

## Leading in the Present: Mindfulness for Library Leadership

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### Abstract

Mindfulness is the deliberate, non-judgmental awareness of what one is experiencing in the present moment. Our brains are always working, scanning the environment for dangers, which can put us in a constant state of stress. Mindfulness allows us to break a thought pattern and return to the present moment, thereby helping to alleviate stress. Mindfulness is cultivated through various practices including deep breathing, mindful moments, and meditation. Mindfulness helps library leaders be more present, improve self-awareness and management, and provide mental replenishment. Mindful library leaders are better at dealing with stress and responding to the numerous demands of their job by being more focused and aware.

### Introduction

Mindfulness is currently in vogue. While many of us are wary of trends that quickly fall in and out of fashion, the concept of mindfulness has been around and practiced for thousands of years. Even though it is rooted in religious traditions, mindfulness is a secular, practical, and evidence-based practice. The benefits of mindfulness are numerous and well-documented. Three overarching benefits are living in the present, self-awareness and self-management, and mental replenishment. These benefits help library leaders function better at their jobs and reduce stress, and they can be achieved through regular mindfulness practice. As a library leader, you will experience stress, frustrations, and negativity. How you choose to react or respond to trying times is up to you. You can become entangled in negative thoughts falling down the rabbit hole of poor coping mechanisms leading to burn out and personal and professional hurt, or you can choose to be in the moment and apply proper perspective and control. The claims on a library leader's time and the workload of a library leader are demanding. Deadlines, non-stop meetings, and urgent personnel matters create a stressful environment that wears down even the most resilient leader, but mindful library leaders are better able to navigate this environment. This article explores mindfulness for library leaders: what it is, its benefits, how it works, and how to practice it.

## What is Mindfulness?

Currently, the term mindfulness is used in a myriad of ways with a slew of meanings. Before any discussion of mindfulness, its benefits, and how it is practiced can occur, we must define the term. In order to more easily define mindfulness, let's first discuss what mindfulness is not. Have you ever driven somewhere only to get there and not remember the drive? Read the same page four or five times and still not know what you read? Ate until you were physically ill? Bounced back and forth between writing an e-mail, reading a webpage, and answering text messages and gotten nothing done after an hour? Or erupted in anger at a minor annoyance? All of these are examples of not being mindful, or practicing mindlessness. Mindlessness is reflexive habit, habitual reactions, multitasking, and being physically in one place and mentally in another. Mindfulness is, in part, the opposite of these acts. Mindfulness is also not being happy, feeling good, or relaxing. While mindfulness can help alleviate stress and anxiety, it is not a panacea, and even with a regular practice, we will experience the whole range of human emotions.

Humans have a natural tendency to be unaware. We are almost constantly anticipating the future or brooding about the past. This inclination to unawareness is made even worse by the distractions of modern life like smart phones, TVs in seemingly every public space, and social media. We could spend our entire lives bouncing from one thing to the next without ever being present and fully appreciating the moment in which we are living. Mindfulness is a rebellion against this tendency and the modern life of distractions. Mindfulness is the deliberate, non-judgmental awareness of what one is experiencing in the present moment. To be mindful is to be fully engaged and fully present in the moment as you experience it. As Jon Kabat-Zinn wrote in *Wherever You Go, There You Are*, mindfulness "is the direct opposite of taking life for granted." The more mindful we are the more accepting we are of life and less desirous we are of living a different life or being another person.

Anything can be done mindfully. Mindful eating can help you eat less and enjoy your food more by focusing on each bite, how the food tastes at various points, how it feels in your mouth, and what it will do to your body once you are done chewing and swallow. This mindfulness extends to librarianship as well. *The Mindful Librarian* not only offers some great techniques for mindfulness practice, including walking meditation, joy of loving kindness meditation, and yoga, but the book also discusses at length how to apply mindfulness to all aspects of librarianship including information literacy, reference, and working with faculty. Leadership can also be done mindfully, and being mindful makes library leaders better at their jobs. Mindfulness improves a leader's listening, decision making, responses to an emergency,

handling of angry patrons, and coping with stress. Mindfulness also makes library leaders better at innovation, managing change, and creativity. In short, mindfulness can help so many aspects of our professional - not to mention personal - lives as library leaders.

