



# Happiness & Mindfulness in the Workplace

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# Happiness Factors

- ▶ Happiness= Genes+ Circumstance +Habits
  - ▶ Circumstance: Genetic, Sex, Income, Race, Where you live, Intelligence (10%)
  - ▶ Intentional activities (40%)
  - ▶ Genetics/Set Point (50%)
- ▶ Interplay of genetics, choices, circumstance
- ▶ “Most people are as happy as they make their minds up to” Abe Lincoln

# Benefits to Becoming a Happy Employee

- ▶ Happiness reveals flexible thinking
- ▶ Creativity and big picture thinking vs. details
- ▶ Better health and stronger immune systems
  - ▶ Happiness is consistent with longevity, improvements in career, increases in salary
- ▶ Happy people have better relationships and better marriages

# PERMA

- ▶ Elements when you have joy in your life

- ▶ Positive Emotion
- ▶ Engagement
- ▶ Manage Stress
- ▶ Healthy Habits
- ▶ Mindfulness
- ▶ Relationships
- ▶ Purpose
- ▶ Accomplishment
- ▶ Resilience

(Meta Analysis s by Dr. Martin Seligman, Psychologist)

- ▶ Happiness = Skills, work, commitment, the journey

# Cultivate Positive Emotions

- ▶ Problem = challenge = opportunity = increased self esteem
- ▶ Increase sense of control and perceived ability
- ▶ Let go negative events
- ▶ Practice an attitude of gratitude, mindfulness and acceptance
- ▶ Discussion of Negativity Bias

# Engage In Life

- ▶ Choose flow and energizing experiences
- ▶ Experiences that enhance your attitude
  - ▶ Alignment of behavior and values (Maslach, Christina)
- ▶ Examine expenditure of time and energy
  - ▶ Extract *time thieves* (toxic emotions, personal bad habits, routine tasks, demanding people)

# Happy Body to Engage in Life

- ▶ Sleep
- ▶ Exercise
- ▶ Nutrition



# Manage Stress

- ▶ Everyone has unique triggers of stress
  - ▶ Identify your particular stress triggers, and manifestations in body
- ▶ Maintain a baseline level of energy and physical health
- ▶ Prepare yourself: are there things that are difficult that you can strategize
- ▶ Practicing relaxation techniques: breathing, body scan
- ▶ Social support



# Techniques

- ▶ Diaphragmatic Breathing
- ▶ Meditation
- ▶ Setting Goals
- ▶ Self-Assertion
- ▶ Avoid procrastination
- ▶ **Mindfulness**

