

The Mindful Justice Initiative

Report
September 2016



Above, leaders from throughout the criminal justice system, including police, corrections officials, former inmates, victim advocates, restorative justice practitioners, mindfulness teachers, and former prosecutors, public defenders, and judges, gathered in Kalamazoo, Michigan for MJI's conference on building a more just and compassionate criminal justice system, grounded in mindfulness practices and principles.

Read more on page 6 of the report.

A collaboration of
Prison Mindfulness Institute
and
**Transforming Justice: The Center for
Mindfulness And Criminal Justice**

Systems change, starting from the inside.

The crisis in our criminal justice system today is acute: a system of mass incarceration with enormous human and financial costs; an epidemic of deadly encounters between civilians and law enforcement; shockingly high recidivism rates among those leaving our jails and prisons; and racial disparities at every level of the system. Many citizens, particularly people of color, no longer trust law enforcement and our courts to dispense justice.

There is no simple solution for this crisis. It will require, among other things, new approaches to recruitment and training, greater investment in our communities, increased government transparency, and police accountability.

We believe it will also take inner change by the people who manage the system, and a commitment to build a different kind of criminal justice system, focused on fairness, compassion, and community safety.

Both those who operate the criminal justice system, and those caught up in the system need tools with which to better manage stress, to strengthen impulse control, reduce unconscious racial bias, and increase empathy and compassion. Without these tools, we will continue to witness cycles of violence, reactivity, and cruelty.

An approach being embraced in a growing number of criminal justice settings is the powerful yet simple practice of mindfulness*. The practice has been a source of personal transformation for centuries, and recently has been embraced by schools, corporations, and even sports teams.

Organizations across the country now offer mindfulness-based programs to



ABOVE, police in York, Ontario, meditate as part of a mindfulness training.

* What is mindfulness?

Mindfulness is a quality of mind cultivated through a nonjudgmental, receptive attention to our moment-to-moment experience. Paying attention in this way wakes us from our habitual thought patterns, emotional reactivity and unconscious or impulsive behaviors. Practices that develop this capacity include sitting meditation, certain forms of yoga, qi gong, and walking meditation.

police, prosecutors, judges, inmates, correctional officers, and court-involved youth (see **Map**, p. 4), ranging from short workshops to year-long intensive trainings.

The effects, in many cases, are profound. We and our partners have observed that mindfulness boosts resilience, helps develop concentration, and enhances empathy and compassion towards others. If offered on a large scale, we believe it could gradually shift many of the attitudes and behaviors that cause so much suffering in the system.

The Mindful Justice Initiative

In 2014, The Mindful Justice Initiative

was formed as a collaboration between two organizations—Prison Mindfulness Institute and Transforming Justice—in order to harness and connect this growing community of organizations, service-providers, community groups, and policy-makers.

In 2015, we hosted the first national conference on creating a mindful criminal justice system (See p. 5), which has helped catalyze the spread of mindfulness-based initiatives throughout the country.

We are now focused on two key goals: 1) developing a mindful criminal justice system in Santa Clara County, California, by training prosecutors, public defenders, judges, and others in mindfulness (See p. 6), and 2) coordinating a national effort to integrate mindfulness into criminal justice from front to back.

This report describes our work in more detail. We hope you will find the information useful, and will consider partnering with us in bringing mindfulness into your work. Please feel free to contact us at info@mindfuljustice.org

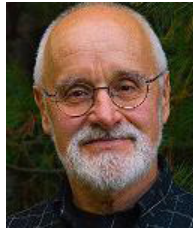
Who we are

MINDFUL JUSTICE INITIATIVE LEADERSHIP



Fleet Maull, Co-Director

Fleet, a leading innovator and provider of mindfulness-based programs in corrections for more than 30 years, is a pioneer of the Mindful Justice movement. He founded Prison Mindfulness Institute, the Center for Mindfulness in Corrections and National Prison Hospice Association, and co-authored with Kate Crisp the Path of Freedom curriculum for prisoners and the Mindfulness-Based Wellness & Resiliency (MBWR) curriculum for corrections professionals.



