

**How Mindfulness and Self-Compassion Impact Public Safety Personnel: A Mixed
Methods Study with Focus on Policing in Canada**

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Abstract

Mindfulness is a phenomenon that has been proven beneficial for mental and physical health (Li & Bressington, 2019; Grossman et al., 2004). Self-compassion is a positive self-attitude and can improve psychological wellbeing (Dunne et al., 2018). This thesis will focus on how mindfulness and self-compassion can impact Public Safety Personnel (PSP). PSP include firefighters, police officers, and first responders as a whole. These fields are subject to immense trauma and mental health challenges (Ricciardelli et al., 2020), further reinforcing the need for additional supports. The intervention was a 2-hour 4-week program called “Mindful@Work” developed by Mindfulness Without Borders, encompassing social and emotional learning and meditation practices. The methodology was a within-subject mixed methods design. Participants completed pre- and post- surveys, including qualitative questions. Scales utilized for the surveys were the Mindfulness Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS) and the Self-Compassion Scale Short-Form (SCS-SF). It was hypothesized that mindfulness training would increase understanding of mindfulness and self-compassion, as well as shift individuals’ narratives. The objective was to see the impacts of mindfulness training. Quantitative results were not significant. Results from the MAAS pre- survey ($M = 4.067$, $SD = 0.865$) were similar to post-survey results ($M = 3.933$, $SD = 0.726$). The SCS-SF pre- survey results ($M = 3.417$, $SD = 0.471$). and post- survey results ($M = 3.417$, $SD = 0.535$) were very similar, indicating little to no differences. Whereas, the thematic analysis identified themes and saw changes in connections amongst themes as more relationships developed and strengthened between pre- and post-results. The main themes found were emotional regulation, compassion, emotional intelligence, self-awareness, present focus, positive mental health, and resiliency. It was noted how many themes were interconnected and how strengthening one could affect another. As participants developed understanding, their language and responses shifted. Therefore, changes in narrative following completion of the training were observed, although longer training sessions

and the incorporation of independent practices could yield more results. Conclusions drawn were that mindfulness is a suitable intervention and highly beneficial for PSP, although it should be implemented within their educational careers in addition to workplace training. Longer interventions would be recommended for future studies.

Key Terms

Mindfulness, self-compassion, Mindfulness Attention Awareness Scale, Self-Compassion Scale Short-Form, public safety personnel, first responders, police, mental health, stigma, trauma-facing, resilience, self-awareness, present focus.

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Introduction

Mindfulness can be explained as a way of living and thinking which allows us to focus on what is happening within our bodies, minds, and surroundings (Abdelrahman et al., 2022). Mindful@Work developers refer to mindfulness as a quality that exists in all people yet requires cultivation through practice. Objectives of mindfulness include reducing reactivity and increasing clarity, as this can prevent individuals from operating on autopilot. Bluth and Eisenlohr-Moul (2017) describe mindfulness as noticing and being aware of one's momentary experiences while practicing non-judgement, acceptance, and self-compassion. These practices were "identified as protective factors buffering against negative mental states such as stress, depression, and anxiety in adolescents" (p. 109). The second factor, self-compassion, comprises three components being self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness (McGehee et al., 2017), and equates to a "state of loving, connected presence" (p. 280). These factors will be explored within PSP populations, as PSP experience above average exposure to "potentially psychologically traumatic events (PPTE)" and have reported greater levels of mental health disorders than the overall population (Easterbrook et al., 2022, p. 253). The positive impacts mindfulness and self-compassion can have on physical and mental disabilities speaks to the value of investigating these phenomena (Li & Bressington, 2019; Grossman et al., 2004). To expand on how mindfulness can help physical and mental health, it was found that mindfulness can improve physical health as it can decrease pain and improve functional quality of life (Murphy et al., 2012); it was found to help mental health as mindfulness can positively support both therapists' work with their clients and subsequently the clients' overall therapeutic benefits (Davis & Hayes, 2011). Mindfulness allows individuals to practice non-judgement and raises awareness on the present moment, while self-compassion increases the level of kindness individuals offer themselves. Both offer a coping mechanism to utilize in face of adversities, granting the potential to further strengthen resiliency and adaptability to hardships.