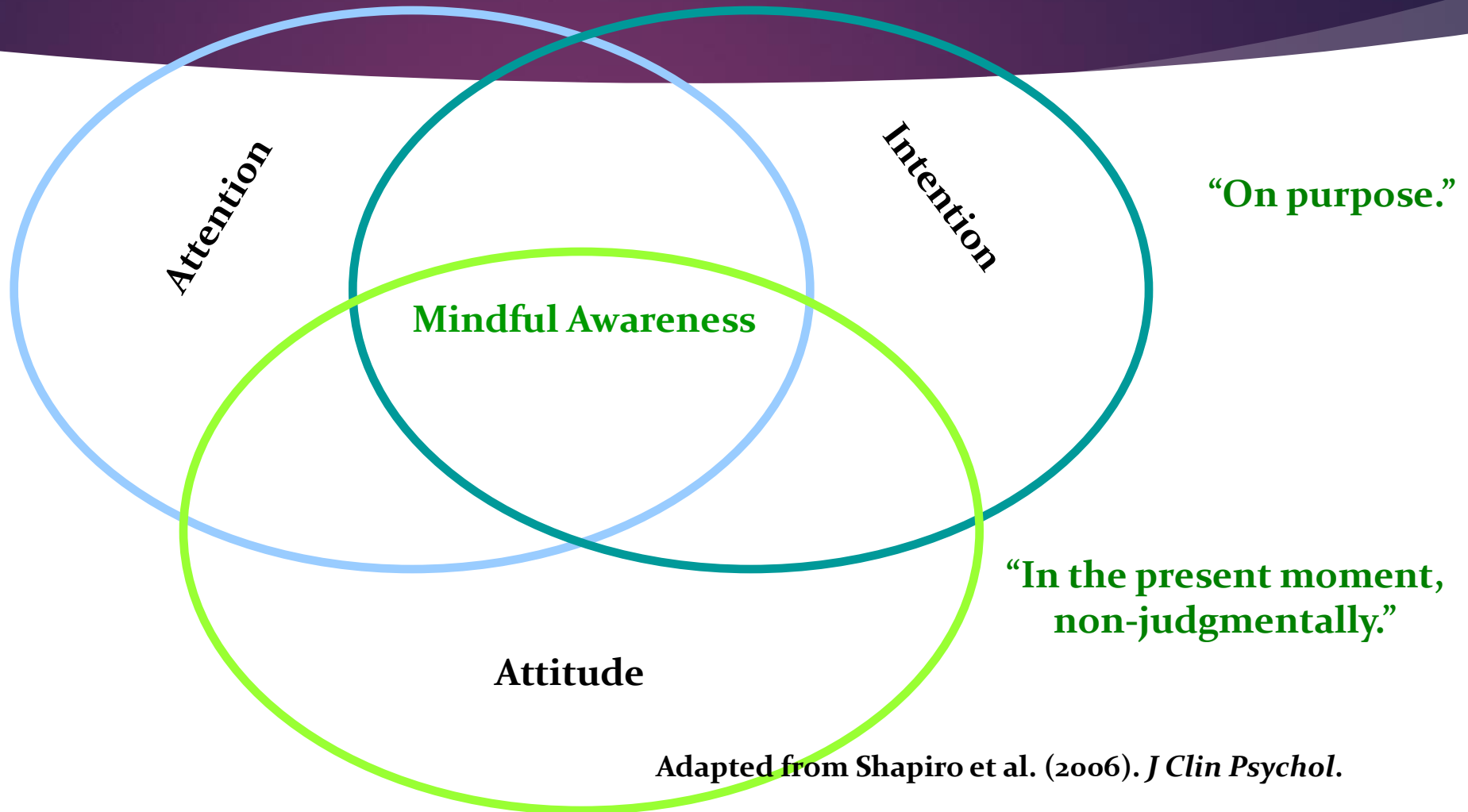
# Mindfulness

- ▶ The ability to pay attention to an experience from moment to moment
- ▶ Getting unstuck
  - ▶ From thoughts of the past
  - ▶ Concerns about the future
  - ▶ Opinions about what's going on
  - ▶ Break free from judgements and rumination

# Principles of Mindfulness

- **Awareness (non-judging)**
- **Attention (present-focused)**
- **Intention (valued action)**
- **Attitude**
- **Kindness**
- **Compassion**
- **Acceptance**
- **Approach (exposure)**
- **Non-reactivity**

