

Mindfulness and Health

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What is mindfulness?

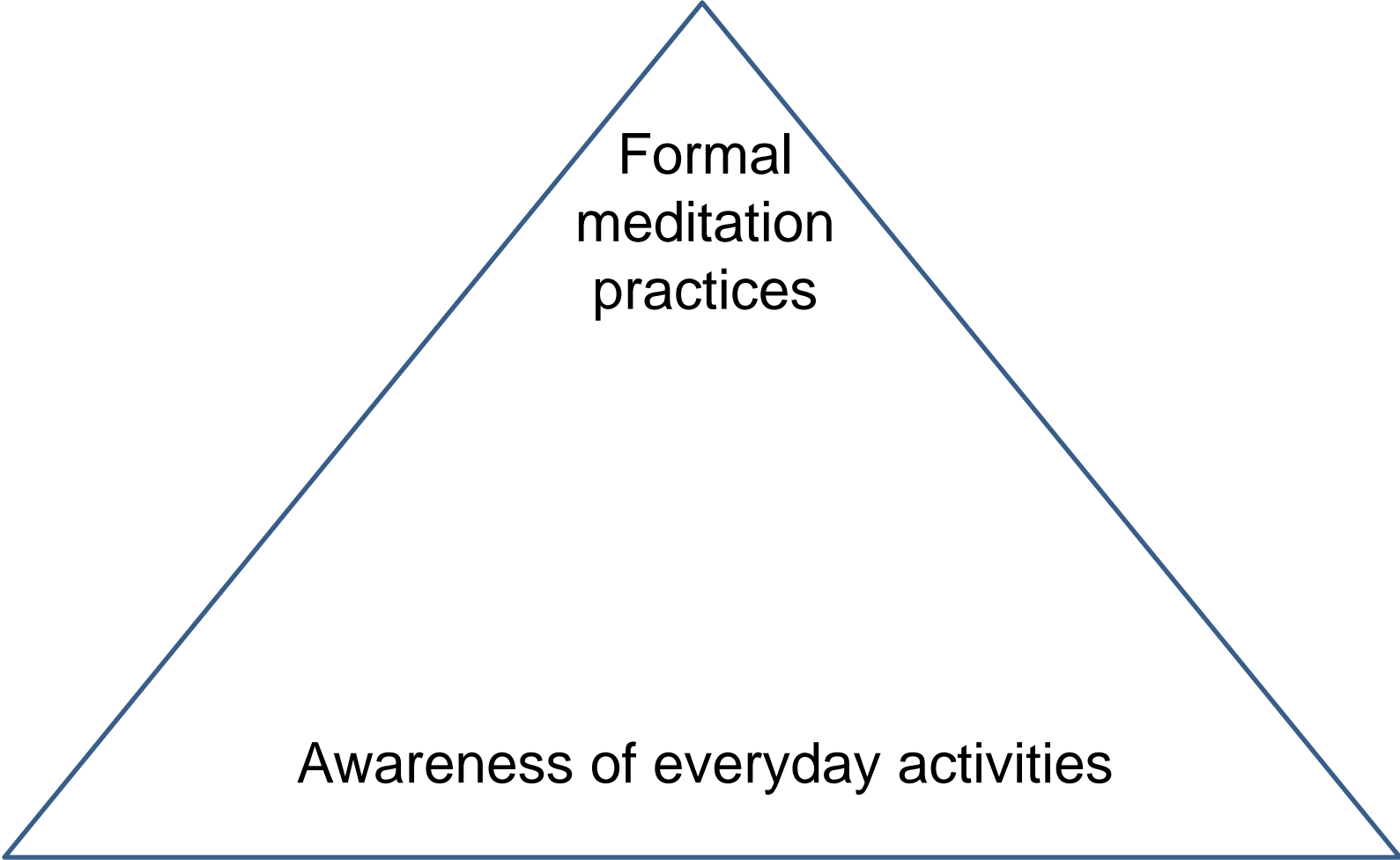
“The awareness that emerges through paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally to the unfolding of experience moment to moment.”

(Kabat-Zinn, 2003)

Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)

- Stress reduction clinic at Umass founded in 1979 by Jon Kabat-Zinn
- 8 weekly 2 ½ hour classes and a single 6 hour retreat
- Classroom format with guided practice and group discussion

Mindfulness practices



Formal
meditation
practices

Awareness of everyday activities

How is mindfulness different than relaxation techniques?