Charlie Halpern, Co-Director

Charlie is a long-time social entrepreneur and innovator in legal education. He founded the Berkeley Initiative for Mindfulness in Law in 2011 and for more than 20 years has led workshops and retreats for law students and law professionals, in the U.S. and abroad. He is the President of Transforming Justice.



Dan Carlin, Associate Director

Dan is Executive Director of Transforming Justice. He was previously Associate Director of the Berkeley Initiative for Mindfulness in Law at UC Berkeley School of Law, which helped pioneer mindfulness in legal education and law practice. He is currently a core teacher in the San Jose Project, training prosecutors, public defenders, and judges in mindfulness.



Rhonda Magee, Senior Advisor

Professor at University of San Francisco Law School and a leading scholar and thinker in the integration of mindfulness into legal education and dialogues around race, class, gender, power, and privilege. She is currently Board Chair of Transforming Justice.

ABOUT THE ORGANIZATIONS

Prison Mindfulness Institute (PMI), a national organization based in Massachusetts, is a leader in designing and delivering evidenced-based mindfulness programming for inmates and corrections professionals. PMI is focused on healing individual lives and transforming the correctional system as a whole, in order to mitigate its destructive impact on families, communities and society while reducing crime, enhancing public safety and building strong, resilient communities.

Transforming Justice: The Center for Mindfulness and Criminal Justice, based in Berkeley, California, was established to bring greater compassion, justice, and respect for human dignity into the criminal justice system through the transformative practices and principles of mindfulness. We focus particularly on bringing mindfulness training to prosecutors, public defenders, and judges, and partner with allies throughout the system to advance a vision of system-wide change.

On the Cover

24 leaders from across the criminal justice system, representing police, courts, corrections, community groups, victim's advocates, former inmates, court-involved youth, and others attended MJ's 2015 conference at the Fetzer Institute's Seasons conference center called "Mindful Justice: Creating a Criminal Justice System Grounded in Mindfulness, Compassion, and Human Dignity."

Back row: Fania Davis, Sujatha Baliga, Chris Innes, Ron Tyler, Charlie Halpern, Brad Bogue, Jonathan Simon, Richard Goerling, Fariborz Pakseresht, Mark Bolton, Jacques Verduin

Middle: Beverly Kingston, Leslie Booker, Preeta Bansal, Linda Grdina, Fleet Maull, Jared Seide

Front: Jeni Lyon, Bob Barton, Joel Villaseca, Rhonda Magee, Robin Fisher, Dan Carlin, Ron Greenberg

Our Guiding Principles

#1

Facilitating inner change among those who operate the criminal justice system, those who are caught in it, and those in our communities is a critical element in addressing the fundamental inhumanity of our criminal justice system.

#2

All people, including those who have committed serious crimes and made mistakes, have inherent goodness that can and should be cultivated and nurtured.

#3

Our institutions of criminal justice should be guided by principles of respect for human dignity and compassion for others, and these principles should be reflected in institutional practices and policies.

#4

Training and supervision of criminal justice workers should involve principles and practices, including meditation, that support discernment, wisdom, and compassion.

#5

The transformation of the criminal justice system should be guided by community engagement and input, and enacted in partnership with community organizations.

#6

The integration of mindfulness into the criminal justice system must be done in a way that repairs the disproportionate harm the system has had on poor communities and communities of color.

MINDFULNESS IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

A growing movement of organizations, meditation teachers, and policy-makers are using mindfulness principles and practices to advance a more fair, humane, and compassionate criminal justice system. Here are several examples

POLICE in Hillsboro, a suburb of Portland, have introduced an 8-week mindfulness based resiliency training program for its officers

24 CRIMINAL JUSTICE LEADERS gathered for a national conference in Michigan in September 2015 to discuss how mindfulness can transform criminal justice. See videos and papers from the conference at www.mindfuljusticeconference.org

CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS

The Center for Mindfulness in Corrections is providing mindfulness-based wellness & resiliency (MBWR) training to correctional officers and other criminal justice staff in Oregon, Kentucky, Colorado, and Massachusetts and will soon launch programs California.

