

PRACTICE:

Key Trends in Mindfulness Meditation and Business:

- Mindfulness Meditation has been proven in preventing and treating depression and anxiety, according to Ms. Gonzalez, the Vice-Chair and a founding member of the influential Global Business and Economic Roundtable on Addiction and Mental Health.
- Significant numbers of both new-economy and old-guard companies such as AOL, GM, and Xerox are tapping into the wave of conscious capitalism by bringing meditation into the workplace, forcing stricter environmental controls on their vendors, and donating both time and money to social causes, according to Megatrends 2010 author Patricia Aburdene.
- Meditation is helping companies improve performance, productivity and sales and reducing stress.
- Over the past three decades, meditation has increased in popularity as a tool used in alternative health as well as traditional medical practice and has shown results in preventing and dealing with stress and a variety of ailments.
- In research conducted since 1992 by Dr. Richard Davidson, a neuroscientist at the University of Wisconsin's laboratory for functional brain imaging and behaviour, results show improvements in mental activities such as focus, memory, learning and heightened awareness as a result of meditation, as well as positive thought and emotion. He has concluded from recent research that meditation training and practice may produce permanent change in the brain as well as these short-term benefits.

Key Statistics on Stress and Performance in the Workplace:

- 25% of the labour force suffers depression, and 45% of Canadians believe their lives are 'out of control' according to the 2006 Ipsos Reid survey. Research has found Mindfulness Meditation to be very effective in the prevention of depression and its treatment, according to Sharon Begley, author of the book, 'Train Your Mind, Change Your Brain'.
- Companies lose an estimated \$200 billion annually in absenteeism, sub par performance, tardiness, and workers' compensation claims related to stress. In fact, stress-related ailments account for upwards of 60% of all doctor visits, according to the Mind/Body Medical Institute at Harvard Medical School, as published in the August 30, 2004 issue of Business Week.
- Watson Wyatt's study 'Canadian 2002/2003 Staying@Work' revealed that psychological conditions including stress, anxiety, and depression form the leading cause of both short and long-term disability and that most organizations surveyed were concerned but unsure how to address these problems successfully.
- Absenteeism not only costs Canadian organizations billions of dollars each year, but the cost of absenteeism has increased by 50 per cent in the last decade. Direct and indirect costs combined -- including costs for replacement workers and lost productivity -- account for 17 per cent of a total payroll, according to HR Voice, October, 2007.