- Not trying to produce a special state
- Greater awareness of the mind as it is in the present moment
- Applicable to any situation

Health benefits

- Increased awareness:
 - Mind and body
 - Thoughts as passing events and conditioned
 - Relationship between thoughts and emotions
- Leads to decreased:
 - Automatic reactions
 - Stress

Clinical research

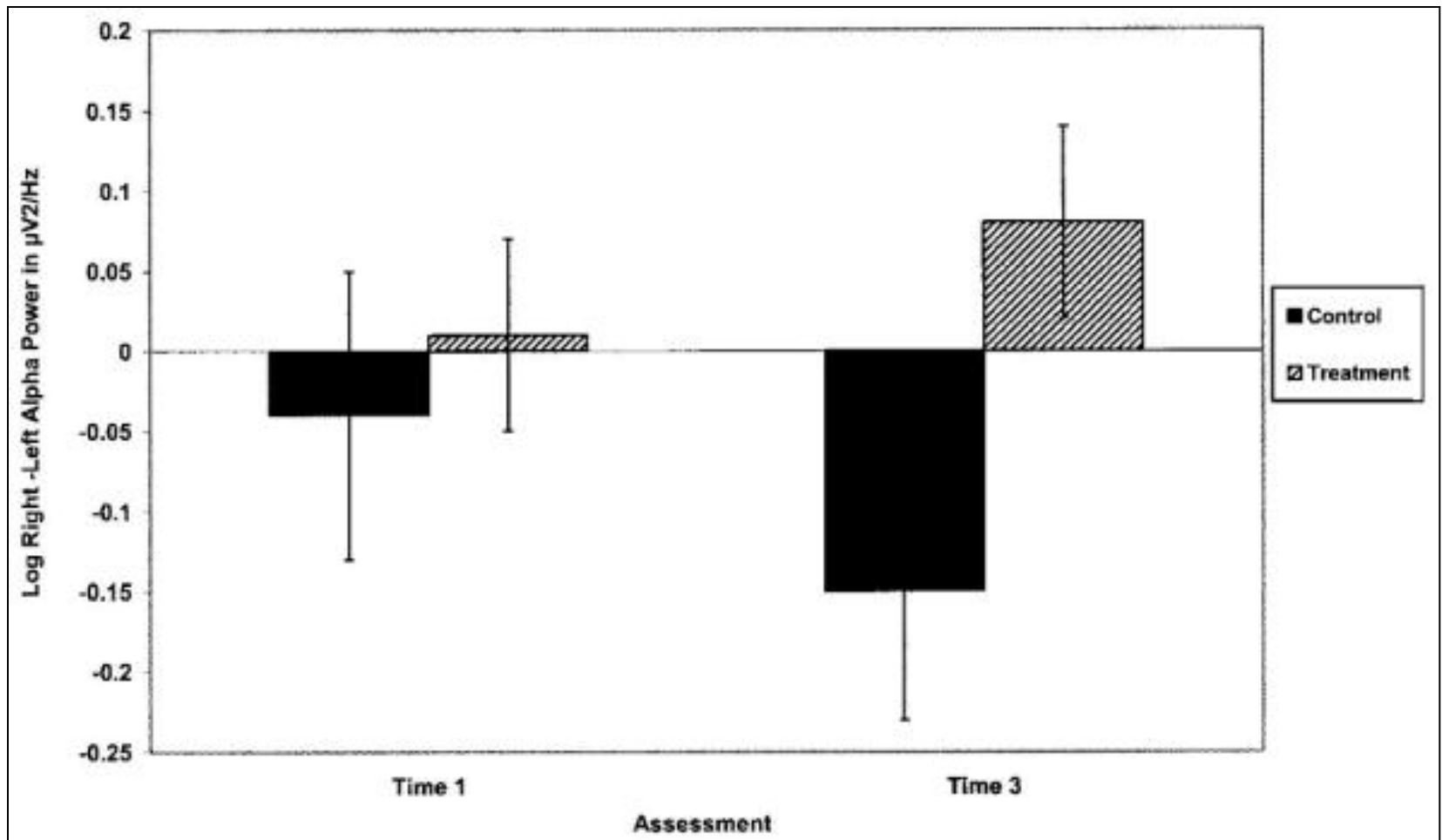
- MBSR effective for chronic pain, anxiety, depression, and other complaints
- Reduced psychological stress, increased well-being
- Reduced physiologic response to stress

