

Online Research @ Cardiff

This is an Open Access document downloaded from ORCA, Cardiff University's institutional repository: <https://orca.cardiff.ac.uk/id/eprint/108700/>

This is the author's version of a work that was submitted to / accepted for publication.

Citation for final published version:

Hales, Jonathan M. 2018. Response to "Why mindfulness matters in medical education". The British Student Doctor Journal 2 (1) , pp. 32-33.
10.18573/bsdj.42 file

Publishers page: <http://dx.doi.org/10.18573/bsdj.42>
<<http://dx.doi.org/10.18573/bsdj.42>>

Please note:

Changes made as a result of publishing processes such as copy-editing, formatting and page numbers may not be reflected in this version. For the definitive version of this publication, please refer to the published source. You are advised to consult the publisher's version if you wish to cite this paper.

This version is being made available in accordance with publisher policies.

See

<http://orca.cf.ac.uk/policies.html> for usage policies. Copyright and moral rights for publications made available in ORCA are retained by the copyright holders.



Response to: “Why mindfulness matters in medical education”

CORRESPONDENCE

AUTHOR

Dr Jonathan M. Hales

Former Senior Lecturer and
Lead for Health Enhancement
Programme
University of Leicester

Address for Correspondence

Dr Jonathan M. Hales
Leicester Medical School
George Davies Centre
University of Leicester
Leicester LE1 7RH

Email: Jmh9@le.ac.uk

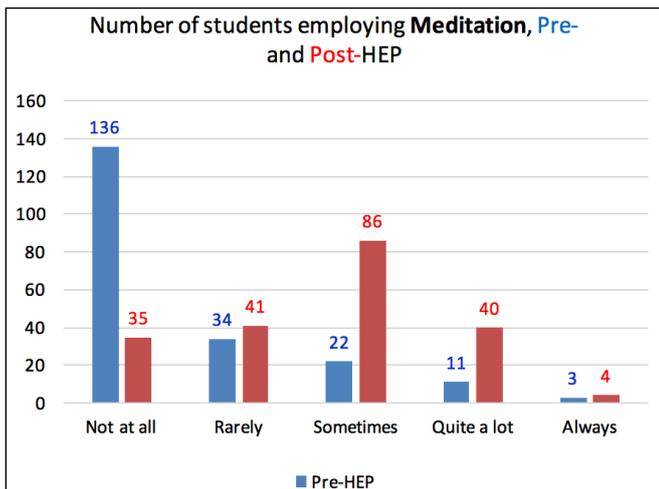
*Conflicts of Interest: Dr Craig Hased
has worked with us closely to deliver the
Health Enhancement Programme at the
University of Leicester. He also gave us
a great deal of personal advice for the best
delivery of the programme.*

Accepted for publication:
12.01.2018

Dr Craig Hased's paper (1) makes a compelling case for the introduction of mindfulness to medical curricula and proposes that the question, “Why not teach mindfulness?” has more rational support than its counterpart, “Why teach it?”. The evidence continues to mount; Galante et al. (2) studied 616 Cambridge University students demonstrating significantly reduced, self-reported psychological stress during the exam period in the group receiving a mindfulness skills course plus normal support, compared with those receiving normal support alone. Several UK medical schools offer mindfulness training on an elective basis whilst Leicester and Warwick have introduced it as core curriculum. Leicester has just completed its second delivery of Dr Hased's mindfulness-based, Health Enhancement Programme (HEP) which his team has been teaching for 16 years. We contacted Dr Hased in light of papers showing positive impact of the HEP. He has advised at universities in Australasia as well as at Harvard, McGill and Toronto and visited us at Leicester, delivering masterclasses to staff and generously giving us his HEP manuals and lectures. We were suddenly in possession of a tried and tested mindfulness course and of ongoing expert advice. With an enviable decisiveness, Leicester's Head of School, Prof London, instructed that the HEP be delivered to our first semester medical students. Nearly thirty staff, some already mindfulness practitioners, volunteered to train in HEP delivery. In house mindfulness teaching was arranged for staff, some choosing to supplement this with external courses, and with the excellent, free Monash mindfulness MOOC. (3) Quantitative, post-HEP, Leicester student feedback has demonstrated a statistically significant, positive correlation between self-perceived employment of mindfulness and eight, self-perceived indicators of wellbeing (improved mood, level of

anxiety and general level of energy, as well as the abilities to manage stress, to relax, to keep stress in perspective, and to communicate and problem solve).

Figure 1. Number of students employing meditation, pre and post-HEP.



It is hard to overestimate what the staff at the University of Leicester have learned about mindfulness delivery through Dr Craig Hased's brief pivotal visits. His own engagement with mindfulness began intuitively as a first year Melbourne medical student and was later enriched by awareness of what science and the wisdom traditions have to say about it. His masterclasses and personal example helped us to teach it by being present, letting go, respectfully accepting whatever genuine response our students brought to the group, and by welcoming resistance. We learnt to value our students' informal mindfulness practices, however brief, and that we need not labour the formal sitting meditation, despite its value. We learnt the importance of providing the scientific evidence base for mindfulness but also the value of understatement and how giving our students the space to learn from each other's experience can be much more effective than our own 'answers'. We learnt that being flexible with the form, but faithful to the philosophy of mindfulness, is an important underpinning and that having a personal mindful practice is essential. In a gentle way, Dr Hased knows that what he promotes is good for medical students, doctors and their patients; he may endeavour to come to your medical school should you ask him to do so.

REFERENCES

1. Hased, C. Why mindfulness matters in higher education. *The British Student Doctor*. 2017;1(2):3-7.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.18573/n.2017.10181>
2. Galante, J. Dufour, G. Vainre, M. Wagner, AP. Stochl, J. Benton, A. et al. A mindfulness-based intervention to increase resilience to stress in university students (the Mindful Student Study): a pragmatic randomised controlled trial. *The Lancet Public Health*. 2017; S2468-2667 (17). [Accessed 22 Jan 2018]. Available from: [http://www.thelancet.com/pdfs/journals/lanpub/PIIS2468-2667\(17\)30231-1.pdf](http://www.thelancet.com/pdfs/journals/lanpub/PIIS2468-2667(17)30231-1.pdf).
[http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S2468-2667\(17\)30231-1](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S2468-2667(17)30231-1)
3. FutureLearn. *Mindfulness for Wellbeing and Peak Performance*. London: Future Learn; 2017 [accessed 22 Jan 2018]. Available from: <https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/mindfulness-wellbeing-performance>.



The British Student Doctor is an open access journal, which means that all content is available without charge to the user or his/her institution. You are allowed to read, download, copy, distribute, print, search, or link to the full texts of the articles in this journal without asking prior permission from either the publisher or the author.

bsdj.org.uk



[/thebsdj](https://www.facebook.com/thebsdj)



[@thebsdj](https://twitter.com/thebsdj)



[@thebsdj](https://www.instagram.com/thebsdj)

Journal DOI

[10.18573/issn.2514-3174](https://doi.org/10.18573/issn.2514-3174)

Issue DOI

[10.18573/bsdj.v2i1](https://doi.org/10.18573/bsdj.v2i1)

This journal is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License. The copyright of all articles belongs to **The British Student Doctor**, and a citation should be made when any article is quoted, used or referred to in another work.



Cardiff University Press

Gwasg Prifysgol Caerdydd

The British Student Doctor is an imprint of Cardiff University Press, an innovative open-access publisher of academic research, where 'open-access' means free for both readers and writers.

cardiffuniversitypress.org