



Mindfulness in the Contact Center & the at Home Agent

Our topics

WORK FROM HOME {AGENT}

- × What we heard from local CC Director of large WFH base
- × Considerations
- × Best Practices
- × Engagement

MINDFULNESS IN A CONTACT CENTER

- × This is tough work
- × How that impacts our bodies
- × What can help?
- × What is mindfulness (not voodoo)
- × How to deploy these tactics



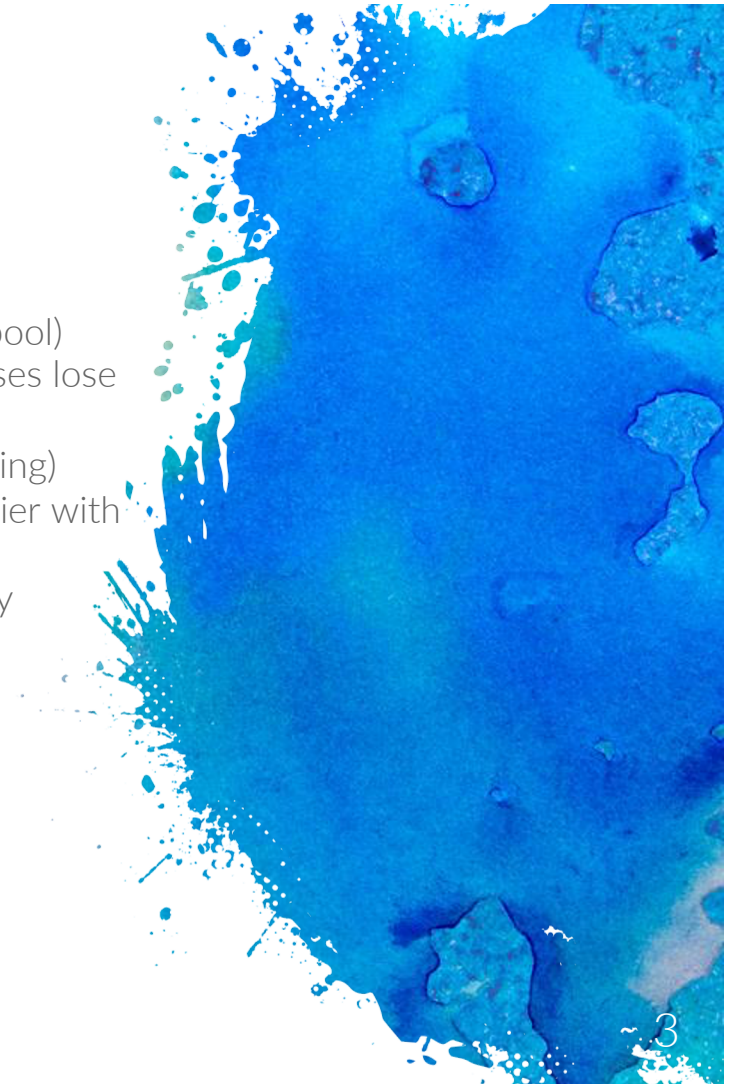
Work from Home

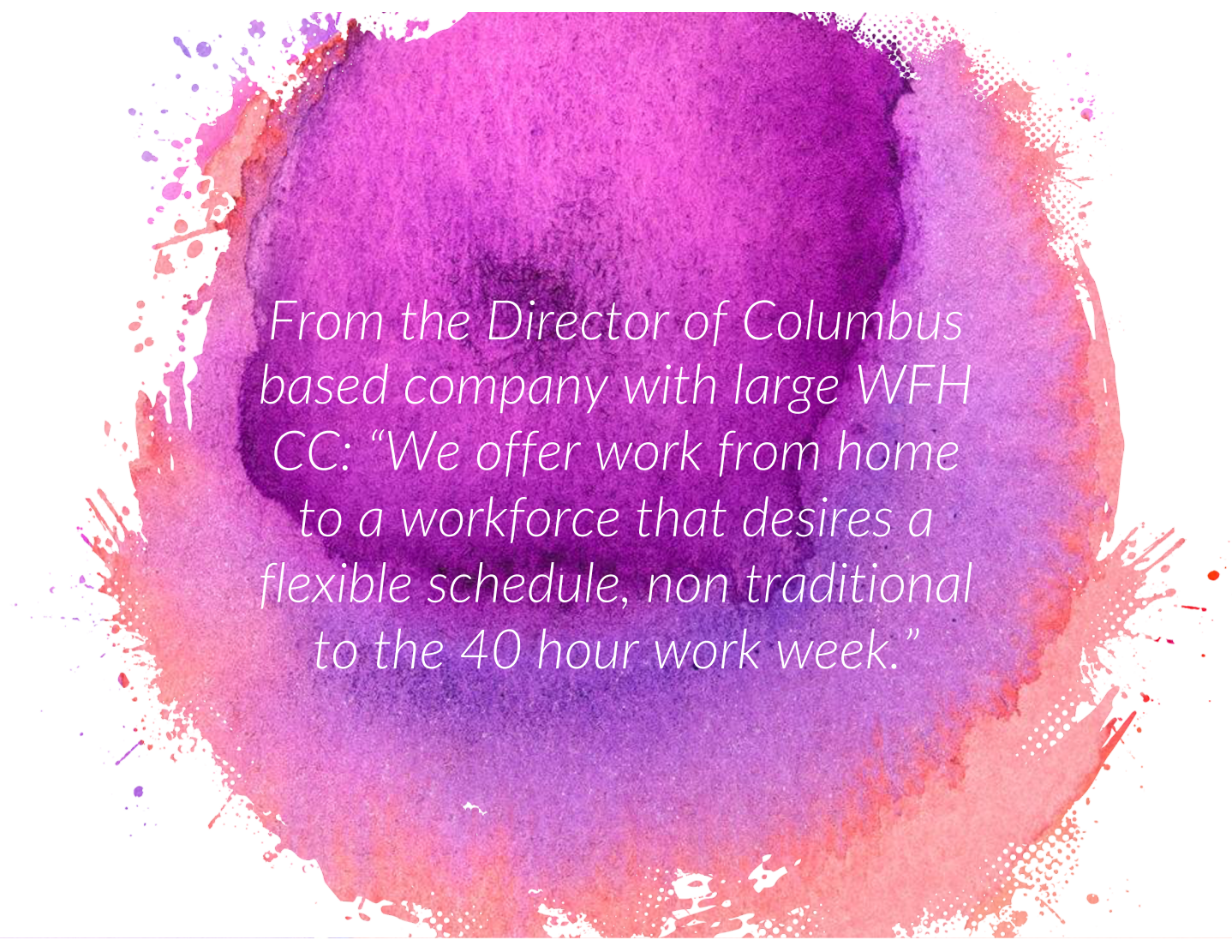
What we know

- The workforce we desire may not be in our backyard (Talent pool)
- The need for agents to be onsite is not as prominent (Businesses lose \$600 billion a year in workplace distractions)
- Businesses can save money (space, snacks, time from commuting)
- Mobilizing a workforce in the instance of a disaster can be easier with already geographically dispersed agents
- Productivity can increase (Best Buy, British Telecom, and many others show that teleworkers are 35-40% more productive)

Why aren't more doing it? What we need to overcome

- How do you train WFH agents
- How do you keep WFH agents engaged
- Who do you offer WFH to, all, some, specialty?
- How do you manage technologies and QoS?
- How do you manage staff that is not under your watch?





From the Director of Columbus based company with large WFH CC: “We offer work from home to a workforce that desires a flexible schedule, non traditional to the 40 hour work week.”

What we learned from this Director:

- × Technology
 - × This is the easy part, create a WFH kit with laptop, headset, and request certain level of dedicated bandwidth or – utilize traditional phone
- × Train in person
 - × Have the team come together for training, to bond and have a personal relationship
- × Make it fun
 - × Monitor employees by checking their status with trivia
 - × Host gatherings to allow the team to get together





Best Practices

Laying the Foundation

- × Technology package
- × Culture of TEAM
- × Strong and committed leaders
- × Clear and measurable goals
- × Results based performance metrics
- × Clear expectations about work schedule availability
- × Consistent method for communicating regularly
- × The right tools to get the work done – technology & training

Mindfulness

The idea of reducing stress and improving wellness through intention and impact



Agent life



Face many face paced and always changing interactions, situations – all without preparation

Make sometimes stressful decisions or deal with unhappy situations

Feelings of uncertainty can undermine decisions leading to mistakes, and layering of worry

Stress can lead to poor coping, decreased happiness, negative impact on others and lower performance

Costs of stress in the workplace are estimated at \$300 billion in the US





Studies show our minds are not made to multitask

It leaves many of us

Sluggish

Cranky

Quick to react

Worrisome

In our world today, multitasking is all around.