### **Benefits of Mindfulness**

The benefits of mindfulness are multitudinous. Mindfulness and mindfulness based cognitive therapy (MBCT) are used to treat post-traumatic stress disorder, addictions, depression, anxiety, and a host of other disorders. Practicing mindfulness increases your creativity, academic performance, and feelings of contentment and happiness. In one study of a meditation group and a control group, after just 5 days of 20 minutes of meditation the meditation group showed improved and greater attention; less anxiety, depression, anger, and fatigue; and reduced levels of cortisol and better immune systems compared to the control group.<sup>1</sup> Being mindful leads to us being more open and receptive to new ideas, and it increases our self-compassion and self-care. The three big benefits of mindfulness are living in the present, increased self-awareness and self-management, and mental replenishment.

### Living in the Present

The present is a razor thin line between the past and the future. We are almost never in the present but always thinking of ourselves in terms of both the past and the future. We seemingly spend our lives hoping for the future to be better than the present, or wishing for our past glories to resurrect themselves. Anxiety is caused by thinking about the future and all the work that lies ahead of us to do, including the vast choices available to us. Depression occurs when we think about the past and all the choices we did not make. We regret not choosing another path, which we are convinced would have turned out better than our current situation. We try many artificial ways to limit anxiety and alleviate depression, but mindfulness may be the most natural and effective. Being in the moment gives us relief from the constant doing and evaluating of our lives and the flittering from one point to the next. Staying present allows us to keep our thoughts close, enjoy the moment and then let it go, and connect more wholly and deeply with others.

To become more grounded in the present moment means focusing our mind and attention on only what is right before us. Living in the present means being too busy in the moment to worry about or anticipate the future. We are always receiving stimuli while we are awake, and as leaders, others are always pulling our attention to and fro. Focus is a critical trait for library leaders. As leaders, we are required to perform detail oriented work with budgets,

carefully navigate personnel issues, and make informed decisions that take into account numerous sources of data and viewpoints. Without focus, we as library leaders can miss critical information or fail to properly understand an argument. Mindfulness allows us to focus on the important work we are doing in the present moment. Living in the present moment also allows us to build better relationships with those in our library. Relationships are vitally important for library leaders, and the best leaders are those that can build, maintain, and nurture relationships and mentor librarians. No relationships can occur, however, if we are not fully present with other people. Closely coupled with building relationships is mindful listening. This requires to not only be present with another person, but to listen to what they are saying without judgement or interpretation, a key aspect of mindfulness. When bringing a problem, concern, or idea to a leader, librarians and library staff need to be heard in order to feel appreciated and understood. Mindfulness allows us as leaders to better listeners and understand others.

### Self-Awareness and Self-Management

Self-awareness is a vital trait for a library leader and one of the cornerstones of emotional intelligence. When we take the time to investigate our thoughts and from where they came, we begin to learn a lot about ourselves. We learn what energizes us, what scares us, and what makes us happy. Through our increased self-awareness, we come to understand that our reactions, thoughts, and fears, while they are a part of us, are not who we are and should not control our lives. Our thoughts, also, are not always true. We should notice and investigate them instead of becoming trapped by them. This self-awareness leads to a better understanding of our leadership and a well-led life. A self-aware library leader understands his or her values, motivations, strengths, and limitations. Values are the bedrock of library leadership. The self-awareness that comes from mindfulness allows us to align our actions with our values. Unfortunately, leaders of all walks lose track of their values in the hustle and bustle of their day-to-day lives. By being mindful of our actions and self-aware, we can make sure we live by our values and that our leadership actions are in line with those values. When those two things - our work and our values - are no longer in sync, we need to take the time as library leaders to realign them. The self-awareness mindfulness produces also allows us to honestly reflect on the consequences of our actions. As leaders, we must know if what we are doing is beneficial to the library and its community. Too often we get caught in the trap of constant change or innovation without taking the time to reflect on its effects on our librarians, library staff, and patrons. Mindful self-awareness helps us to know what actions of ours will bring the greatest good to our library.

