**Mindfulness: Calm the Storm (Drill Title)**

**GNEG Drill 3**

**11/7/2023-11/10/2023**

**45-50 minutes allotted**

**Purpose:** The purpose of this drill is to introduce mindfulness and its benefits, offer practical exercises, and consider how mindfulness can help test anxiety.

**Learning Outcome & Assessment:** At the end of the drill, students will understand what mindfulness is, be able to have practical exercises to use, and understand how it can help with reaching their personal and academic goals.

**Packing List:**

* The Basics (Outline, clicker)
* Phone or watch for class times

**Housekeeping:** Check in with clickers. Teacher will address housekeeping w/ students.

**Slides 1-3: Introduction/Point in the Semester:** **(5 minutes)**

* Slide 1: Begin the Drill by introducing yourself.
  + Welcome everyone! My name is \_\_\_\_\_\_ and I am an academic coach here in Engineering. Today, we will be talking about mindfulness and why using mindfulness techniques can help you to reach your goals both inside and outside of the classroom.
* Slide 2: Review the “GNEG Academic coaching roadmap” to let students remember who we are, and where they have interacted with coaching
  + This is our third drill our team has presented to you this semester. You first met with some of our team during group coaching at the start of the semester. Then, we discussed starting successful systems. Last time we met, we did a systems check to see how your habits have been going and how to tweak them. Today, we are going to discuss mindfulness and how it can be beneficial in both your personal and academic life. This is especially great as you start to prepare for finals.
* Slide 3: Overview of what we are doing today
  + I’m really excited to be here today to discuss mindfulness with you all. It’s such a great skill to have, especially with finals coming up soon. Today, let’s start with an affirmation. Take a moment and say a positive affirmation out loud. Mine is that today is a great day because I am trying my best.
  + Go over the agenda for today.
  + Ask scaling question on how they are feeling from 1-5 with 1 being the worst and 5 being the best.

**Slides 4-8: Overview of Mindfulness:** **(12 minutes)**

* Slide 4: VIDEO- Mindfulness is a Superpower
  + I’m really exicted to be here today to discuss mindfulness with you all.
  + Mindfulness is an intentional focus on one’s thoughts, emotions, and physical sensations in the present moment. Mindfulness targets becoming more aware of, rather than reacting to, one’s situation and choices. It’s superpower because it allows your mind to take control rather than your body. It allows you to focus on one thing and let the rest be.
  + Stop at 1:43
* Slide 5: What is Mindfulness
  + Have them pair up and discuss in pairs/small groups the difference between the person and the dog.
  + “With one person, describe what you notice about this picture.”
* Slide 6: What do I get from being mindful?
  + “A George Mason University study showed that meditation before class might help students, especially freshman, focus better and retain information. Mindfulness helps improve mental clarity, focus, and self-discipline.”
  + “You now understand how mindfulness training improves one aspect of thinking — attention — at the level of brain physiology. This means that by focusing on the present moment, cultivating mindful awareness toward sensations, and attending to the rising and falling of the breath, you can actually improve your brain's ability to direct your attention and accurately perceive the world.” Harvard Univeristy
* Slide 7: What does mindfulness look like?
  + Have the class get in groups to discuss.
  + While class is discussing, walk around and talk to groups.
  + Invite class to share ideas discussed in their groups.
  + Presenter will then share additional topics (i.e. hiking, reading, listening to music, journaling, being with friends, gratitude list, gym, etc.)
  + Discuss how to add it in to a busy schedule (ex. While you are walking to class, as you eat dinner, as you shower, or before you start studying)

