

# TODAY'S CHALLENGE TOMORROW'S INNOVATION

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## CHALLENGE STATEMENT #01

### 1. Challenge Owner Index and Pseudonym

#### #01 – The Mindful Company

### 2. Challenge Statement

Our mission is to help individuals improve their lives by learning and applying Mindfulness techniques into their daily and work lives.

But learning mindfulness is not just about learning a skill set or head knowledge. It is about a change in behaviour. That means being aware of when it needs to be applied, and what to do then.

This application of mindfulness revolves around building new habits and doing it at a pace that is effective for the particular learner.

Reinforced learning is important but difficult to enforce by a coach / mentor or trainer all the time.

Having a solution that allows the learner to be more self-directed in the application of mindfulness would be a very powerful tool to effective application.

### 3. About the Challenge Owner Organisation

The company was set up in 2016 to conduct art and craft lessons and brain development training. In 2019, the company incorporated mindfulness training in its curriculum.

The focus of the company now is in Mindfulness Training. There has been a significant surge in the research of mindfulness practices in the past few years with more than 2,800 research papers published in PubMed in 2020 alone due to the increased interest in Mindfulness as a way of life.

Mindfulness training has been found to be beneficial to patients with certain medical conditions such as depression, anxiety disorders, pain and insomnia, etc.

In addition, it has also been found that mindfulness training will increase attention and memory, decrease burnout, increase compassion and improve relationships among many other things.

Mindfulness for children can improve attention and memory, reduce stress and build a growth mindset which are essential to better performance in schools.

Mindfulness training has been spread to schools, hospitals, health care and many corporates.

Research by Marketdata Enterprise 2017 has indicated that 22% of US organisations offer mindfulness training and the market is expected to grow by 500% between 2020 and 2027.

Mindfulness training is relatively new in Singapore and we see great potential in mindfulness training for both adults and children.

#### 4. Define the Challenge

##### **Current Situation**

We provide a mindfulness training program to the volunteers, staff, and parents of a charitable organisation, “The Charitable Organisation” on a complimentary basis.

The volunteers provide small group coaching and tuition to young students from families with low income.

It is The Charitable Organisation’s objective to equip these volunteers and student’s parents with mindfulness skills to enable them to infuse mindfulness practices in their coaching sessions and consequently help to improve the academic performance and mental wellness of their students.

Majority of the volunteers are tertiary students. They usually sign up for 1 year volunteering as part of their CCA. The Charitable Organisation has 300 to 400 volunteers and 600 to 700 students under their care.

The training we provide comprises two components:

- The first part of the program is to train the learners the concepts of mindfulness and how they can apply it in their own daily and working life.
- The second part of the program is the train the trainer component where the learners learn how to infuse mindfulness training and study skills into coaching sessions with children.

Effective mindfulness training would result in changes in:

- attitude,
- habits, and
- behaviour.

Hence, traditionally mindfulness training is conducted in class and in person over a period over several weeks. This would allow learners to share their personal experiences, practice at home and to shape changes over time. Some of the training has been moved online via Zoom.

In terms of course design, learning materials are largely in PowerPoint and handouts in Word format. Handouts are given to learners at the end of the course.

Learners are asked to do homework and the class discusses homework at the beginning of the next class.

There is currently no mechanism to track if learners do their homework except to ask them in class.

Upon joining the class, all learners are invited to join our community portal to continue their learning and for them to meet people with the same interest in mindfulness.

The major challenges of the existing model are:

- The normal way of doing 1-2 workshops is no longer sufficient. How might we encourage self-learning?
- Key learning challenges with student and adult volunteers include course scheduling, having shorter lessons to develop more content, and how to be more engaging.
  - o to organise classes that can deliver the training effectively and yet be able to meet the learners' schedules and preferred locations or mode of training (audio / visual / kinesthetic).
- Mindfulness training is typically done over a few weeks with lots of interaction between the trainer and the students with facilitation and reinforcement.
  - o Unable to track or remind learners to do homework or home practice.
  - o No effective and efficient way to reinforce learning during the training weeks.
  - o Have to manually invite learners to join our community portal post training to encourage them to continue to practice and apply what they learn.
- The learners prefer having greater flexibility in choosing schedules and topics which cannot be met cost effectively with the current model. Learning reinforcement is also not ideal in the current model since the trainer or facilitator cannot be with the learner all the time.
- We hope to come up with a learning model that:
  - o will allow learners to have the flexibility to choose what they want to learn and when they learn;
  - o will minimise overlapping of course content so that learners can maximise their learning time;
  - o can automate learning reinforcement.

### **Past & Current Solutioning Efforts**

The main issues are funding and the lack of knowledge of how to overcome these. For some of the solutions like quizzes, we use Survey Monkey but it is not ideal as it is not integrated into one innovative learning solution that addresses the above concerns.

### **Challenge / Gap / Unrealised Potential**

If we are not able to get the solution, the following will happen:

- learners will find it difficult to learn the program at their own pace to master the identified mindfulness practices or attitudes that they desire to have;
- lack the motivation and engagement to do self-directed learning; and
- may not be able to receive timely feedback on their learning progress and application effectiveness.