Mindfulness-based approach to wellness

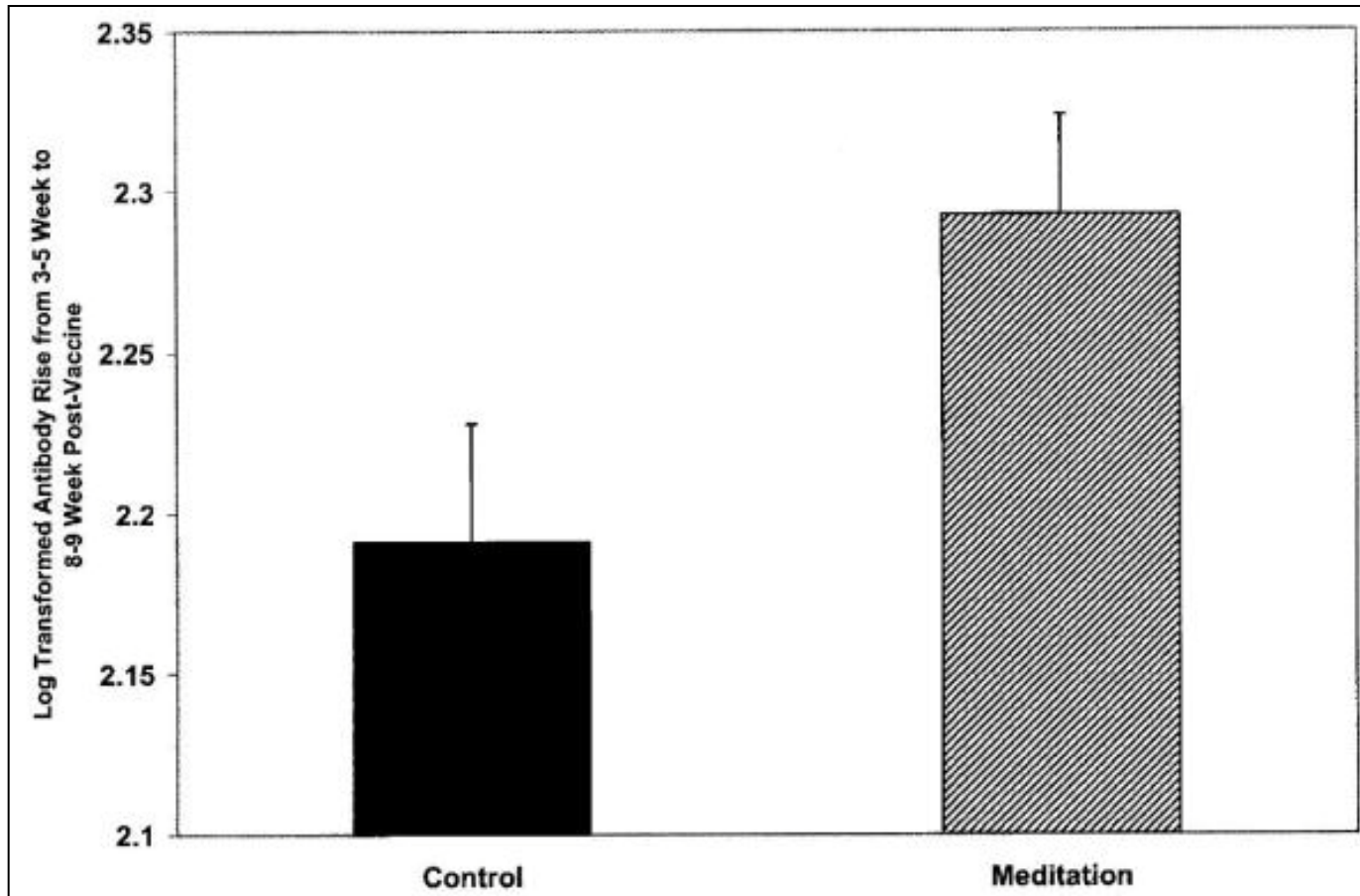
- Holistic – physical, mental and spiritual
- Strength-based – vast potential of inner resources to promote one’s own well-being
- Supports a “culture of wellness” for all stakeholders involved in the person-centered planning partnership