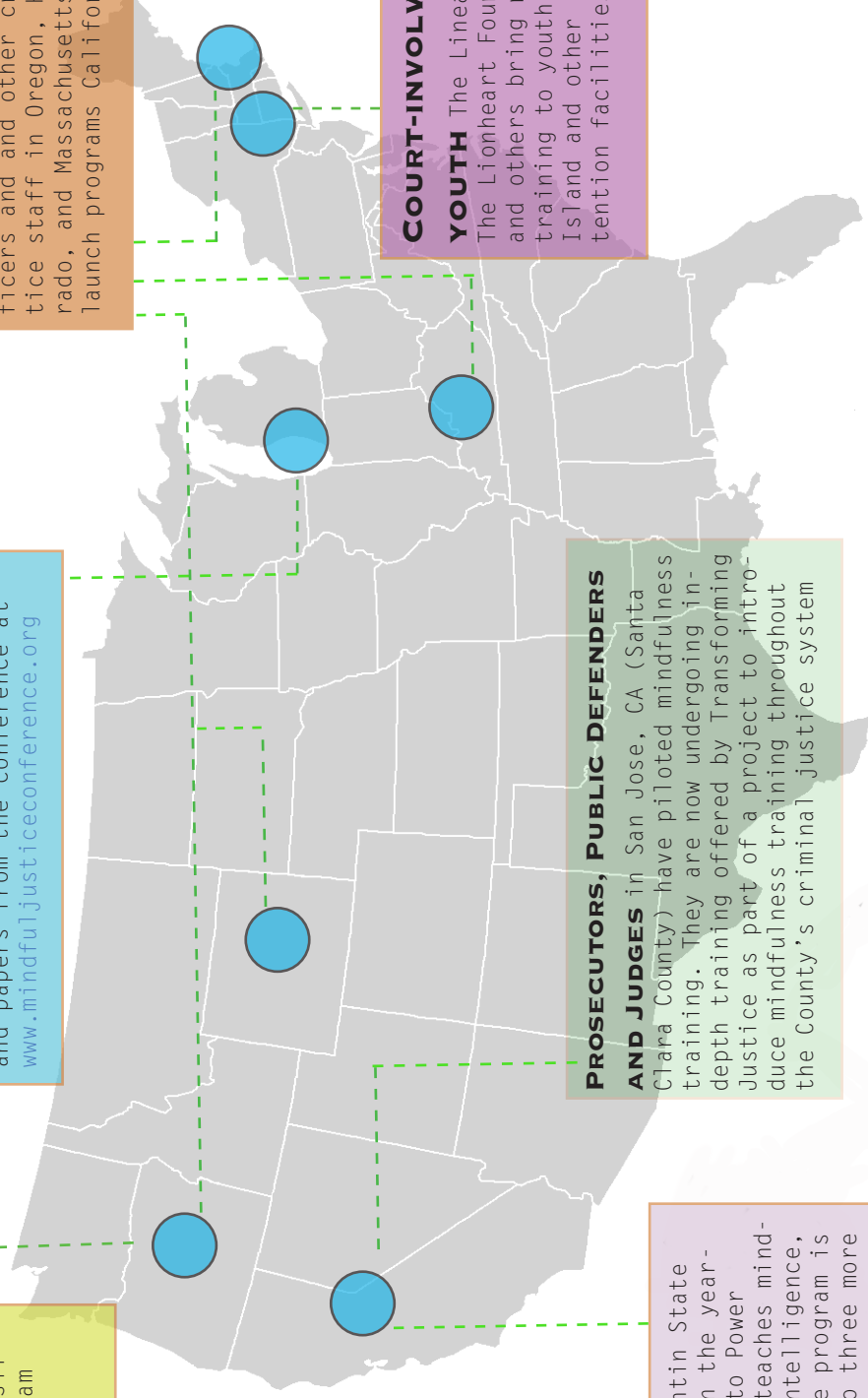
INMATES in San Quentin State Prison participate in the year-long Guiding Rage Into Power (GRIP) program that teaches mindfulness, emotional intelligence, and non-violence. The program is now being expanded to three more California prisons*

PROSECUTORS, PUBLIC DEFENDERS

AND JUDGES in San Jose, CA (Santa Clara County) have piloted mindfulness training. They are now undergoing in-depth training offered by Transforming Justice as part of a project to introduce mindfulness training throughout the County's criminal justice system

COURT-INVOLVED

YOUTH The Lineage Project, The Lionheart Foundation, and others bring mindfulness training to youth at Riker's Island and other New York Detention facilities



*In addition to the programs highlighted here, Prison Mindfulness Institute's Path of Freedom program is offering mindfulness-based emotional intelligence training to inmates in 16 states, including California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Massachusetts, Oregon, and New Mexico, and mindfulness-based prison programs now exist in all 50 states.