## **5. Targeted Learners / Users**

The primary target learners are volunteers in The Charitable Organisation. Most of the volunteers are university or polytechnic students. They are usually onboard for a year. The rest of the volunteers are young working adults after they have graduated.

We also plan to extend training to the parents of the students and many of them are from poor families. It is important that parents are trained in mindfulness too, not only will mindfulness help them have a better life, it also ensures that they can work with the volunteers in bringing up their child mindfully.

The primary target is 400 volunteers and staff in The Charitable Organisation and 1,200 parents of the students under the care of the organisation.

The secondary market can include volunteers and staff of all charitable organisations that are working with children and their parents. The numbers can be more than 10,000.

The solution can also be for any other organisations as there is a significant surge in mindfulness training in recent years. Potentially the number of learners can reach another 10,000.

## 6. Solution Partner and Deliverables

Effective mindfulness training would result in changes in attitude, habits and behaviour.

Hence, traditionally mindfulness trainings are conducted in class and in person over a period of 4 to 8 weeks. This would allow learners to share their personal experiences, practice at home and shape changes over time.

Besides, there are shared contents in many of the mindfulness courses. However, as the background of the learners differ very much and for commercial considerations, the learners who sign up for two mindfulness courses will still have to sit through both courses entirely.

Hence, such training mode does not meet the needs of most adult learners who often cite lack of time.

On the other hand, online learning platform does not provide the live elements where learners can learn from each other.

Hence, ideally we are therefore looking for a solution provider that is able to help us transform the training delivery that can:

- allow learners to choose what mindfulness practices or attitudes they wish to improve / work on
- learn the program at their own pace to address the identified mindfulness practices or attitudes
- have the interactive part to allow for community-driven learning / social learning
- have the gamification part to stimulate motivation and engagement to do self-directed learning
- provide feedback on their learning progress and application effectiveness
- focus on one attitude to learn and track how the learner is doing in relation to his progress and give reminders and prompts to the learner.
  - o For example, after a person has learnt how to control anger by using mindfulness technique, as a form of learning reinforcement -> the solution should be able to detect the condition that the person has not been able to control his anger e.g. speaking louder than usual and heart beats faster than usual. The solution then offers the learner steps to calm down, such as giving instructions like "Making a pause of what you are doing, take 3 deep breaths,

observe your experience, do not make judgment, consider a different response".  
The solution may be a live one or a recorded one for subsequent reflection by the learner.

- The solution could integrate with smart wearable devices which detect voices and heart rate and provide hints when it detects an opportunity to share about a certain attitude.

## 7. Expectations of Solution

The solution should ideally have the following features:

### Course Design

- Reorganise courses into program modules to make it easier for learners to master the mindfulness topics that are relevant for them.
- Segment courses into bite sizes to make it more convenient for learners to do self-study and to minimise overlapping of courses.
- Create interesting lessons for self-learning (eg: animation).
- Gamification and rewards to keep learners motivated to learn.

### Course Delivery

- Convert PowerPoint into video presentations (for effective learning and relearning).
- Covert storytelling into animation.
- Training materials should have the capability to be delivered on mobile devices for convenience. This consideration is also important for a group of our target learners, the parents of the students with most of them coming from poor families and may not have access to computers for training.
- While we plan to move this course to self-learning, some form of interactions between trainers and learners and among learners is essential to maximise learning. We would therefore like to have an app that can create calendar booking. For example, the trainer can fix several times of the week where learners can make a booking to join for class discussion.

### Reinforcement on Learning

- Create a solution that can deliver short quizzes to learners at pre-specified time to reinforce learning.
- The solution should also include mindfulness practices as guidance for learners' self-practice. Examples are meditation audios and mindful movement videos.
- Automated instructions or reminders when learners do not practice what they have learnt.

### Training Assessment

- The same solution should have the capability to generate assessment at the end of the course on learners' knowledge of mindfulness.
- The solution should also have the capability to generate surveys on learners' attitudes on mindfulness pre- and post-training to assess the effectiveness of the training program.

### Post Training

- Post-training follow-up is an important component of mindfulness training because the training would involve changes in attitude, habits and behaviour. To keep interest going, all learners will be invited to join our community portal and we would like to automate this process.
- Automated instructions or reminders when learners do not practice what they have learnt.

The content of the solution cannot be shared without our permission.

## 8. Measures of Success

### Selection criteria:

- ability to meet design specifications,
- learning innovation,
- costs (one-time, on-going and future upgrade),
- user friendly,
- rollout timeframe,
- after-sale support,
- responsiveness.

### Selection evaluation:

- Interview,
- feedback from other users / their clients,
- testing,
- matrix evaluation.

### Observable outcomes:

- A breakthrough learning experience
- More engaged learners
- More learners prepared to take up mindfulness courses
- More learners will be able to benefit from the positive effects of mindfulness training and hence improve their mental and physical health as well as better all-round relationships and many others

### Measurable outcomes:

- 10% increase in enrolment rate
- 10% improvement in learners' assessment outcome
- one point increase in customer satisfaction