It's estimated that 46% of the time your brain is thinking about an activity you aren't doing...

But! The more you pay attention the stronger your prefrontal cortex gets

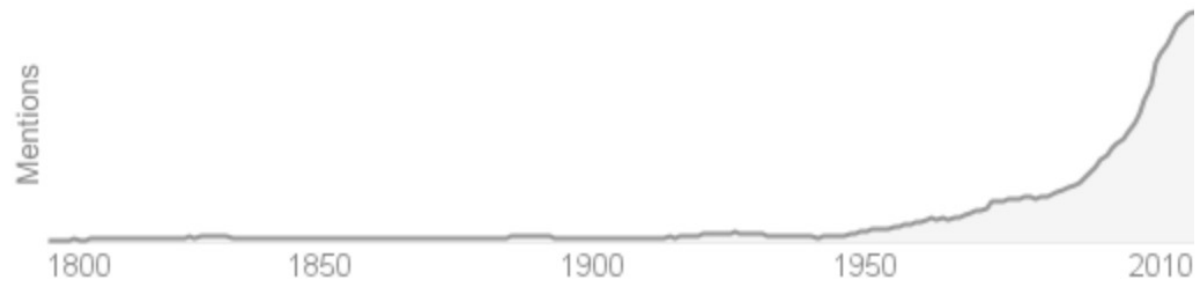
The thicker the cortex, the better decision making

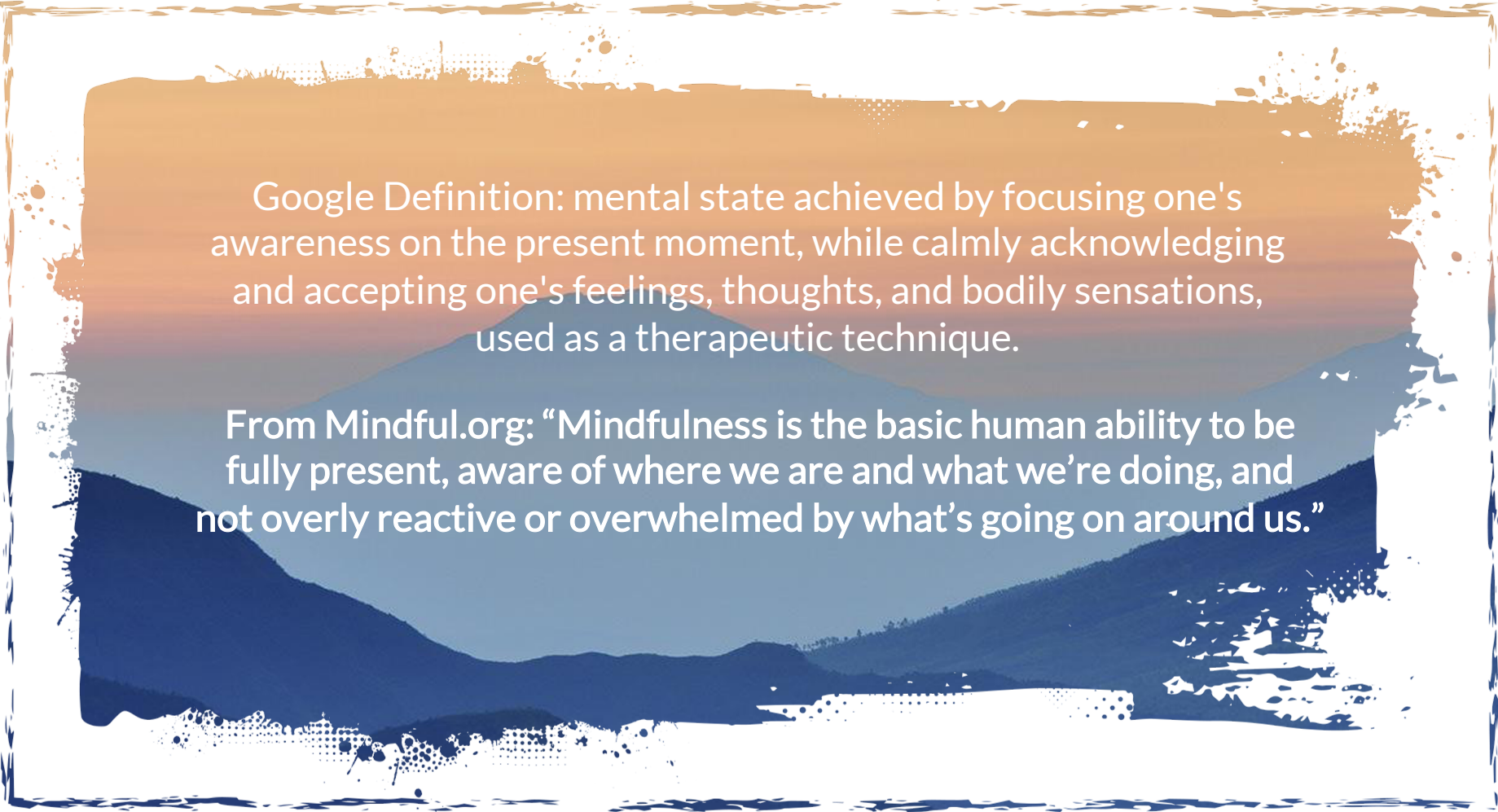
That impacts problem solving, focus, concentration, work life balance, innovation, creativity and relationships