2015 Mindful Justice Conference

AT THE FETZER INSTITUTE IN KALAMAZOO, MICHIGAN, MJI CONVENED AN UNPRECEDENTED GATHERING OF 24 CRIMINAL JUSTICE LEADERS TO ENVISION — AND MODEL—A MORE MINDFUL AND COMPASSIONATE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM



ABOVE, Police Lieutenant Richard Goerling, co-creator of a mindfulness-based resiliency training program for police in Oregon, shares his findings with the group. From left, Fariborz Pakseresht, Director of the Oregon Youth Authority; Leslie Booker, Founder of Urban Youth Sangha; and Rhonda Magee, Professor of Law at University of San Francisco. Photo by Kellen Manley.

co-convened the event with the Fetzer Institute and the Center for the Study of Law and Society at UC Berkeley.

While meditation programs have existed in prisons for decades, this was the first time that a group representing the entire system came together united by a focus on bringing mindfulness practices and principles throughout the criminal justice system.

At an historic conference hosted by the Fetzer Institute in Kalamazoo, Michigan, 24 criminal justice leaders came together to discuss the need for a fundamental transformation of the criminal justice system and the ways that mindfulness practices could help to catalyze such a transformation, making the system more compassionate, fair, and committed to human dignity.

The Michigan conference was an unprecedented gathering in bringing together representatives from the front end to the back end of the system who shared a commitment that inner work by all those in the system is critical to doing so.

“Many criminal justice professionals are looking for ways to make their work more sustainable, and to have it more fully reflect the goals of fairness, justice, and public safety that brought them to work in criminal justice in the first place.”

“The deep commonality of shared suffering, hope and commitment we discovered across sectors of the system was matched by a shared sense that mindfulness can foster interconnection, and enable genuine healing and system change,” said conference co-chair Fleet Maull, founder of Prison Mindfulness Institute, which

“This is a unique moment,” said Charlie Halpern, the conference co-chair, “Many criminal justice professionals, from judges to police to parole officers, are looking for ways to make their work more sustainable, and to have it more fully reflect the goals of fairness, justice, and public safety that brought them to work in criminal justice in the first place. Mindfulness can be a significant part of that process.”

The conference organizers are now exploring convening a second conference in 2017, to review and build on the significant progress participants have made since 2015.

Read original papers from the conference on mindfulness in policing, mindfulness in prisons, and other topics at www.mindfuljustice.org/

The San Jose Project

MJI AND AN INFLUENTIAL NORTHERN CALIFORNIA COUNTY DEVELOP WHAT COULD BECOME A MODEL FOR A FAIRER, MORE COMPASSIONATE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

In July 2015, Transforming Justice offered a series of introductory mindfulness workshops to the prosecutors, public defenders, and judges in Santa Clara County, a diverse and influential jurisdiction that includes the major metropolis of San Jose, as well as Silicon Valley, Stanford University, and several rural communities.

The leaders of each agency (District Attorney, Public Defender, and Superior Court) were interested in ways to support the wellbeing of their employees, and also cultivate emotional intelligence, empathy, and compassion in order to improve their relations with the community.

An idea emerged from the three workshops: what if the three principal actors in a courtroom were all trained in mindfulness, and operated from a place of focus, receptiveness, and empathy towards the others involved in the proceedings? It might transform the experience, giving the defendants, victims, and witnesses a sense of truly



Santa Clara County District Attorney Jeff Rosen, above, has made mindfulness workshops led by Transforming Justice available to all prosecutors in his office, as a way to increase wellbeing, focus, and improve decision-making.

being heard, and create a more collaborative dynamic between prosecutors, public defenders, and judges.

Building on this initial idea, Transforming Justice is working to create the conditions for mindful courtrooms to develop in Santa Clara County. In Summer 2016, it offered a six-week mindfulness training program for the County's District Attorney's Office, delivering an initial training to more

than 150 attorneys, and an in-depth five-week course to 16 prosecutors.