Mindfulness also leads to better emotional self-regulation. Too often we react to a situation instead of responding. This is not a difference in semantics, but a difference in mindset, thought, and action. Our reactions are habitual, but our responses are thoughtful and appropriate to the situation. When we are given bad news, our first inclination might be to react with anger. But by being mindful we can interrupt that initial reaction and give the situation the response it deserves. Sometimes as library leaders we use habitual reactions for decision making and communication. This could mean trotting out replies like, “We do not have the money for that.” “I am too busy to try that.” or “That is not what a library is supposed to be.” These reactions require no thought, and we are on library leader autopilot when we give them. While we might think this is saving us time, effort, or money, it might actually be costing us a lot more. By reacting instead of responding, we may miss out on exciting new opportunities for our library or dismiss a great new idea off hand. Reactions can also damage our leadership reputations. Library leaders model the way. When we as leaders engage in mindless reactions of anger, sarcasm, or apathy, we have modeled those actions for the rest of the library. If we allow our mindlessness to create an angry scene, then others in the library will be less likely to approach us for fear of our anger. Self-regulation allows us to take a step back and look at a problem from a distance. What at first glance seemed insurmountable becomes very doable with a little distance and mindful thought. Mindfulness also increases our patience, composure, and grit, all of which are important traits for library leaders to demonstrate in their library.

### Mental Replenishment

Physical exertion - running, lifting weights, working in the yard - depletes energy and makes us tired, and mental exertion does the same thing. Decision fatigue results from making too many decisions at one time. This can lead to making bad decisions or being unable to make any decisions at all. This is why powerful figures like politicians, CEOs, and coaches wear similar outfits or eat the same meal repeatedly: it is one less decision they have to make. The reason mental exertion makes us tired is because our brains require energy to perform their jobs. Former drug addicts have a fondness for Coke and candy bars because they are quick sources of sugar that provide an energy spike for the brain. Resisting the temptation of using again takes its toll on the brain's energy supply. This is the same reason dieters often fall off the wagon. They deplete so much energy resisting desserts and simple carbs that they can no longer make decisions and give in to their cravings for brownies.

The point is thoughts take energy. All those thoughts that pop in and out of your head - about what you are doing after work, the project you need to complete next week, what your

significant other really feels about you - consume energy. When it comes time to make crucial decisions about the present and future of our library, we may be too mentally drained to make a proper decision. Library leaders attain their positions, in part, because we are willing and able to make the important decisions when needed. But if we are mentally drained when the time comes, then we may be unable to make a decision or make a very bad decision that hurts our library and our livelihood. We should never waste energy on useless thoughts, worry, or anxiety. Mindfulness allows us to relate to our thoughts in a different way, helping us to break thought patterns and save energy. Mindfulness practices like meditation refresh our minds helping us to focus on when we need to. Mental replenishment can also help us as library leaders to avoid burnout. Our brains need to be recharged and reenergized. This is done through proper rest and stimulation. Too often, leaders do not get the mental and intellectual replenishment they need, opting instead to mindlessly “zone out” with the TV, junk food, and alcohol. Mindfulness allows library leaders to cultivate the mental stamina and mental health to be productive on the job for a long time.

Organizations that are mindful - that is populated with people practicing mindfulness - have similar benefits. The well-being of those in the organization improves as their stress decreases and resiliency increases. Relationships between those in the organization become better as compassion is raised, improving collaboration in the organization. The overall performance of the organization improves with greater innovation and an enhanced ability to deal with change. Mindful organizations are much better than non-mindful organizations creating, receiving, and recognizing the importance of new ideas.

### **How Mindfulness Works**

Our thoughts become our reality, and our focus grows our reality. When we get caught in a thought pattern that produces stress, anxiety, or depression, we need to be aware of the pattern and then be able to break it and return to the present moment. Think of your thoughts as cars on a highway. Sitting and watching the cars drive by you may notice some cars are fancy, some cars are beat up, and others are driving erratically. Noticing the cars and their conditions are fine, but you would never run onto the highway and hop on to the back bumper of a fancy car or step in front of speeding car. Yet, we do this with our thoughts many times throughout the day. Mindfulness provides us a way to notice the cars as they pass, accept that there are cars on the highway, and return to our activity in the present moment. While mindfulness is currently a hot topic, it is a concept that has been around for 1500 years or more. So why is mindfulness so important to our well-being?