# Breaking free from Autopilot

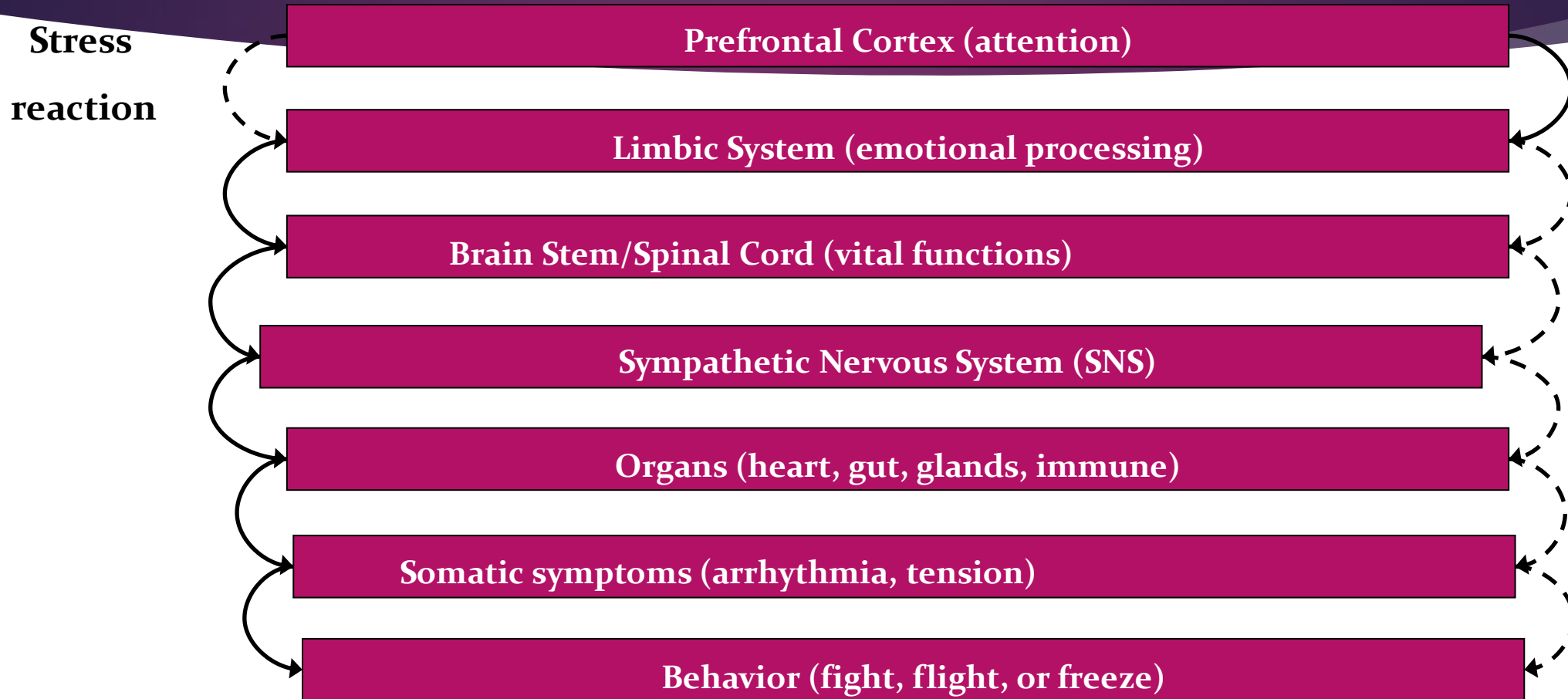


Adapted from Shapiro et al. (2006). *J Clin Psychol.*

# Mindfulness helps Corporations

- ▶ Mindfulness to reduce Burnout
  - ▶ ↓ stress
  - ▶ ↓ burnout
  - ▶ ↑ self-compassion
  - ▶ ↑ life satisfaction

# Biological and Brain Mechanisms of Mindfulness



From Greeson & Brantley (2009). In: *Clinical Handbook of Mindfulness*.

# Changes in brain waves patterns and brain function

## ▶ **Increased activity in left prefrontal cortex**

- ▶ Davidson, Kabat-Zinn, et al., Psychosomatic Medicine 2003
- ▶ ***Increases ability to orient attention in the present moment***
  - ▶ Jha, et al., Cognitive, Affective & Behavioral Neuroscience, 2007
- ▶ ***Enhanced ability to control emotional reactions by engaging prefrontal cortex***
- ▶ Creswell, et al., Psychosomatic Medicine, 2007; Farb, et al., Emotion 2010

# Mindful Health Care

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- ▶ Reduce “stress response”
  - ▶ Shift in perception of life's stressors
  - ▶ Better able to cope & manage emotions
- ▶ Activate “relaxation response”
  - ▶ Brain, autonomic nervous system, organ systems
- ▶ Sense of interconnectedness (self & others)
- ▶ Consciously respond vs. react under stress
  - ▶ Healthy choices