In October-November it will offer a similar program to the County's Superior Court judges, and plans to do so with the Public Defender's Office in early 2017. We anticipate that interest in experimenting with "mindful court rooms" will build as a result of these programs.

The Mindful Justice Initiative is also exploring how to bring mindfulness programming to the County's jails—to both correctional officers and inmates.

As more parts of the County's justice system adopt mindfulness practices and principles, we expect to see positive impacts not only on the wellbeing of those in the system, but also on the quality of justice and on system outcomes.

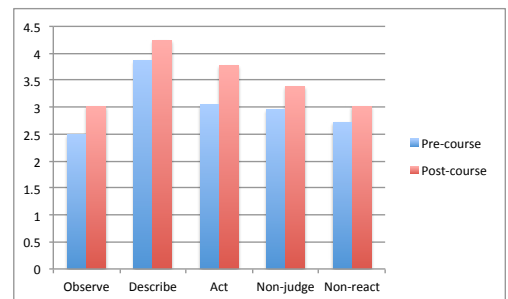
Research

In collaboration with the Greater Good Science Center at UC Berkeley, we are analyzing the impact of mindfulness training on wellness and behavioral metrics among criminal justice professionals.

The results from a five-week mindfulness program offered to 16 prosecutors in the Santa Clara County District Attorney's Office (right) suggest that even a short mindfulness intervention

can have significant positive effects on stress, resilience, happiness and other areas that impact their professional effectiveness, as well as their ability to do their work with compassion.

We will continue to replicate the study in order to verify these results across a larger and more diverse sample size.



Above: results from a five-week training for prosecutors found significant increases on traditional measures of mindfulness, as well as greater resilience, lower perceived stress and other measures.

Mindfulness for Police and Law Enforcement

Why it matters

Police play a critical role on the front lines of the criminal justice system and face enormous challenges on a daily basis.

In many communities, police find themselves in the role of nurse, social worker, mental health expert, and drug treatment provider, due to low investment in social services and community organizations. This strains the mental and emotional resources of police officers, and sets them up for enormous workplace stress, if not outright failure.

The rash of police-involved shootings of unarmed people of color over the last two years has highlighted the dire need to address this larger

picture of poverty and community services, as well as implicit bias, police training, culture, and recruitment, among other issues.

Mindfulness is a tool that can help police cope with the many stresses of the job, minimize their implicit biases, and develop better relationships with the communities they serve through greater empathy and emotional intelligence.

So far, a small number of police forces have begun exploring the use of mindfulness, as well as movement practices such as yoga, and we expect to see it grow in the years ahead.

Current efforts

Mindfulness-Based Resiliency Training Police Lieutenant Richard Goerling and Brant Rogers at the Hillsboro, Oregon police department created a 9-week (8 weeks plus a 6-hour retreat) Mindfulness-Based Resiliency Training (MBRT) program that was first offered to 43 police officers in early 2014.

The initial training resulted in improvements among participants in a number of dimensions including resilience, perceived stress, burnout, emotional intelligence, difficulties with emotion regulation, mental health, physical health, anger, fatigue, and sleep disturbance. These results are documented in a paper recently published in the aca-

demic journal *Mindfulness* (“Changes in Facets of Mindfulness Predict Stress and Anger Outcomes for Police Officers.”).

So far, a few police departments have followed Hillsboro’s lead and have developed or are exploring offering a similar training program. These include Falls Church, VA, where the department launched an MBRT program in 2015 and San Leandro, Calif., which is exploring offering a day-long retreat to its officers.

Community-law enforcement dialogue In San Francisco, mindfulness-based dialogues have helped address strained

Leading voices



Rhonda Magee

In June 2015 led a series of community-law enforcement dialogues in San Francisco framed by mindfulness, as a way to address long-standing tensions over treatment of minorities.



Richard Goerling

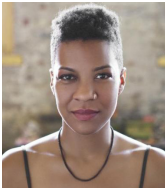
Lieutenant, Hillsboro, Oregon Police Department and co-creator of an 8-week mindfulness-based resiliency training (MBRT) program for police officers.

relations between the community and law enforcement. In summer and fall 2015, Professor Rhonda Magee of USF Law School led workshops, framed by mindfulness and sponsored by the District Attorney’s office, in which community members could voice concerns, in a safe and non-judgmental space, about the role of race in law enforcement and other issues.