**Slides 9-12: Mindfulness & Exercise Check (15 minutes)**

* + We are now going to do 3 practice exercises. These are beginner exercises that are easier to accomplish when sitting down. There are additional mindfulness and breathing exercises out there, but for today, we are going to focus on these three.
  + **Some of you may be farther along in your mindfulness journeys and that is something to celebrate. Today is meant to introduce the topic and those that are farther may be a great resource to your fellow classmates.**
* Slide 8: Box Breathing (The Navy SEAL Technique)
  + This is a great one to start us out today. We are starting with Box Breathing, which is also known as the NAVY SEAL technique. It’s a good one to start with because it’s proven that using this can calm the mind and slow your breath. As you are breathing, you are silently counting, which is a version of mantra meditation, and it calms the nervous system and brings you into the present moment.
* Slide 10: Belly Breathing
  + We are going to start with belly breathing. It can slow your heart rate and give you more oxygen. It’s proven that getting more oxygen can help you with performance. Ask about athletes and oxygen.
  + Invite them to close their eyes or find a spot with their eyes in the room. Go through the belly breathing with them. Repeat once with instructions. Then have the students do it on their own 1-2 times.
* Slide 9: Grounding Exercise
  + Toolbox: Explain why grounding is useful.
  + Discuss grounding exercise and when you can use it
* Slide 11: Body Scan
  + Use guided meditation script.

**Slides 13-16: Test Anxiety & Mindfulness (3 minutes)**

* Slide 13: Common Test Anxiety Symptoms
  + Raise your hand if you have heard of test anxiety, have experienced it yourself, or know someone who has.
  + “Now we are going to discuss how mindfulness can help with test anxiety, especially since finals are coming up.”
  + When you think of finals coming up, how many of these symptoms do you feel? If you feel comfortable sharing, please raise your hand when it applies.
* Slide 14: Example of when to use mindfulness
  + Go through each circle and ask the class if they have any ideas of when they can use each one. After 1-2 answers per circle, show them the example on the slide.
  + Alternatives are yoga, guided mediation, and massage therapy.
* Slide 15: Habits are the brain’s way of conserving energy & resources.
  + Explain how mindfulness is key to habit change because now you become aware of your habits.
  + Mindfulness opens up the option of choice- we can choose to make new choices to help curb things like every day stress, long term stress, generalized & test anxiety, and depression.
* Slide 16: Choosing new testing habits
  + Some new habits could look like this to help with test anxiety. Remember, mindfulness is about becoming aware and understanding you have choices.

**Slides 16-17: Resources**

* Slide 17: App Resources
  + Quickly review over resources. Point out that all have a free version and Calm & Headspace have premium versions that offer a significant student discount.
* Slide 18: Campus Resources
  + Quickly review over resources found around campus.
  + These resources are going to be on Blackboard as well and you are also welcome to email or stop by our offices if you want to discuss them in more depth.

**Slide 19: Video: Why Mindfulness Empowers Us**

**Slide 20: From the video: “We can choose what we strengthen and what we let go of.”**

* + If you only take one thing from today, take this knowledge.
  + Remind them that mindfulness is not about perfection but rather about taking each moment as an opportunity.

**Slide 21: Academic/Skills/Calculus Coaching Slide**

* + Remember, today’s presentation covered a very broad range of mindfulness. There is so much more out there that we weren’t able to cover in 45 minutes. If you are wanting to discuss more personalized mindfulness or other topics, the Academic coaching team are here to help collaborate on your success in Engineering.

**Slide 22: Sign-Out Survey (assessment)**

Created by K. Newkirk and G. Taylor for the University of Arkansas Academic Coaching Program in the College of Engineering (November, 2023).

Sources:   

*Breaking Bad Habits Through Mindfulness*. (2019, June 18). Insight Timer Blog. <https://insighttimer.com/blog/breaking-bad-habits-mindfulness/>

MD, A. E. B. (2021, May 13). Can mindfulness change your brain? Harvard Health. https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/can-mindfulness-change-your-brain-202105132455

Mindful eating. (2020, September 14). The Nutrition Source; Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/mindful-eating/

Feedback notes:

1. Start every drill with an affirmation. Something they are grateful for, something they are looking forward to, something they are proud of, etc.
2. Be very intentional that mindfulness is not a cure for mental health. It is a tool/skill for their toolbox. Make sure that they are aware that campus has additional resources for mental health.
3. Between the superpower & dog slide, really define what mindfulness is and how it’s different from destressing. What it is and what is isn’t.
4. Box breathing- Introduce & show them the first round. Then have them participate for the next 2-3 rounds of the video.
5. Typing out instead of putting the acronym for the campus resources.
6. Start putting more focus on the campus resources. A lot of feedback was requesting additional help with counseling on how to schedule, what to do when they have depression/anxiety/etc.
7. Peer to peer engagement of how mindfulness empowers us. Have them answer specific questions.