Our ancestors lived in a world of constant danger. The African savannahs were filled with large, dangerous animals, poisonous snakes, and other humans with less than pleasant intentions for our well-being. Our brains were scanning the environment non-stop looking for danger, and when it found danger our sympathetic nervous system kicked into high gear. This put us in “fight-or-flight” mode, tensing our muscles, focusing our attention, and releasing adrenaline and stress hormones like cortisol throughout our bodies. This state of stress was designed to be a temporary one allowing us to get out of a danger. A fight would only last a few minutes as would a retreat from danger. We could then take some time to calm down and be back on our way. Despite what happens at library board or faculty meetings, the modern world is extremely safe. Most of our brains never have to worry about a charging rhinoceros, but that does not mean our brains stop scanning the environment for danger.

Now, however, instead of finding poisonous snakes - or is that a stick? - our brains find looming deadlines, upcoming financial obligations, and a never ending stream of work that needs to be done. We can start by thinking of an upcoming deadline and before we know it we are thinking about deadlines, appointments, and commitments nine months out. The same can happen going backward in our thoughts. We can think of something we should have said at that meeting two days ago, and in no time flat we are thinking about the embarrassing scene we made in the middle school cafeteria. We can also start arguing with ourselves about whether we really want to eat some cookies or not. This back-and-forth between pro and con can build up a thought so big that we need to act on it by eating entirely too many cookies. These “dangers” of the modern world rev up our sympathetic nervous system, but instead of a temporary spike that helps us overcome the danger, our bodies experience prolonged states of stress, which they were never intended to do. This can lead to health problems, diminished cognitive functioning, and unhealthy ways of dealing with the stress.

Mindfulness has four parts. The first is noticing our thoughts as they occur. The second is acknowledging that those thoughts are there. The third part is re-centering or bringing our attention back to the present moment. And the final part is meditating, which we will discuss in more detail a bit later on. The first two parts of mindfulness consist of four parts themselves. The first part is recognizing when a thought or feeling has occurred. This might seem obvious, but the human mind can be quite adept at ignoring and refusing to recognize what it is doing. As the old joke goes, denial is not just a river in Egypt. The second part is acceptance of that thought or feeling. This does not mean giving in and doing whatever pops into our heads, but accepting we have those thoughts or feelings. Too often we try to push away “bad” thoughts or feelings and hold on to “good” ones, often with disastrous results. For example, you may get the

thought “I want to eat some cookies.” Acceptance entails acknowledging and living with that thought without acting on it. The third part is investigating from where that thought or feeling came. Sit with the thought or feeling and examine it instead of acting or reacting to it. Perhaps you had a stressful meeting or a fight with someone you care about. These events can cause you to seek relief in sugary desserts. Understanding what causes a thought or feeling is a key step in being able to manage that thought or feeling. The final part is non-identification with that thought or feeling. Having a thought to eat cookies does not make you the Cookie Monster. It just means you had a thought to eat a cookie.

Mindfulness gives us a way to interrupt these thought patterns and thereby reduce stress using our breath. When our minds and attention drift, mindfulness brings us back to the present moment. Mindfulness acts as the anchor our minds need to keep from becoming lost in the stormy sea of our thoughts. When we notice our thoughts have strayed from the present moment and acknowledge those thoughts exist, we can use our breath to bring us back to the present moment. Just like any other skill, mindfulness takes practice.

### **How to Practice Mindfulness**

Mindfulness can be practiced in many ways. Below are a few methods that move from the quick and easy (mindful breathing) to the more the committed (meditation). The point of these practices is the same as practicing the violin. A violinist practices a piece of music over and over again so that when she performs her muscle memory and neural pathways take over allowing her to be at her best. The same holds true for mindfulness. By practicing we prepare ourselves for the moment in our leadership lives when we are faced with a crisis, emergency, or feel the anger rising. Instead of giving in to habitual reactions and unhealthy coping mechanisms, we can activate our mindful responses.

#### Belly Breathing

Try as hard as you might, you would be hard-pressed to find someone - anyone - who would not agree that breathing is important. In fact, it is the central act around living. But oddly, most of us do it wrong. We take shallow breaths, which become worse when we go into fight-or-flight mode. Our breath is what centers and stills us and counters the physiological effects (elevated heartbeat, sweating, increased aggression) of stress. This puts us in a better state to respond - not react - to a situation. By practicing taking deep, long breaths, we improve our overall breathing and are better able to respond in an emergency.