The sessions may offer a model for how mindfulness can facilitate these difficult conversations and help to defuse the dangerous tension between law enforcement and communities.

Mindfulness in Juvenile Justice

Leading voices



Leslie Booker

Founder and Director of the Urban Sangha Project; Senior Teacher and Director of Teacher Trainings for the Lineage Project.



Fariborz Pakseresht

Director, Oregon Youth Authority. He has introduced a number of mindfulness programs into the Oregon youth system



Kate Crisp

Prison Mindfulness Institute Executive Director & co-author of the Path of Freedom curriculum for at-risk & incarcerated youth.

Why it matters

Young people who are caught up in the juvenile justice system have a high likelihood of later becoming involved in the adult system.

Many of them are victims of physical and/or sexual abuse and suffer from trauma that can lead to learning difficulties, anti-social behavior, problems with authority, and violence.

Trauma-informed mindfulness training, including meditation and yoga, can give these young people much-needed skills to cope with stress and trauma, to make better decisions, and to succeed in academic and professional settings so that they can avoid becoming further enmeshed in the justice system.

These skills can be equally valuable for the adults who treat and supervise at-risk youth, enabling them to cultivate greater wellbeing, balance, and compassion, so that they can continue to do their important work effectively and with a spirit of care for the young people they serve.

Current efforts

In July 2015 the Oregon Youth Authority (OYA) hosted a two-day meditation retreat for 17 youths aged 18-22 in the MacLaren Youth Corrections Facility (Woodbury, OR), and is now offering Prison Mindfulness Institute's Path of Freedom program at the facility.



ABOVE, Young men at the McLaren Youth Corrections Facility in Oregon participate in a meditation retreat led by Fleet Maull

The New York City-based Lineage Project offers classes on yoga, meditation and life skills at detention centers, alternative schools, subsidized housing complexes, alternative-to-incarceration programs and Boy's Clubs. The organization reports that New York

City is cutting by half the number of children it sends to state prisons by enrolling low-risk offenders in community-based programs.

In California, the organization Insight-Out connects graduates of its prison-based GRIP program with at-risk youth in Novato, Richmond, and Oakland, California, introducing them to mindfulness practices and sharing their own stories to help young people avoid making life-changing mistakes.

The Mind Body Awareness Project (MBA), another Bay Area organization, focuses specifically on at-risk youth, offering mindfulness-based programs in six different juvenile detention facilities and two after-care sites in four different counties in California.

Prison Mindfulness Institute recently launched a Path of Freedom program in the Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice. These programs are designed to interrupt the youthful offender to adult incarceration cycle by empowering youth to make healthier more rewarding choices.

Mindfulness in Jails and Prisons

Why it matters

In the age of mass incarceration, jails and prisons have become places for warehousing individuals, mostly black and brown men, before returning them to their communities, usually less equipped to succeed than when they came in. Recidivism rates indicate that our correctional institutions are failing to produce rehabilitation.

Current efforts

Programs for Inmates

There are mindfulness-based programs for inmates throughout the U.S. Some of the leading programs include Prison Mindfulness Institute's Path of Freedom program, the Guiding Rage Into Power (GRIP) program, and the

Mindfulness training programs like Path of Freedom, Guiding Rage Into Power (GRIP), and Council provide desperately needed skills to individuals who struggle with trauma, anger, addiction and other problems. Learning mindfulness helps them to better understand themselves, to develop healthy relationships, and to avoid destructive and self-destructive behavior.

ing for inmates has found that these programs produce improvements in three principal areas: enhancement of psychological wellbeing (making inmates receptive to further rehabilitation), decrease in substance abuse, and reduction in recidivism.



ABOVE, Men in a Rhode Island prison meditate as part of Prison Mindfulness Institute's Path of Freedom program

Council program.

Each of these programs teaches participants ways to relate more skillfully to their thoughts and feelings, to develop impulse control, and how to cope with the intense pressures of life in jail or prison. Upon release, they can draw on these skills to be more successful in reintegrating society.