MINDFULNESS-INDUCED NEUROPLASTICITY

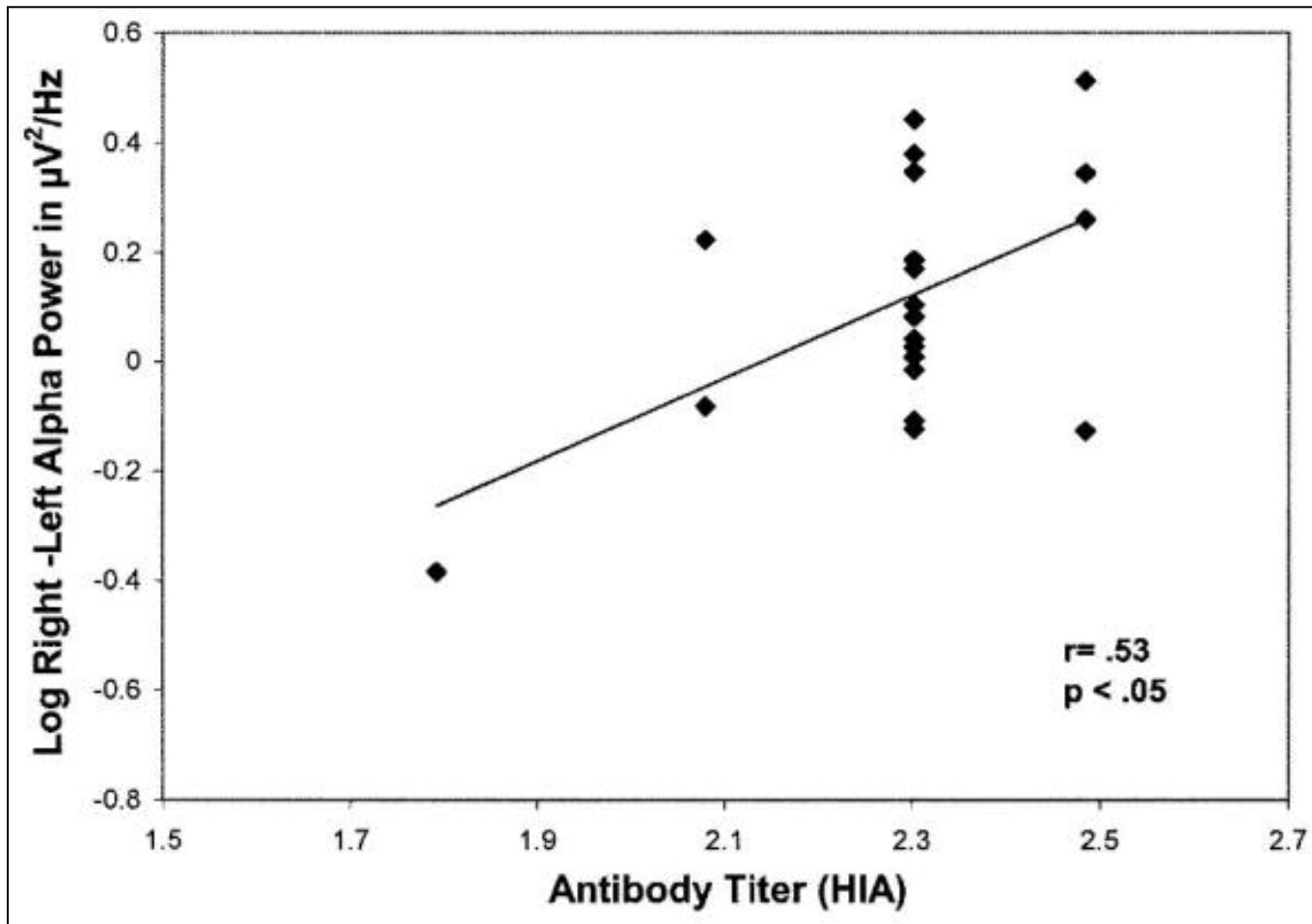
MBSR increases left-sided cortical activation