# Choose Relationships

- ▶ Social support
  - ▶ The top predictor of happiness
  - ▶ Good relationships are at the core of our well being
- ▶ People with meaningful, positive relationships are happier
- ▶ Stay away from politics, gossip, and fix problems not people



# Relationships



- ▶ Dr. John Gottman & Nan Silver: The Seattle Love Lab
  - ▶ Decades of research can predict divorce with 91% accuracy
  - ▶ Happy marriages are emotionally intelligent marriages
- ▶ The Four Horseman
  - ▶ Criticism: complaint about spouse's character or personality
  - ▶ Contempt: conveys disgust
  - ▶ Defensiveness: blaming spouse, boomerang issues
  - ▶ Stonewalling: tuning your spouse out

# Relationship Skills

- ▶ Be aware of types of marital conflict
  - ▶ Art of the start
  - ▶ Identify perpetual problems /gridlock
- ▶ Increase repair attempts and moments of connection
- ▶ Create a love map: that part of your brain where you store all the relevant info about your spouse's life
  - ▶ Learn each others' goals, worries, hopes
- ▶ Allow influence: Turn towards your partner to connect and create an emotional bank account
- ▶ Learn Partner's love language

# Create A HAPPY CULTURE



# Meetings Become Memories



# Find Your Purpose

- ▶ Purpose is linked to health and happiness
- ▶ Serve a cause bigger than yourself
  - ▶ How does your work link to your values?
  - ▶ Even menial tasks lead to a bigger purpose
- ▶ Contribute and make a positive difference
  - ▶ Prosocial behavior provides instant mood boosts

# Accomplish

- ▶ Goals: Think big and break it down
  - ▶ SMART goals: Specific, Measurable, Action Oriented, Realistic, Timely
  - ▶ Continue to build upon skills
  - ▶ Challenge yourself: Open Mindset (Dweck, C.)
- ▶ Clarify goals
  - ▶ Employees tend to feel dissatisfied when goals are unclear
  - ▶ Employees may overwork because they think that everything must get done at once

# End of Life Reflections

- ▶ Follow your heart, dreams and personal sense of meaning
- ▶ Be present
- ▶ Give more than you receive
- ▶ Relationships and Love (Give and Be)
- ▶ Be true to yourself and your feelings
- ▶ Let yourself be happier

(Dr. John Izzo: The 5 Secrets You Should Know Before you Die)



# Less is More

- ▶ Forgiveness
- ▶ Curtail social comparisons
- ▶ Simplify
- ▶ Spend on experiences versus material possession

# Laugh

- Learn to appreciate incongruities and ironies of life
  - Invite laughter to difficult situations
- Laughter induces a relaxation response while reducing stress responses
- Laughter benefits the immune system and increases bonding



# Learning Humor

- ▶ **Infuse Humor in your environment**

- ▶ Photos
- ▶ Comic strips
- ▶ Funny movies
- ▶ Comedy shows or radio
- ▶ Joke books

- ▶ **Laughter is contagious**

- ▶ Practice laughing through difficult situations
- ▶ Practice using humor even when this contrasts with current states

- ▶ **Create a culture that laughs**

- ▶ Spend time with friends who make you laugh.
- ▶ Share funny stories, jokes

- ▶ **Practice**

- ▶ Learn good jokes

# Happy Habits

- ▶ **Focus on the positive:**
  - ▶ *Attitude of gratitude, appreciation (self and others) and positive reframe*
- ▶ **Assess energy expenditure:**
  - ▶ *Assess time expenditures and health habits*
- ▶ **Enhance relationships:**
  - ▶ *Gatherings, potlucks, find out unique characteristics of staff*
- ▶ **Set value driven goals:**
  - ▶ *SMART goals, purpose driven*
- ▶ **Invite humor**
  - ▶ *Laughter for health and bonding*

Thank you!