Mindfulness, self-compassion, and PSP studies have explored the phenomenon individually or phenomena in pairs, although all three in conjunction have not been highly researched. Given that the PSP field is male-dominated and exposes individuals to increased physical and psychological demands, with a large percentage having skeptical attitudes to treatments that challenge strong, male self-concept (Krick & Felfe, 2020), this research can contribute to a potential solution and future research recommendations regarding mindfulness training opportunities for PSP.

Literature Review

In 2018, the Chief Coroner launched an internal review of officer suicides following nine deaths by suicide amongst serving and retired police officers (Ontario, 2023). The Chief Coroner Ontario, Dr. Dirk Huyer, noted that this was a significantly higher number of deaths by suicide in comparison to past years (Burke, 2018c). In fact, this number was noted to be unprecedented, alarming, and unacceptable (Ontario, 2023). Following the end of 2018, the Office of the Chief Coroner “initiated an expert panel review process” that concluded with a report of their findings. This report emphasizes the urgency of removing mental health stigma within policing organizations commencing with recruitment throughout the entirety of their careers, in addition to ending the stigma within the larger public community (CBC News, 2019). Evidently, there is an urgent need to address the mental health needs within policing organizations in an all-encompassing manner, commencing with education prior to and during fieldwork alongside increased resources.

Mental Health and Public Safety Personnel

Public Safety Personnel

First responders, commonly referred to as Public Safety Personnel (PSP), are vital to our society and global wellbeing. As described by Beshai et al. (2022), these careers include

“police officers [and trainees], correctional workers, dispatchers, firefighters, and paramedics” (p. 1). These roles include responsibilities such as preventing the loss of lives or properties caused by fire (Government of Canada, n.d.), working to mitigate and resolve crime, enforce laws, develop partnerships with communities, perform to the best of their abilities and training to support the safety of Canadians (Royal Canadian Mounted Police, 2023), attend to emergency calls, providing medical care while transporting individuals to medical facilities (Canadian Center for Occupational Health and Safety (2023), responding to emergency calls and connecting the appropriate PSP to the scene, and so forth. Definitions of responsibilities scarcely encompass the entirety of the roles’ experience, although they can shed light on how valuable PSP are to our communities. They respond to most emergency situations and ensure the wellbeing of others. Thus, it is important to collectively support the wellbeing of PSP as well, especially considering the tolls of the role: exposure to trauma, barriers to support, and community dependency.

As vital as PSP are to our society, treating the wellbeing of the community indubitably comes with a cost. Due to the highly traumatizing nature of their field, PSPs face many challenges associated with their roles. As noted by Ricciardelli et al. (2020), PSP work environments are often interconnected with inherent difficulties involving para-militaristic organizational frameworks, which often facilitate job dissatisfaction, stress, and burnout. These organizational frameworks could involve a rank-informed, hierarchical relationship amongst staff and administration; branching off of the findings of Ricciardelli and team, one could infer that this framework could amplify discrepancies, silos and status. This could further perpetuate feelings of isolation and contribute to the mental health stigma by instilling inconsistent or status-based access to resources and supports. Furthermore, Argawal and Singh (2020) observed the multiple traumatic stressors within PSP working careers, in addition to their increased risk for developing substantial symptoms of a mental disorder such as “depression,