Initial research into mindfulness train-

Leading voices



Fleet Maull

Founder, Prison Mindfulness Institute. Maull is a leading teacher and activist in the mindfulness in criminal justice movement.



Jacques Verduin

Executive Director of Insight Out. Insight Out's GRIP program is being expanded to three California facilities.



Jared Seide

Director, Center for Council. Jared is leading the effort to bring mindfulness training to wardens and correctional officers in California prison system



Mark Bolton

Director, Louisville Metro Department of Corrections. Bolton has led the effort to bring mindfulness training to the CO's in Louisville's jails.



Robert Barton

As Inspector General of California, Barton oversees the California prison system. He has formally recommended mindfulness training for correctional officers as a way to combat workplace stress and inmate abuse

Programs for correctional officers

Correctional officers face tremendous pressure at work, which often translates into health problems, as well as violence and reactivity on the job.

In the past five years, the Center for Mindfulness in Corrections (CMC) has offered mindfulness-based wellness & resiliency (MBWR) training for

correctional officers and other criminal justice professionals in Colorado, Kentucky, Massachusetts and Oregon. CMC is working on a pilot MBWR program for the California prison system in collaboration with the Center for Council.

Judges, Prosecutors, and Public Defenders

Why it matters

The legal professionals who prosecute, judge, and defend criminal cases play a central role in the criminal justice process and in many ways set the tone for the larger criminal justice system. Their decisions have profound implications for defendants, victims, and communities alike.

They also face significant challenges including vicarious trauma, burnout, physical and mental health problems, and addiction. Like others, they are also subject to implicit biases that affect their decision-making

Current efforts

Mindfulness programs for lawyers and judges have existed for more than 20 years, including retreats and Continuing Legal Education programs.

In the last two years, programs specifically for prosecutors, public defenders, and judges have emerged in New Mexico, California, and other places.

In Spring 2016, the Association of Prosecuting Attorneys (www.apainc.org), a national training organization, collaborated with Transforming Justice to develop a mindfulness module for its two-day leadership training program. It has been offered successfully so far at training events in Indianapolis and Delaware.

As detailed on page 5 of this report, the Mindful Justice Initiative has launched a project to provide in-depth mindfulness training to prosecutors, public defenders, and judges in Santa

Mindfulness training can help these groups to be more resilient, focused, and emotionally connected to their work, and to be more aware of—and therefore able to mitigate—their implicit biases.

This is good for their own health and professional effectiveness. It's also good for the quality of justice in the communities they serve—mindfulness practice helps them to make better decisions, to bring compassion into their work, respecting the needs of defendants, victims, and communities.

Clara County.

We believe that developing a successful curriculum and training model in Santa Clara County will help to spread mindfulness training for prosecutors, public defenders, and judges nationwide.

Judge Jeremy Fogel, Director of the Federal Judicial Center, which is responsible for the training of all federal judges, has been exploring ways to integrate mindfulness training into the work of more than 800 federal judges

Given the leadership role that attorneys and judges play in shaping the criminal justice system, with particular influence on law enforcement professionals, defendants, and community members, their adoption of a mindful approach to their work could have powerful ripple effects throughout the system.

Leading voices



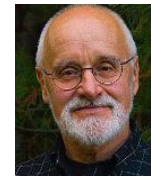
Ron Tyler

Tyler, Director of the Criminal Defense Clinic at Stanford Law School, has taken a leading role in teaching mindfulness to prosecutors and public defenders



Ron Greenberg

As a California Superior Court Judge, Greenberg successfully integrated meditation practice into his drug court. Greenberg now teaches mindfulness workshops to judges throughout North America



Charlie Halpern

Charlie is a former law school dean and law professor who has taught mindfulness retreats, workshops, and courses throughout the U.S. and abroad.



Rhonda Magee

Magee, a law professor at the University of San Francisco, has been a leading scholar, advocate, and teacher of mindfulness in legal institutions.



Jeremy Fogel is the Director of the Federal Judicial Center in Washington DC, a Senior Judge on the District Court of the Northern District of California, and the author of the paper “Mindfulness and Judging.”

CONTACT US

To learn how you can bring mindfulness programs into your office or jurisdiction, please contact us:

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