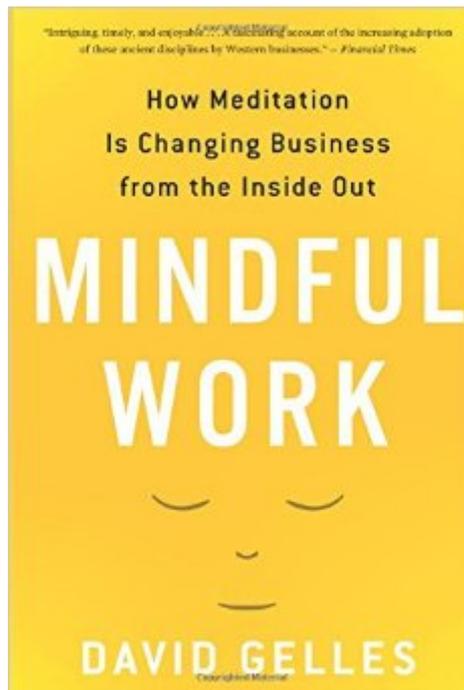


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Mindful Work: How Meditation Is Changing Business From The Inside Out (Eamon Dolan)



Synopsis

â€œIntriguing, timely, and enjoyable . . . A fascinating account of the increasing adoption of these ancient disciplines by Western businesses.â€ •Â€”Â€ Financial Times â€œ[An] adroit exploration. [Gelles] deftly describes what mindfulness is and what it isnâ€™t, presents the science behind it, and handily succeeds in convincing readers that the practice is worth exploring.â€ •â€”

SuccessBusiness leaders around the country are discovering that meditation may be the key to fostering a happier, more productive workplace. Many American companies, including some of our largest â€” such as General Mills, Ford, Target, and Google â€” have built extensive programs to foster mindful practices among their workers. Mindful Work is the first book to explain how all sorts of businesses and any kind of worker can benefit from meditation, yoga, and other mindful techniques. Mindfulness lowers stress, increases mental focus, and alleviates depression among workers. It has also benefited companies that have adopted it â€” from the millions of dollars Aetna has saved in health-care costs to the ways Patagonia has combined leadership in its market with a pervasively mindful outlook. Mindful Work offers an eye-opening tour through this new landscape, and goes beyond other books on the subject by providing evidence for the practical benefits of mindfulness and showing readers how to become more mindful themselves.â€ •Brimming with insights and backed up with solid research, Mindful Work takes us to the front lines of a revolution that is transforming the business world.â€ •â€” Arianna Huffington

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Customer Reviews

I'm not sure who is the intended audience for this book. If you know little to nothing about meditation and mindfulness practice or about the decades of research (physically-focused or psychologically-centered) that outlines the benefits of meditation or mindfulness practice, then the book is likely to be of some use to you, and the revelation of the value of such practices in business may seem like important news. But if you know much of anything about meditation or mindfulness practice, the chances are good that you'll also know something about the decades of research into its mechanisms and its health (and spiritual) benefits. The question then becomes largely one of how interesting you find the author's autobiographical observations and anecdotes about conversations with great businessmen (and the occasional businesswoman). Since I have known about meditation and mindfulness practice and the research into their value for a long time, was not all really engaged by this man's journey of discovery, and don't generally regard the pronouncements of business VIPs as of much interest or relevance, I did not find much of value or interest in the book. I found it overlong, overwritten, and just not that much fun to read. But that's me; I can't say whether people with different attitudes, experiences, or interests would find the book more engaging and informative. I think not, but that could be more a reflection of my angle of vision than a judgment about the book. I do believe that people who are seriously interested in learning about and perhaps developing a meditation practice would do much better to read some of Zabat-Zinn's work than this book. FULL CATASTROPHE LIVING is a wonderful book, and one I've recommended and given as a gift for a long time.

On pages 258-259 of this wonderful book you'll find a basic mindfulness meditation primer, so all the busy executives and employees looking to start somewhere will be able to take a mindful moment and meditate. Then, having put that conflict with a co-worker or unhappy customer or frazzled IT department in proper perspective, you might be able to find the space and time to read the rest of Mindful Work. Please READ THAT FIRST and read the rest of the book at your leisure. Preferably practice the basic mindfulness routine a few times. Once you get into Mindful Work, you will find it's not "McMindfulness"--yes, this is a chapter in the book, providing an excellent critique of the cultural critique of a mass mindfulness culture detached from the original tradition of "how the swans came to the lake" (Chapter 2) and Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau--the original American zen masters. (You had to know the man who wrote WALDEN would be in line with Buddha and the dharma.) True mindful practice at work is not, as David Gelles argues (having established his meditation creds by saying he meditated under a body tree in Bodh Gaya, India),

just a way to make employees compliant cogs in the corporate machine, as established by none other than master Thich Nhat Hanh, who once said, "Smiling is important. If we are not able to smile, then the world will not have peace." However, Gelles does argue that "as much as mindfulness is goes mainstream, the marketplace for information, education, and training on the topic is a disorganized, confusing and ineffective mess.

Mind fullness as opposed to mind emptiness whereby the mind is narrowed due to rage, or powerful emotions is what this book is all about. On a more timid level achieving the alpha state is something that everyone achieves naturally from time to time. It is the state of greatest problem solving ability. I was fortunate to have studied Dr. Wayne Dyer's teachings and he taught me a form of meditation that I think everyone can relate to. Let's say you are angry, or afraid, tensed out etc. Instead of making important decisions in that state of mind, what you want to do is lie down, or you can do this sitting, I prefer lying down and resting my palms on my chest and simply let all of the thoughts go out of your mind. Don't argue with them, just kindly show them the door. It takes about 10 or 15 minutes for them to leave, but finally they do. There is a profound change that comes over you. You can arise with a clear mind. At the moment you achieve this you may even feel a jerk of your leg like something left. I, unlike the author have a spiritual orientation. Without getting off on a tangent, what occurs is that you arise and problems that you thought were problems are no longer important. You become aware of problems on a deeper level and the answers to those problems appear effortlessly. A feeling of peace and joy permeates your being. Knowing what you just realized will bring you the answers you really seek. So what does this book do? It spends a good deal of time establishing how mindfulness is permeating the workplace of some very notable corporations. I know many years ago MacDonald's had a meditation room, and their executives were known to push themselves away from their desks when the onslaught of problems became unbearable, and to go and sit and meditate.

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