

Welcome!
Lunch and Learn
Presentation
and Practice:
“How
Mindfulness can
Help During the
Pandemic”
Dr. Toupey Luft,
Psychologist
Assistant
Professor,
Health Sciences

Our plan for the hour:

- Brief Introductions and Guidelines~10 min
- Overview of Our Challenges~5 min
- Definition of Mindfulness and How it Can Help~10 min
- Three Specific Challenges and Practices-30 min
- Checkout and Reminder from Suzanne~final 5 min

Introduction of Presenter (AKA Me) 😊

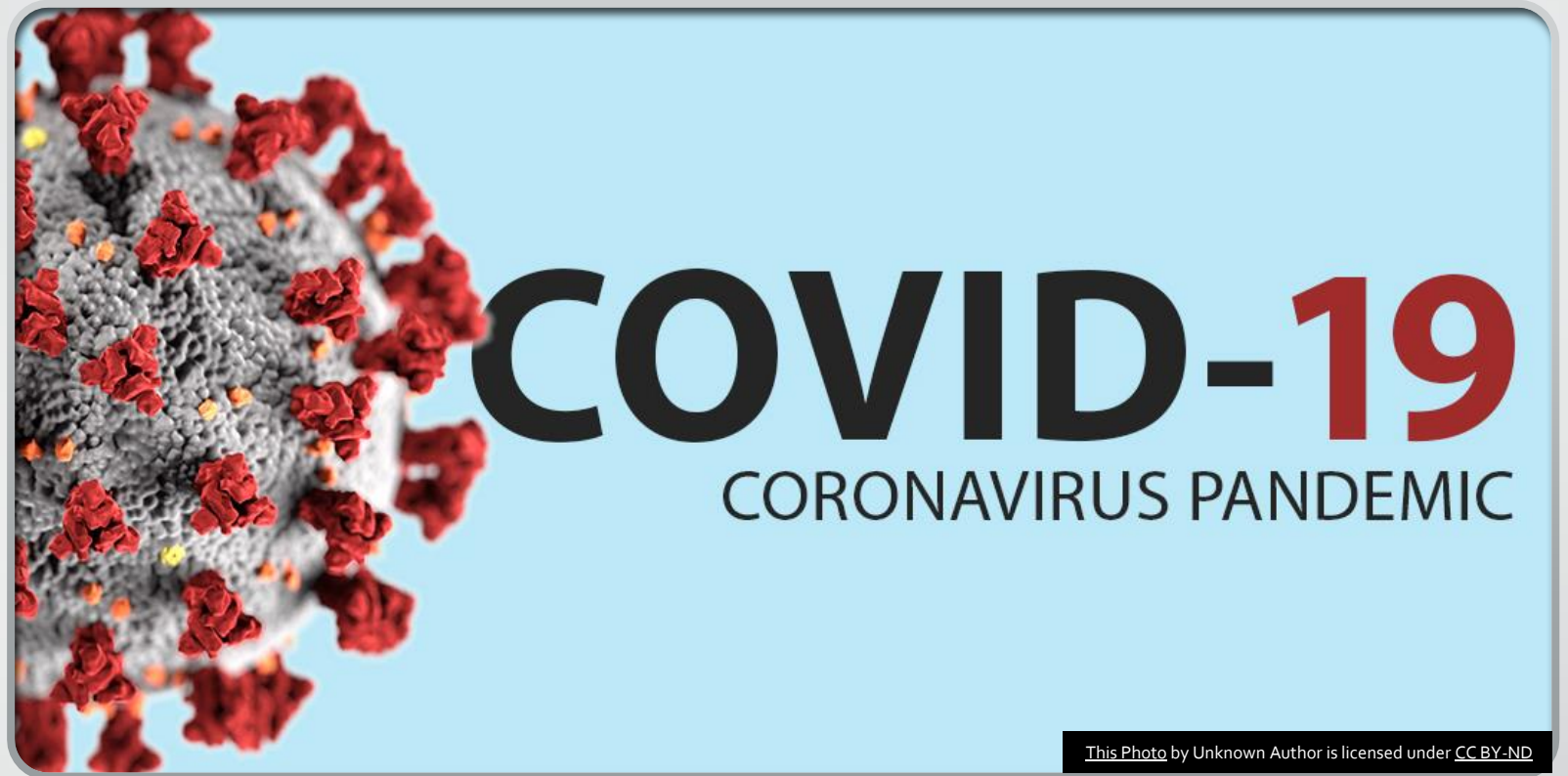
- Mindfulness has been important to me as a person, psychologist, educator, and researcher
- My thanks to Suzanne for asking me to present today
- Like you, I've faced challenges to my mental wellness during the COVID-19 pandemic
- I've found a lot of mindfulness strategies and practices have helped me cope better



