



Dan Siegel's Mindsight Lecture Series Topics for 2012-2013

Session #1 - October 12, 2012

Mindsight in Politics

Our relationships with both our larger community and with authority figures, among other factors, shape how we feel a part of the political process. As we begin this year's exploration of mindsight in our lives, we'll dive into the political mind in the heat of the presidential race just before the national elections take place.

- What does research tell us about how the brain responds to political choices?
- How can we feel a part of a "we" when the person we voted for loses?

Recommended Reading: *A Mindful Nation: How a Simple Practice Can Help Us Reduce Stress, Improve Performance, and Recapture the American Spirit*, by Tim Ryan

Session #2 - November 9, 2012

Practical Applications: Strengthening the Mind Part 1

By defining the mind as a self-organizing, emergent process that regulates the flow of energy and information within the body and within our relationships, we are in a powerful position to strengthen the mind. Regulation entails monitoring and modifying. When we strengthen the mind, we can learn practical skills of monitoring with more depth and stability so that we see more detail and more clearly. We can also learn to modulate energy and information flow toward integration—the linkage of differentiated elements of our minds, bodies, and our relationships.

- How can we learn to directly strengthen in our minds in schools and in our family life?
- What are the practical ways we can apply mindsight skill training in our daily life?

Recommended Reading: *Mindsight: The New Science of Personal Transformation*, by Daniel J. Siegel

Session #3 - December 14, 2012

Practical Applications: Strengthening the Mind Part 2

In this presentation we'll dive even deeper into how to make mindsight skills a part of daily living. Strengthening the mind is not something one does once and is done—this is a lifelong challenge and an opportunity to transform the ordinary into the extraordinary.

- What are the ways we can integrate our relationships?
- How does focusing the mind integrate the brain?

Recommended Reading: *Mindsight: The New Science of Personal Transformation*, by Daniel J. Siegel

Session #4 - January 11, 2013

The Teen Brain

The brain is in an active state of reorganization during our adolescent years. In this discussion we'll explore how modern neuroscience and cultural anthropology can be combined to see how the universal need to transition from childhood to adulthood involves fundamental changes in not only behavior and social roles, but in the structures of the brain responsible for executive functions—the prefrontal cortex. It is the reconstruction of this prefrontal region that helps us understand the huge changes that adolescents, and their parents and teachers, face during these years of opportunity, challenge, and transition.

- Why is associating with peers over parents so important for human societies around the globe?
- How do changes in the brain influence adolescent behavior and what can adults do with this knowledge to best respond to the challenges that arise?

No Recommended Reading

Session #5 - January 25, 2013

Connecting to our Parents Across the Lifespan

We walk through life with at least two others inside of our mind—our parents. How do the relationships we have had with our parents influence our adult functioning? How do we come to make sense of where we've come and move into a “coherent narrative” of our life experiences? In this presentation we will explore the research into personal narratives and how making sense of our parents' own ways of being can shape who we are and who we can become.

- How do parents influence an adult's state of mind?
- Why is making-sense of our parental legacy so important for moving into a full way of living as an adult?

Recommended Reading: *Are You My Mother?: A Comic Drama*, by Alison Bechdel and *Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic*, by Alison Bechdel

Session #6 - February 15, 2013

Trauma and Attachment

Becoming overwhelmed during childhood can leave lasting impacts on how we have developed a coherent sense of our selves. Direct responses to trauma and our adaptations to traumatic experience can each shape our development. Without integrating these effects into a coherent way of regulating our emotion, attention, and memory, we are vulnerable to cascades of reinforcing loops of feeling and not feeling that shape our relationships and embed themselves in our ways of being in the world. In this discussion we'll explore both how to understand these important developmental impacts on attachment and how as adults we can liberate ourselves from their constraining impacts on our lives.

- How do implicit memories of trauma limit our capacity for joy?
- Can patterns of relating to others after traumatic childhood experiences be changed, and how does healing occur?