anxiety, Post-traumatic Stress Disorders (PTSD) and burnout” (p. 34). The stressors observed were categorized into operational vs organizational, protective, and demographic factors (exposure to human misery; justice and leadership; development or lack of resiliency; and gendered differences). PTSD symptomology can include intrusions involving memories correlated with the traumatic incident and avoidance of traumatic memories (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). An explanation of the vulnerability of police officers and the likelihood of experiencing PTSD was offered by Chen and colleagues (2005), who described the exposure to conflict, violence, traumatic events, pain and misery, and the life-threatening risks as being both prevalent and traumatizing. As mentioned by Ricciardelli et al. (2020), operational stress seems to be an intrinsic aspect of the PSP field, which includes stressors that involve frequent and chronic exposure to potentially psychologically traumatic events (PPTEs). Understandably, it is natural that PPTEs including vocationally related attacks or injuries, witnessing, participating, or passing along death notifications, as well as high-risk activities such as high-speed chases, will drastically impact PSP’s mental health and wellbeing. Moreover, the authors added how shift work, fatigue, understaffing, and additional operational realities can exacerbate the already-compromised mental health challenges (Ricciardelli et al., 2020). In essence, the roles present challenges within their responsibilities that can be life-threatening. Being on guard for one’s survival and the survival of others can take a toll, particularly when the community that is so heavily affected is also most resistant to treatments.

Alongside the aforementioned challenges and heightened vulnerabilities resulting from traumatic work situations, PSPs often experience resistance towards medical treatment for mental health. They could feel increased hesitancy and skepticism towards interventions such as mindfulness, stress prevention, and mindfulness-based interventions because they could pose differing views from the “male self-concept with high levels of physical and psychological fitness” (Krick & Felfe, 2020, p. 100). Moreover, many PSPs are male-dominated fields that

require increased physical and psychological demands. Beshai et al. (2022) recognized the influence that taboos, prejudices, and macho culture impose on officers (p. 35). A correlation between macho culture, male-dominated fields, and resistance to mental health supports could be drawn. There is a notable mental health stigma present that places individuals in high-trauma fields at greater risk due to a lack of open dialogue and encouraged interventions. Attitudes towards resources and mental health are significant for PSPs because of how much they interact with the community and crisis situations. Society's reliance on PSPs further affirms the urgency for and benefits of greater supports.

Unsurprisingly, mentally healthy PSPs are more knowledgeable on how to peacefully de-escalate, engage, and support individuals in crisis within the community (CAMH, 2018, p. 9). Due to their work environments, PSPs need to remain calm and have to maintain stable mental health in efforts to sustain their roles (Argawal & Singh, 2020). Considering the high- stress and trauma that PSPs face, in addition to the public's dependency on their mental stability, it is evident that resources are needed to better support this community. Specifically, mindfulness resources should be considered an operational imperative, as supporting how PSPs think and function under high stress and threat is essential for performance, wellness, and emotional intelligence (S. Hunter, personal communication, December 14, 2023).

PSP in Canada

In Canada, 44.5% of PSPs screened positive for one or multiple mental health disorders: 23.2% experiencing PTSD and 26.4% experiencing major depressive disorder (Carleton et al., 2019). In 2014, Canada also suffered the loss of 23 PSPs to suicides within a 6-month period, and many more on an annual basis, leading to media attention and calls for further research (Koopmans et al., 2017; Carleton et al., 2018). More recently, in 2018, 9 officers died by suicide in Ontario (Casey, 2019). This later lead to a chief coroner's review and internal review within

the OPP. In 2019, an Ontario coroner's panel took place and advocated for better resources, such as clinicians who are versed in both trauma as well as the PSP dynamic, to increase suicide prevention resources (CBC News, 2019). A component of the problem was suggested to be attitudes and the needs to change them. According to CBC News (2019), "When officers are suffering, they don't want to associate themselves with the type of people they see on those calls, which leads them to deny their symptoms" (para 10). The degree of stigma and self-stigma are large barriers for PSPs; they are a contributing factor as to why many PSPs do not access services or supports. Now, notwithstanding the recognition of workplace exposure, little is known about suicide within PSP populations; although, there have been issues of inaccuracy of these suicide statistic rates given the stigma, underreporting, and misclassification issues (Koopmans et al., 2017). Hereafter, police officers (being a member of PSP), will be investigated more in-depth.