Increased immune response

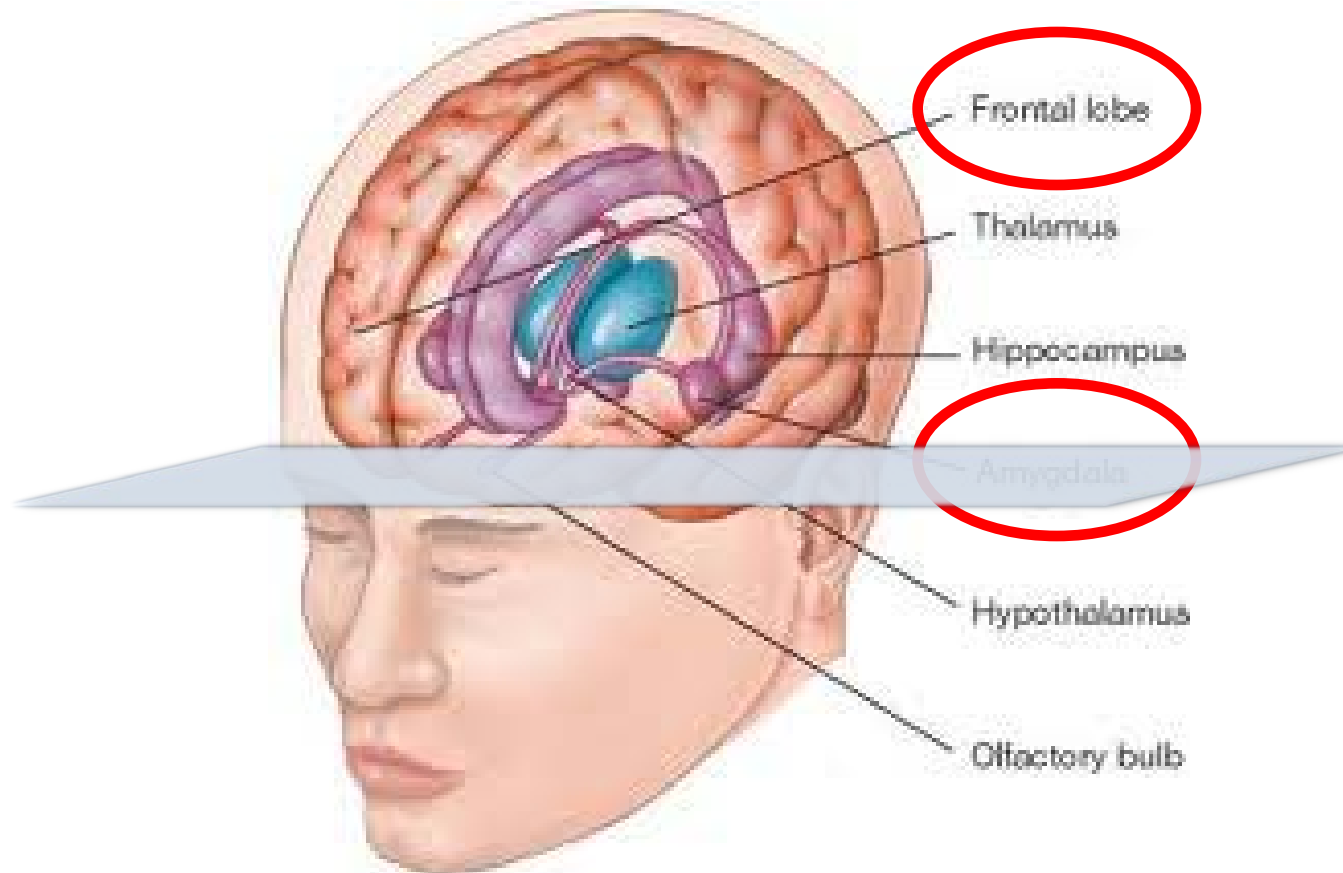


Immune changes correlate with shift in prefrontal activation

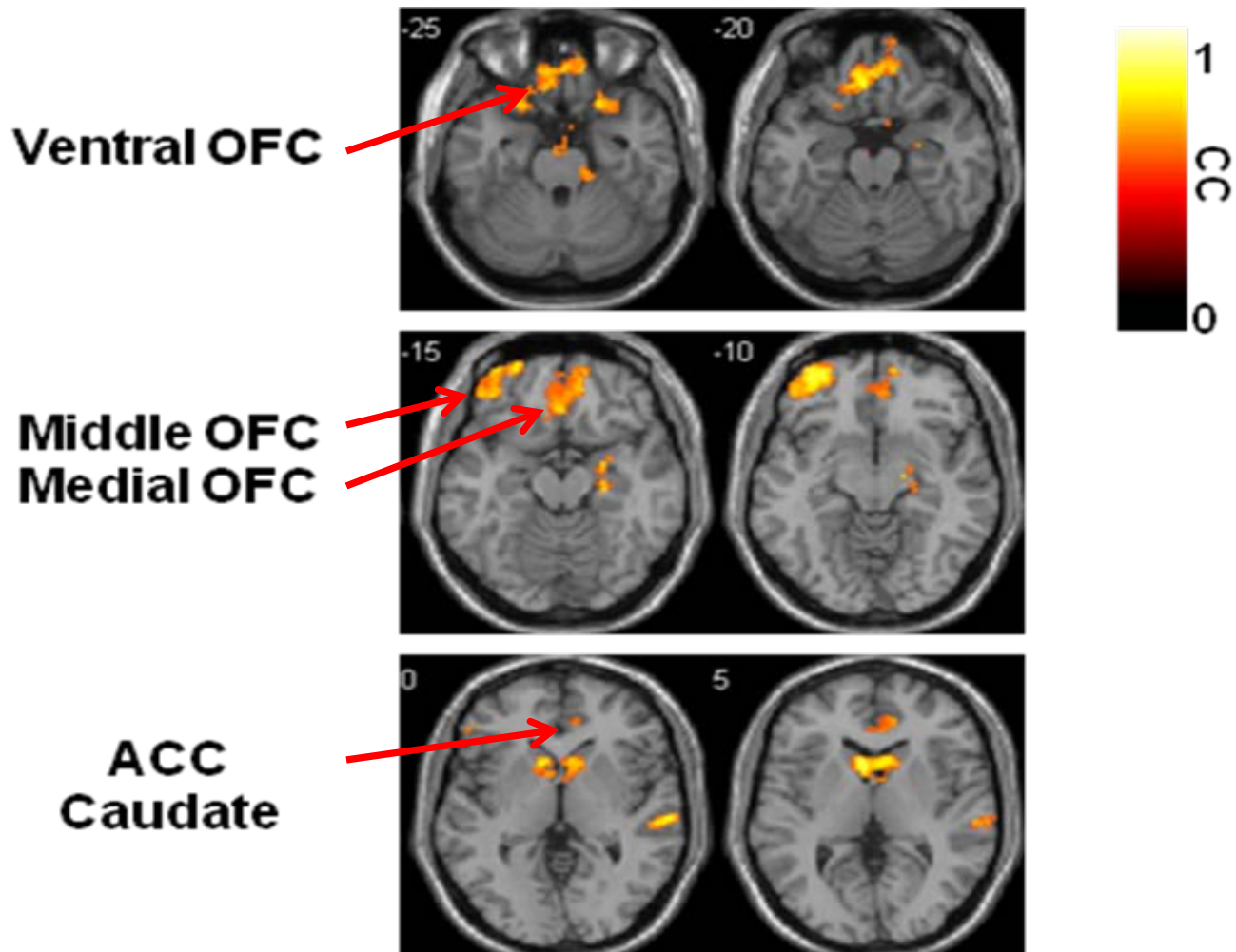


CHANGES IN NEURAL CIRCUITRY

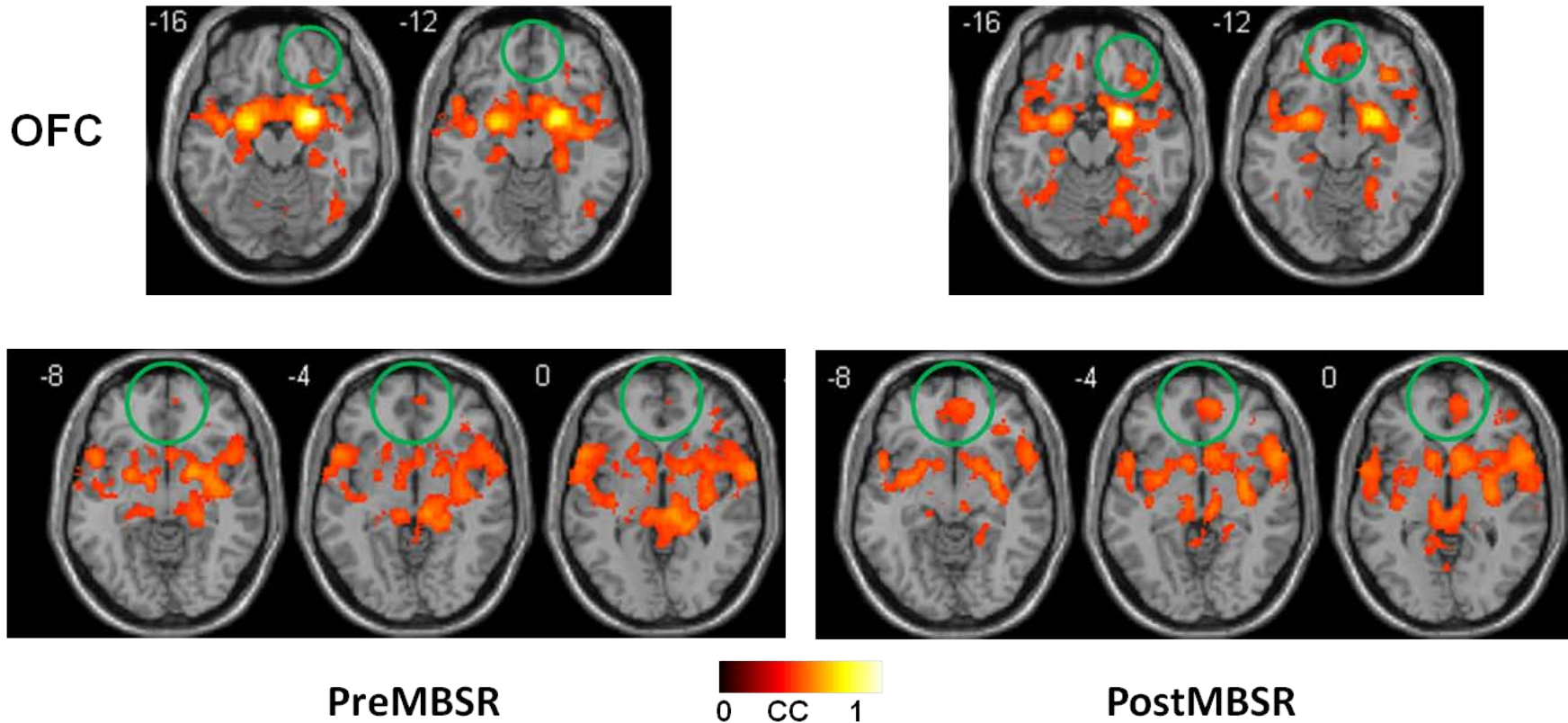
Limbic system



Amygdala connectivity correlates with mindfulness



MBSR changes amygdala connectivity



Collaborators

- fMRI
 - Umass: Nanyin Zhang, Jean King, Ali Bourisly
 - Suffolk: David Gansler & Matt Jerram
- Mindfulness
 - Fernando de Torrijos, Doug Ziedonis, Saki Santorelli
- Students
 - Umass: Rashad Hardaway, Liz Apkin
 - Suffolk: Athene Lee

Mindfulness as Wellness in Psychiatry

A Clinical Experience

Mindfulness:

“Lifejacket of emotional intelligence”



Helping overcome

emotional distress

Mindfulness in Psychiatry

A Clinical Experience

The “MIND” healing the “mind”

or bringing our attention from

the “head” to the “HEART”