Trendy? Or impactful?

Use over time for: mindfulness



A scenic landscape featuring a range of mountains in the background, a calm lake in the middle ground, and a small town or village nestled at the base of the mountains. The sky is a clear, bright blue. The entire scene is enclosed within a thick, hand-drawn border that has a rough, textured appearance, resembling a pencil or charcoal sketch. The border is dark blue and black, with some white speckles and irregular edges.

Google Definition: mental state achieved by focusing one's awareness on the present moment, while calmly acknowledging and accepting one's feelings, thoughts, and bodily sensations, used as a therapeutic technique.

From Mindful.org: “Mindfulness is the basic human ability to be fully present, aware of where we are and what we’re doing, and not overly reactive or overwhelmed by what’s going on around us.”

The more mindful you are, the more dominant your relaxation response becomes.

- Links between mindfulness and reductions in blood pressure, heart rate and inflammation
- It can help shrink belly fat and increase pain tolerance
- Aid chronic fatigue sufferers



Agents can become less reactive and more responsive -

Regulation of emotions and self awareness can lend towards a more empathetic conversation or interaction, as well as maintain stronger calls to action or understanding of next steps


Increased resiliency -

One bad call or chat or social engagement can throw an agent off for hours, if not the whole day. Through mindfulness, agents harden their shell by softening their tension

Focus -

Going back to multitasking, recent studies show that call center agents are maneuvering through as many as six or seven different software programs to find answers and solutions for customers. That juggling act can cause delays or frustration and although they attempt to mask it, clients can feel it too.





Implementing Mindfulness

Cool...now what


$$E+R=O$$

Event + Response = Outcome

In Practice

Breath.

Breathing slowly for 1 minute can increase oxygen to the brain, calm the body and allow for an anchor to focus. Try some under-10-minute [breathing exercises](#) to ease your mood immediately.

And breathing isn't the only [exercise](#) you can do to reset your spirits. Try observing, listening, and appreciating more intentionally, too.

Be Conscious

Just because you're checked out for lunch time doesn't mean that isn't still a core time to be connected with your surroundings. [Eating consciously](#) will make sure you're not scarfing down everything mindlessly—which in turn means you won't be crashing later.

Be Active (not just physically)

How often do you have conversations you can barely recall, because you were too busy thinking about that call you have to make later? Turns out, [active listening](#) can make all sides of a conversation feel better.





Questions

Credits

<http://globalworkplaceanalytics.com/resources/costs-benefits>

<https://www.independentagent.com/Resources/AgencyManagement/ACT/SiteAssets/Pages/efficient/Workflow/Remote%20Work%20Best%20Practices/Remote%20Work%20Best%20Practices%20Guide%20-%20Sharon%20Emek%20-%202016Sep24.pdf>

<https://www.themuse.com/advice/14-realistic-ways-you-can-start-being-more-mindful-at-work-and-stop-feeling-so-overwhelmed>