Policing Worldwide

There are certainly differences amongst policing and workplace culture varying from one country or continent to another. Although, the stress levels and mental health of police officers raise global concerns (Singh et al., 2019). Police officers are subject to immense occupational or job-related stress, which is defined as a situation in which job-related factors impact an employee's psychological and/or physiological conditions, as well as their normal functioning. This stress can be improved or worsened depending on the coping strategies implemented. As mentioned by Singh et al., coping strategies can be active, adaptive, and maladaptive. Active means individuals are engaged in action-oriented methods and are using resources. They are trying to take actions to improve the situation, think about the next steps, and proactively plan. Adaptive means the individual tries to reframe the situation positively. They accept the circumstances for being what they are and can live with the outcomes. In addition to acceptance, adaptive coping strategies include seeing the positive or 'blessing in disguise'. In

contrast, maladaptive is the inclusion of harmful coping through passive and avoidant methods. This can look like self-blame, denial, substance use, and aggression (Singh et al., 2019). It will be later discussed how mindfulness and self-compassion are active and adaptive coping mechanisms. Healthy coping strategies are important because, as hypothesized by Cox's psychological model, "when there is prolonged exposure to stress, and the coping is not effective, it may affect the mental health of the person as high levels of stress have the potential to cause functional and structural changes within the individual" (p. 73). There are numerous studies that have documented an inverse relationship between occupational stress and components of mental health such as powerlessness and frustration; moreover, there is literature that has revealed the alarming rates of depression, substance abuse, aggression, and suicidal ideation and attempt. A study conducted on police personnel in Uttar Pradesh focused on constables, inspectors, and officers and found that stress levels experienced by all echelons of police were similar as well as consistently and drastically high (Singh et al., 2019). In addition to stress, global research has documented a high prevalence of burnout among police officers (Wickramasinghe & Wijesinghe, 2018). Although the mental health crisis is a global concern, it can impact countries differently albeit negatively. In Sri Lanka, the investigation of mental health issues in policing has been neglected, although evidence suggests that there are high rates of depression amongst Sri Lankan police officers. In contribution to these high depression rates, job satisfaction is a component that has indicated lower levels of burnout in Indian police officers, which can be explained by social exchange theory. As Stafford and Kuiper (2021) explained, social exchange theory believes interpersonal interactions are driven by costs and rewards, being what we give the relationship and what we receive from it. This theory assumes that social behavior is transactional and that people are motivated to decrease costs while increasing rewards. "According to this theory, those who have lower perceived discrepancy between the invested efforts and expectations of results or rewards for their work have a lower probability of being vulnerable to burnout" (p. 197). Furthermore, an American study found that

police can be exposed to staggering amounts of grief in their careers. Grief is the spectrum of psychophysiological, emotional, and symptomatic responses to losing someone that can occur over time (Papazoglou et al., 2020). Given the amount of death police officers experience, it is common for feelings of anger and irritability towards perpetrators to arise. Feelings of survivor's guilt can also occur to those who lose a colleague or civilian, further impacting one's mental health. Papazoglou et al. (2020) speak to the benefits of mindfulness practices as a prophylactic intervention, as mindfulness can provide officers with a means for self-reflecting that is free from judgement in efforts to process how the officer's body responds to death-related circumstances. Mindfulness was found to prevent officers from "catastrophic judgements and negative emotionality" (p. 6).

It is evident how far-reaching the issues of police mental health spans. Stress levels of officers in Uttar Pradesh and burnout levels of officers in Sri Lanka are a few examples of literature that highlight the global crisis police and many PSPs are facing (Singh et al., 2019; Wickramasinghe & Wijesinghe, 2018). A study conducted in America found that grief is also prevalent amongst police officers (Papazoglou et al., 2020). Coping mechanisms, job satisfaction, and mindfulness practices were found to impact and potentially support police through their stress, burnout, and grief.

