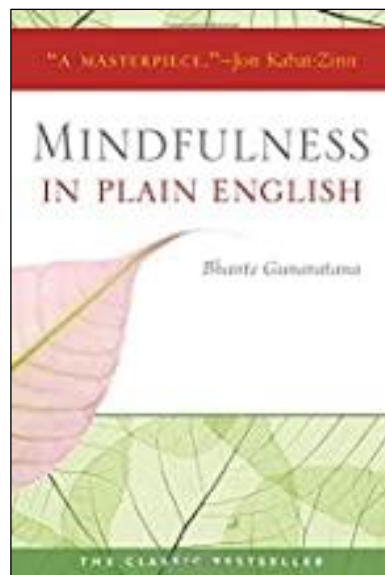
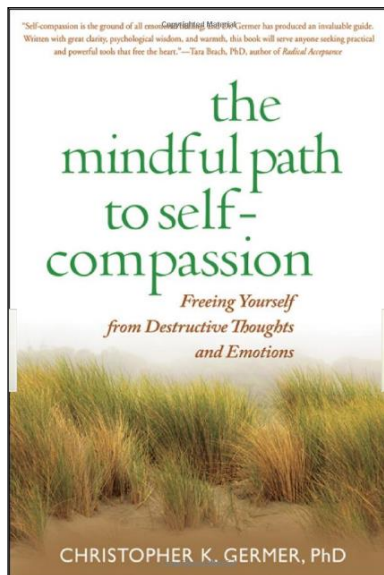
A Rehabs.com community

[TOPIC SEARCH](#)[PROS A-Z](#)[CATEGORIES](#)[WRITE FOR PRO TALK](#)[SEARCH](#)

# Mindfulness for Gambling Addictions: Does it Work?

Posted **November 5, 2014** in [Addiction Treatment Methods](#), [Behavioral Health](#) by [Rory C. Reid](#)

# Mindfulness Awareness Research Center



# Mindfulness Applications for Problem Gambling

---

Dr. Rory C. Reid, Ph.D., LCSW, ICGC-II  
Asst Professor of Psychiatry, Research Psychologist  
Licensed Clinical Social Worker  
International Certified Gambling Counselor

---

Department of Psychiatry and Biobehavioral Sciences  
Resnick Neuropsychiatric Hospital  
University of California Los Angeles

Email: [roryreid@ucla.edu](mailto:roryreid@ucla.edu)



David Geffen  
School of Medicine



Health System