### *Practice*

- When we take a deep breath, our bellies should expand, not our chests. Place your hand on your belly button and take a deep breath. This should push your belly and hand out.
- Hold the breath for a beat and then exhale, leaving your hand where it is.
- As you take more deep breaths, make sure to touch your belly button to your hand.
- Do this for ten breaths, once or several times each day. If all else fails, then just take one mindful breath a day. No one is so busy they cannot do that.

### *Application*

When your mind wanders bring it back to the present by taking a deep belly breath. Remember, your breath is the anchor for your wandering mind.

### Mindful Moments

Throughout the day take several “mindful moments.” These are times when you stop to reflect on what you are doing and how you are feeling. You can set a timer to alert you to when to take a mindful moment. You can also take these moments after big and important events or when you notice you are feeling bored or uncomfortable.

### *Practice*

- Stop what you are doing and take three belly breaths. Now take 3-5 minutes to notice what you are doing.
- Are you single-tasking in your work or activities? Or are you working on three things while watching a video and listening to a podcast? Take a few breaths and either continue what you are doing in a mindful way or make adjustments to become more mindful in your work.
- Explore - non-judgmentally - how you are feeling. Tense? Happy? Energetic? Tired? Do you feel these sensations and emotions in certain parts of your body? Use your breathing to try and relax those areas of your body.
- Is your neck sore? Or lower back aching? It could be the way you are sitting and working. Take a moment to readjust yourself into a more comfortable position.
- Take charge of your attention by noticing colors, sounds, and noises around you. Look out the window and take notice of what is happening outside.
- Pause and reset after big events, especially those that are emotionally draining. Also, take the time to reset when you are feeling bored or uncomfortable.

### *Application*

These mindful moments get us in the habit of noticing and not interpreting our thoughts, feelings, sensations, and emotions instead of ignoring them or judging ourselves based on

them. This helps us to notice at crucial times when we are starting to become angry, stressed, or frustrated and not allow those emotions to affect our response.

### Meditation Practice

According to an old Zen saying, everyone should meditate for 20 minutes a day. Unless you are too busy, then you should meditate for an hour a day. Meditation allows you to clear and focus your mind when you do not need to, so that when you need to clear and focus your mind you can. While meditation is an ancient tradition that has its roots in Eastern religion and philosophy, anyone - Christian, Jew, Muslim, Atheist, Agnostic, or Devotee of the Flying Spaghetti Monster - can meditate. It is not an act of worship, but a way to practice bringing your mind back to your breath. Meditation is not about achieving a goal of a set amount of improvement; we can easily become frustrated when we are too attached to outcomes and do not experience enough progress towards them. Meditation is also not about shutting off our thoughts completely. The only time we are without thought is when we are dead. Meditation is the practice of noticing our thoughts and returning to our breath. When our mind wanders and we bring it back to the present, that is meditation.

Many types of meditation practices exist, including but not limited to concentration, loving-kindness, moving, and visualization meditations. While all practices are similar, what is described below is mindful meditation. It should be noted that meditation is not for everyone. You may experience deep emotions, thoughts, and/or ideas that you will eventually have to explore, so you must be willing and able to explore them.

### *Practice*

- Before meditating make sure you are not hungry, thirsty, or need to use the bathroom. These will all cause distractions while meditating
- Find a place where you do not do anything else and make that your meditation place. That way when you go to it your mind knows you are there to meditate.
- Sit--straight in a chair or on the floor - against a wall if you need to - just make sure you are comfortable. If you are sitting in a chair place your feet flat on the floor. If you are sitting on the floor, then find a position that is comfortable. Place your hands on your thighs or gently fold them together. Again, being comfortable takes precedent over any strict posture.
- Focus on a point in front of you and close your eyes. You can also look downward or keep your eyes open. Whatever feels most natural to you.
- Begin breathing deeply and evenly, not too fast or too slow. Count each breath on the out breath starting with one and working your way to ten. Once you get to ten, start back

at one. When a thought comes into your head, let it float to the top like a bubble and pop or interrupt the thought pattern with your breath.

Start with 5 minutes a day and commit to seven days. You can use an app like Insight Timer to time your meditations. After that, increase the length of your session by five minutes each week. You can practice for as much time as works for you, but 20 minutes a day is generally recommended. Classes and instruction are good, but they may be costly or not available in your area. Try recruiting a meditation partner. You can check in with each other once a week and discuss how your practices are going, what obstacles each of you face, how much the two of you practice. You can also keep a journal and log how often you meditate and the length of your meditation each day along with any challenges, thoughts, or questions that may arise during or about meditation.

