



Tord Helsingeng: Mindful Relief for Chronic Pain



Tord Helsingeng trained as a bodyworker with focus on shiatsu and acupuncture, and is now using mindfulness to help people with stress and chronic pain. Explore a library of mindfulness exercises for chronic pain and participate in a friendliness meditation.

TOP EMBODIMENT TIP: It's possible to train your attentional skills in all situations. Even if you're struggling, you are training your skills and they will improve!

Some Basic Pain Theory: **Pain as output**

- Traditionally pain was seen as input from damaged tissue reporting to the brain. We know from several studies that this is not true, e.g. in military hospitals, when soldiers had surgeries without anesthesia and still reported no pain, or when no damage caused enormous pain. Today we see pain as output: The brain gathers information and creates pain if it thinks that's the best protection. **What we feel and think about the pain is crucial.**

The Biopsychosocial Model Involve Multiple factors:

- Psychological factors: How we are thinking about the pain
- Biological factors: E.g. Inflammation
- Social factors: e.g. gender, how connected you are to the people around you, how your work life affects you.
- **Since pain is so complex, all approaches to pain relief have to be tailored individually.**

The Main Challenge: **Catastrophizing**

- We have nociceptors, danger receptors (not pain receptors), signalling to the brain whether to make pain or not. Physical trauma causes the body to create new, more sensitive nociceptors. These new nociceptors are like overactive surveillance cameras with extra high alarm.

Mindfulness: **Being kind to yourself**

- Shinzen Young's definition: **Mindfulness is three attentional skills working together: concentration power, sensory clarity and equanimity.** By training mindfulness, you increase the base level of the three attentional skills.

Equanimity - a Universal Key to Pain Relief:

- Equanimity is the ability to allow sensory events to come and go without resistance, neither holding on to them nor pushing them away. **Increased equanimity is our main tool** for reducing catastrophizing, anxiety, depression, and increasing satisfaction and having a more active life.

Resources

- ❖ **Website:** [Mindfulrelief](#)
- ❖ **References:** There are lots of references in the document of the [presentation](#)



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Rafe's work has been featured in TEDx, the Journal of Ancestral Health, Paleo Fx, the Ancestral Health Symposium, The Embodiment Conference, multiple health and well-being podcasts, and he even organized the first international parkour events in the United States.



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