Recommended Reading: *Trauma and the Body: A Sensorimotor Approach to Psychotherapy*, by Pat Ogden, Kekuni Minton & Clare Pain

Session #7 - March 15, 2013

Thriving with Uncertainty in Life

Fascinating studies on the process of “presence” reveal how being aware of what is happening as it is happening is a crucial component of healthy living. Parallel to these findings are the two forms of “being mindful” that have been studied in research on “creative” and on “contemplative” mindfulness. What links presence and these forms of mindfulness may very well be the capacity to not only tolerate, but to thrive in the face of uncertainty. We’ll dive deeply into how embracing uncertainty can be cultivated in our lives and what this informs us about regarding the human mind in difficulties and in health.

- How do we develop the ability to thrive in the face of life’s uncertainties?
- If the brain strives for certainty, what can a mind do to combat such an innate distaste for not knowing and not being certain?

Recommended Reading: No recommended reading

Session #8 - April 12, 2013

Mindsight at Work

Our work environment shapes our mind in powerful ways. And our mind can shape our experience in work. When we come to “see the mind” and move the mind to an integrated way of being, we say that we have “mindsight.” Practicing mindsight skills in the workplace transforms the daily grind into the emerging mind. In this presentation we’ll discuss practical ways to practice mindsight at work and how this can link internal well-being and professional life in sometimes surprising and often transformative ways.

- Why is the work setting a place to practice mindsight if work has nothing to do with the mind?
- How can sensing and integrating the mind help with work efficiency and creativity?

Recommended Reading: *Your Brain at Work: Strategies for Overcoming Distraction, Regaining Focus, and Working Smarter All Day Long*, by David Rock

Sessions #9 - May 31, 2013

Mindsight in the Media

The mind emerges as energy and information not only flows within us, but between us. This “between” occurs in rapid and changing ways with modern media, from traditional forms of journalism and entertainment to the digital world of gaming, social media, and tablet life. In this presentation we’ll explore what is known about how media shapes the mind at various developmental stages and what we can do to make positive changes in this important part of our collective lives.

- How do digital environments shape how we pay attention and remember experience?

- What is the impact of continuous distraction and divided attention on the developing mind?

Recommended Reading: *Alone Together: Why We Expect More from Technology and Less from Each Other*, by Sherry Turkle

Session #10 - June 7, 2013

How Relationships Promote Health and Happiness

What do we know about the ways in which happiness seems to depend on the supportive nature of our social relationships? Why are relationships so vital for our well-being? In this discussion, we'll draw on a wide range of studies and the whole of the field of Interpersonal Neurobiology to place a spotlight on our connections to other people. We'll explore how healthy relationships can be defined and outline the skills needed to cultivate healthy relationships across the lifespan.

- Why are relationships so important for mental and medical health?
- What are the key features of relationships that support happiness and well-being?

Recommended Reading: *Social Intelligence: The New Science of Human Relationships*, by Daniel Goleman

Recommended Reading

Session 1: *A Mindful Nation: How a Simple Practice Can Help Us Reduce Stress, Improve Performance, and Recapture the American Spirit*, by Tim Ryan

Sessions 2 and 3: *Mindsight: The New Science of Personal Transformation*, by Daniel J. Siegel

Session 4: No recommended reading

Session 5: *Are You My Mother?: A Comic Drama*, by Alison Bechdel and *Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic*, by Alison Bechdel

Session 6: *Trauma and the Body: A Sensorimotor Approach to Psychotherapy*, by Pat Ogden, Kekuni Minton & Clare Pain

Session 7: No recommended reading

Session 8: *Your Brain at Work: Strategies for Overcoming Distraction, Regaining Focus, and Working Smarter All Day Long*, by David Rock

Session 9: *Alone Together: Why We Expect More from Technology and Less from Each Other*, by Sherry Turkle

Session 10: *Social Intelligence: The New Science of Human Relationships*, by Daniel Goleman