Mindfulness in Psychiatry

A Clinical Experience

A taste of harmony



in the midst of chaos

The story -- personal

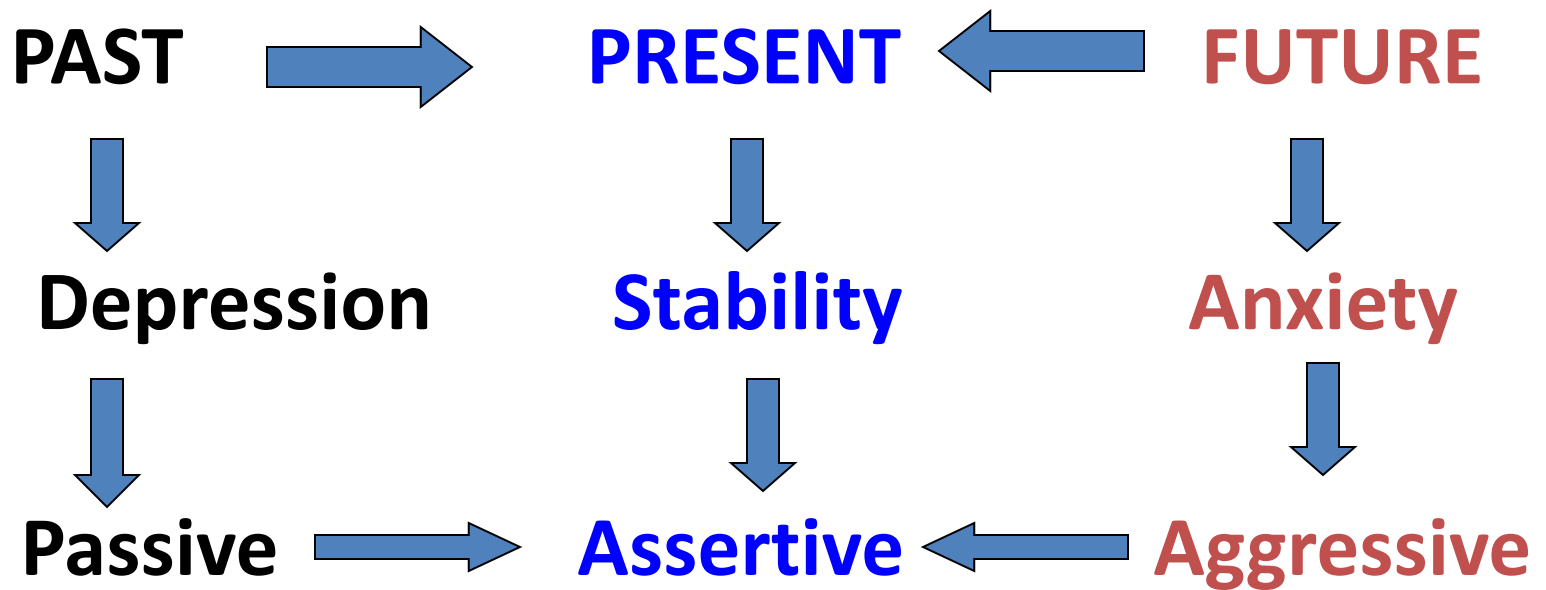
The grounding -- physical

The silencing – integral

Mindfulness in Psychiatry

A Clinical Experience

The Bloom of the Present Moment



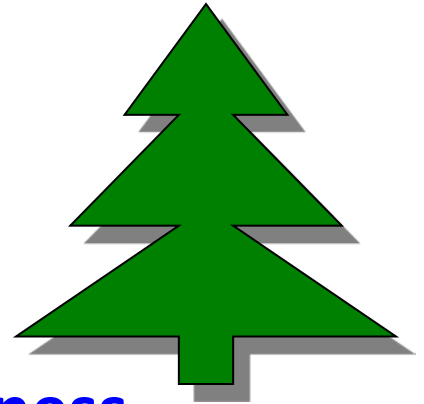
Mindfulness and Acceptance

“Lost in the middle of the dark woods of my life”

A situation: I am lost
(an opportunity to find myself)

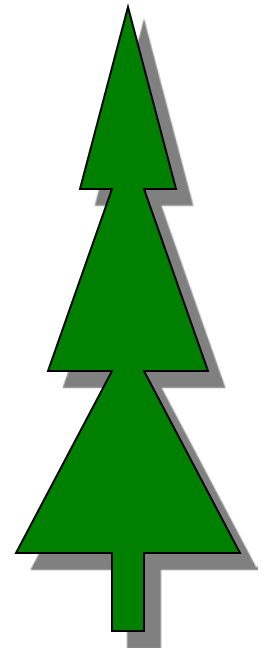
An invitation: embracing wellness
(taking care of myself)

A practice: the cultivation of mindfulness
(taking responsibility for my own life)



Lost

Stand still. The trees ahead and bushes beside you are not lost. Wherever you are is called Here. And you must treat it as a powerful stranger, must ask permission to know it and be known. The forest breathes. Listen. It answers, I have made this place around you, if you leave it you may come back again, saying Here. No two trees are the same to Raven. No two branches are the same to Wren. If what a tree or a bush does is lost on you, you are surely lost. Stand still. The forest knows where you are. You must let it find you.



-David Wagoner
(from the words of a Native American elder)

“Only that day dawn to which we are awake”

H. Thoreau



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