Unsurprisingly, individuals who experience trauma could further perpetuate trauma towards others. This is seen through acts of police brutality, being the "physical, psychological and legal police abuse of authority" (Bowleg et al., 2022, p. 363). Black people are more likely to be pulled over or stopped by authorities while driving or shopping compared to White counterparts. Bowleg et al. described a thesis written on the New Jim Crow, stating that the war on drugs created another avenue to profile and target the Black community. This profiling and abuse has also been explained by colonialism, which emphasizes that Black people are often denied equal treatment under the law and is painstakingly evident when seeing the judicial

system attempting to indict officers for crimes committed against unarmed Black men. In addition to their own mental health challenges, police officers are closely observed by the public eye, making their biases and actions widespread topics of conversation and speculation. Not only do officers have their lives and the lives of the people they are serving at stake, but officers could also feel as though their careers could be in jeopardy, depending on how they respond to calls.

Policing in Canada

In Canada, police mental health issues have not been a new concern, nor one that has seen significant changes and improvements. Over a decade ago, it was released that there had been 23 OPP officers die by suicide between 1989 and 2012 – a number that surpassed how many officers had been killed on duty within the same timeframe (CBC, 2012). Following the death by suicide of RCMP spokesman, a jury recommended increased mental health supports for Mounties, the incorporation of mental health assessment, and classes for family members (Proctor, 2018). It was mentioned that officers do not have normal jobs, therefore officers should not anticipate their typical coping mechanisms to offer sufficient protection against work-related mental health impacts. A recommendation of mandatory and routine psychological testing was proposed by The Police Association of Ontario (PAO) subsequent to the death by suicide of 5 officers in one month (CBC, 2018). In the words of Sarah Routhier, widow of OPP officer Sylvain Routhier who died by suicide, police are faced with a lot of challenging things on a daily basis and “They're expected to keep those emotions in when they're dealing with a call. There's very little time to deal with those emotions afterwards because then they've got to go to the next call” (Burke, 2018a, para. 10). A retired detective inspector with the OPP, Bruce Kruger, urged the force's commission to launch an independent review (Burke, 2018b). It was recommended by the Kruger to arrange for an independent expert to gather qualitative data from OPP members in regards to their mental health experiences over the span of the months, followed by

a forum with police, health professionals, and associations to discuss proposed solutions. Hakik and Langlois (2020) noted that public discussions about policing in Canada including government reports, investigations, scholarly literature, and audits have all emphasized issues pertaining to occupational stress, trauma, and PTSD. Di Nota et al. (2020) recognized that updates have been made to Canadian legislation to extend the timeline and criteria for psychological injuries needed for worker's compensation, albeit qualifying disorders are limited to PTSD. Shore and Lavoie (2019) observed that Canadian police services are incorporating strategies to mitigate hardships resulting from the frequent contact police have with people with mental illness (PMI), most of which strategies include mental health training or collaboration with mental health services. The importance of training was echoed by the Chief Coroner, who recommended the Ontario Police College review and amend training for de-escalation, crisis intervention, anti-racism, and mental health (Ontario, 2023b).

Mindfulness

A finding within the coroner's report included the need for resources, although this was not conceptualized through program recommendations or development. A proposed intervention to support PSPs is mindfulness. As defined by Davis and Hayes (2011), mindfulness can refer to a psychological state of awareness, practices that promote this awareness, ways in which we process information, and even a characterological trait. The word mindfulness originates from the word *sati* in Pali, meaning "having awareness, attention, and remembering" (p. 198). The authors further described this term as a present-focus awareness or psychological freedom that ensues from quiet attention free from attachment to any specific perspective. More commonly, mindfulness is identified as being present-focused and non-judgmental. According to the literature, mindfulness can help with comorbid medical conditions involving psychological and physical disorders or illnesses, such as "social anxiety disorder, cardiovascular diseases, cancer, and long-term medical diseases" (Li & Bressington, 2019, p. 651). In fact, mindfulness

training has the potential to enhance the means of coping with distress and disability under ordinary or extraordinary circumstances experienced due to a disorder or stress (Grossman, 2003). Mindfulness practices have been used for thousands of years to support human growth and have been incorporated into evidence-based treatments such as “Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR), Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT), Acceptance Commitment Therapy (ACT), and Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT)” (Ransom et al., 2022, p. 842). Mindfulness could be used as a singular intervention, or in conjunction with other healing methods. Its flexibility and proven benefits make mindfulness a suitable resource for PSP communities.