Introductions to Each Other

- I'm going to put you into small groups in Zoom rooms.
- In those small groups, I'd like you to
 - 1) give your name and affiliation with the UL.
 - 2) Mention what brings you to the presentation today.
 - 3) Discuss with your small group a challenge (related or semi-related to COVID-19) that you've overcome in the past 6 months.
 - 4) Keep in mind to share only what you are comfortable in disclosing.





Why Have the Past 6 Months Been So Hard?



Why Have the Past 6 Months Been So Hard?

REASON 1: The PANDEMIC DEMANDS our
ATTENTION



Why Have the Past 6 Months Been So Hard?
REASON 2: It is Out of our Control



Why Have the Past 6 Months
Been So Hard?
REASON 3: We experience loss
and grief and we lose
compassion for ourselves and
others



What is Mindfulness? Western Understanding

“A way of being in a wise and purposeful relationship with one’s experience. It is cultivated by systematically exercising one’s capacity for paying attention, on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally”.

~Jon Kabat-Zinn, 1994

It is Important to Remember the Roots of Mindfulness



This includes remembering that Blackfoot ways of knowing are very similar to some Buddhist philosophies in acknowledging the interconnectedness of all things.

Aokaakyoosin in Blackfoot

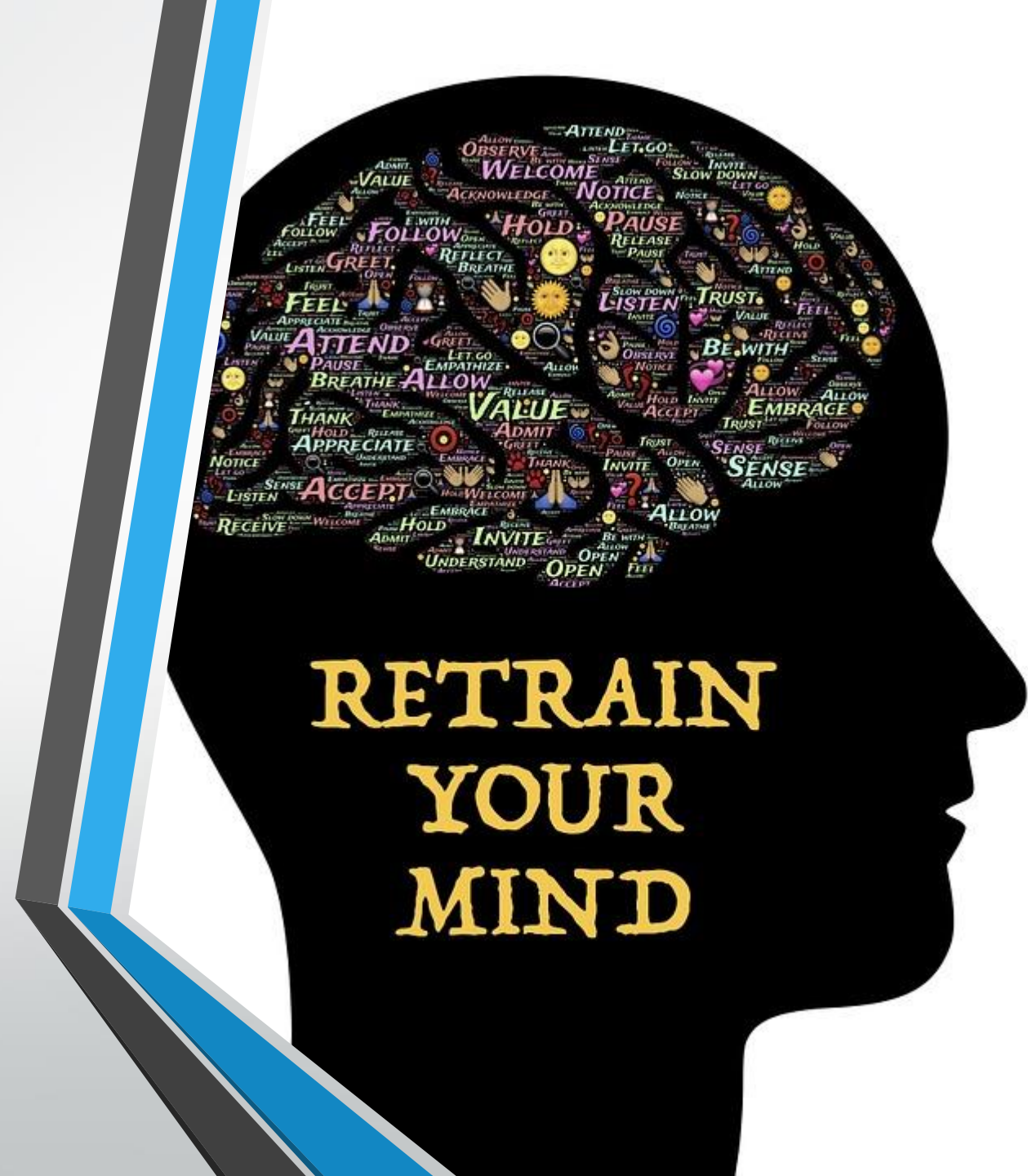


How Can Mindfulness Help Us During the Pandemic and Beyond?

*Also want to
mention that you
are in charge of
how you practice
today

Mindfulness Can Help Us...

- Better respond to the challenges of our lives.
- We can do this by learning to tune into our experience in the present – to shine a light on it. We can become aware of our feelings, moods, and thoughts.
- By breaking out of unconscious, habitual responses, we can have more choice about what we pay attention to.