### *Application*

Meditation is about noticing when you are no longer present and bringing your attention back to your breath. By cultivating this ability in practice, we can better use it in our everyday lives. This will help us become more present and replenish us mentally. To develop greater self-awareness, set aside some time to explore the thoughts - where they came from and why they arose when they did - that come across your mind during meditation practice. Many thoughts come from boredom; your brain really wants to do something all time. But others may come from emotions and feelings that need deeper exploration. This will lead to a greater intellectual and emotional understanding of yourself. If you find yourself constantly thinking of what you need to do when you are finished meditating, then try a brain drain: before meditating list all the things you need to do in order to clear your mind of those recurring thoughts and ideas.

An old bumper sticker reads "A Bad Day Fishing Beats a Good Day at Work." The same can be said about mindfulness practice. There is no good or bad mindfulness practice session. A bad session is still better than nothing at all, and even this mindset is not healthy for mindfulness. It is a practice, and all practices have ebbs and flows, peaks and valleys, states of flow and states of no go. Detach yourself from the immediate outcome and look at the long, big picture. Meditation - and mindfulness in general - is more than a practice. With the right commitment it can become a "way of life." You must decide what level of commitment and exploration is right for you.

### **Conclusion**

The world of a library leader can be a hurly-burly one. Near constant meetings, distractions, interruptions, and decisions can make us stressed and out of touch with the work

we are doing. Mindfulness helps to reduce stress by increasing our focus, aligning us with our values, and improving our decision-making abilities. Mindfulness is about noticing our thoughts, acknowledging them, and breaking thought patterns that can cause stress, anxiety, and depression. By using our breath, we can bring our focus back to the present allowing us to live more fully in the present moment, control our emotions, and re-energize our minds. When we are mindful, we do not react, and we do not let our thoughts and emotions run away with us. Instead, we respond in the present moment to the present moment. It may sound like a cliché or an empty platitude, but our success in life is not due to what happens to us, but how we relate and respond to what happens. By being mindful, we can respond to life's events in a more measured and thoughtful way.

## Resources

### Apps

- Aura
- Calm
- Headspace
- Insight Timer
- Mindfulness App
- Oxford MBCT
- Seven Second (7s) Meditation
- Stop, Breath, and Think

### Books

- Pema Chodron. *How to Meditate: A Practical Guide to Making Friends with Your Mind*. Boulder, CO: Sounds True Publishing, 2013.
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- Mark Williams and Danny Penman. *Mindfulness: An Eight-Week Plan for Finding Peace in a Frantic World*. New York: Rodale, 2012.

### Internet

- Building the Case for Mindfulness in the Workplace  
<http://themindfulnessinitiative.org.uk/publications/building-the-case>
- Getting Started with Mindfulness <http://www.mindful.org/meditation/mindfulness-getting-started/>
- How to Meditate: Links for Guided Meditation Practice  
<https://contemplativemind.wordpress.com/how-to-meditate-links-for-guided-meditation-practice/>
- Institute for Mindful Leadership <https://instituteformindfulleadership.org/>
- Mindfulness <https://www.gse.harvard.edu/news-tags/mindfulness>
- Mindfulness: Finding Peace in a Frantic World <http://franticworld.com/>
- Mindfulness Institute <http://themindfulnessinstitute.com/>
- Oxford Mindfulness Centre <http://oxfordmindfulness.org/>
- Your Guide to Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy <http://mbct.com/>

### Podcasts

- Harvard EdCast: Inner Strength Leadership Training 101  
<https://www.gse.harvard.edu/news/14/10/harvard-edcast-inner-strength-leadership-training-101>
- Mindful Meditation at the Hammer (UCLA Mindful Awareness Research Center)
- Mindfulness (Susan Stabler of Villanova University)
- Mindfulness + Creativity (USC Annenberg Digital Lounge)
- New Psychology of Depression (Oxford University)

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## References

<sup>1</sup> Yi-Yuan Tang, Yinghua Ma, Junhong Wang, Yaxin Fan, Shigang Feng, Qilin Lu, Qingbao Yu, Danni Sui, Mary K. Rothbart, Ming Fan, and Michael I. Posner. Short-term meditation training improves attention and self-regulation. PNAS. 2007 104 no. 43, 17152–17156.