Revisiting: Why Have the Past 6 Months Been
So Hard?

REASON 1: The PANDEMIC DEMANDS our
ATTENTION

Practice to Address: from Siegel's "Aware"
www.drdansiegel.com



REASON 2: It is Out of our Control
Practice to Address: Dr. Tara Brach
"Transforming Fear"

<https://www.tarabrach.com/meditation-transforming-fear/>



REASON 3: We experience loss and grief and we lose compassion for ourselves and others

Exercise to Address:

Treating Yourself as a Friend
Adapted from self-compassion.org

Treating Yourself as a Friend - page 1 of 3

- First, think about times when a close friend feels badly about themselves or is really struggling in some way. How would you respond to your friend in this situation (especially when you're at your best)? Please write down what you typically do, what you say, and note the tone in which you typically talk to your friends.



Treating Yourself as a Friend –page 2 of 3

- Now think about times when you feel bad about yourself or are struggling. How do you typically respond to yourself in these situations? Please write down what you typically do, what you say, and note the tone in which you talk to yourself.
- Did you notice a difference? If so, ask yourself why. What factors or fears come into play that lead you to treat yourself and others so differently?



Treating Yourself as a Friend –page 3 of 3

- Please write down how you think things might change if you responded to yourself in the same way you typically respond to a close friend when you're suffering.
- **Why not try treating yourself like a good friend and see what happens?**



Final Reflections and Questions (if time)

- Thank you for engaging with me and with yourselves over the past hour.
- I'm going to hand things off to Suzanne who will mention what further wellness and mental health resources are available.