Additionally, mindfulness and various self-reflective practices have been leveraged to modify displays of racism and have been found to possibly aid the expressions of colorism (Ransom et al., 2022). Colorism is a form of racism demonstrated through preference and better treatment of same-race people because of their color and, although seemingly unrelated, pairs with mindfulness as an effective intervention given its capacities to be present with sensations and emotions, encourage acceptance of experiences, and promote impermanence. This is relevant given the impacts colorism has on helping relationships, as negative automatic assumptions of darker-skinned people are often made. Colorism affects the justice system as well – literature has found that disparities in sentencing are due to implicit biases and sanctions of stereotypes, predominately the stereotype of blackness being connected to criminality. Mindfulness has been shown to reduce automatic processes and responses while fostering choice-based actions and non-judgement. Practicing mindfulness allows for self-reflection, awareness of privileges and biases, and the recognition of how colorism impacts everyone. Conclusions drawn by Ransom et al. (2022) were that self-reflective practices create awareness of automatic thoughts, invoke an exploration of colorist behaviors, and can consequently

facilitate behavioral modification. Self-reflection and mindfulness could potentially decrease the prevalence of colorism and, consequently, police brutality.

Expanding on the mindfulness intervention provided, the curriculum pillars of The Global MINDS Collective (previously known as Mindfulness Without Borders) are insightful into program core components. The curriculum pillars take a holistic perspective on mindfulness and consist of mindfulness, social and emotional learning (SEL), and the way of Council (The Global MINDS Collective, n.d.). This mindfulness program “integrates the well-researched, five interrelated CASEL cognitive, affective and behavioral competencies: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making” (para 5), allowing individuals to diversify the ways in which they adapt to surroundings and stress. This demonstrates one of the many benefits of mindfulness, being that the practices truly promote a person-centered approach.

Mindful@Work is a program developed by Mindfulness Without Borders that was utilized as the intervention for this study. It is based on neuroscience, emotional intelligence, and secular mindfulness practice (Abdelrahman et al., 2022). This program incorporates two learning theories, being social and emotional intelligence, and mindfulness. The former refers to a set of competencies that can support individuals “understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions” (p. 4). The latter, being mindfulness, has been proven by science to change how one’s body and mind respond to stress. This occurs by “strengthening connections in the prefrontal cortex and reducing reactivity in the limbic system” (p. 4). Among the skills that mindfulness has an impact on, this thesis focused on self-compassion because the two factors are very interconnected. Compassion and self-compassion are included within the Mindful@Work program, specifically in chapter seven. Self-compassion

can prompt us to recognize our suffering, faults, and mistakes with acceptance, leading us towards transformative personal growth.

Self-compassion

Self-compassion can be defined as “a positive self-attitude comprising three interacting components: self-kindness versus self-judgement, common humanity versus isolation and mindfulness versus over-identification” (Dunne et al., 2018, p. 993). Evidence shows that self-compassion is strongly related to various positive psychological factors, such as psychological wellbeing, motivation, happiness, life satisfaction, and optimism (Kim & Ko, 2018). As theorized by Fleischmann and colleagues (2021), PSPs with higher trait self-compassion could leverage this during times of operational and organization stress, which could in turn protect them from experiencing greater levels of anxiety, stress, and depression symptoms. Bluth and Eisenlohr-Moul (2017) support this theory as they found that mindfulness and self-compassion are correlated to better psychological adjustment in adolescents and adults. Self-compassion has also been shown to be a modifiable trait, meaning that it could be strengthened through both learning and teaching. This, in turn, demonstrates neuroplasticity as it proves we can reinforce our self-compassion. Neuroplasticity refers to the ability our brains have to change function and structure given changes in the environment, behavior, neural process, emotions, and thoughts (Abdelrahman et al., 2022). The more frequently and intentionally we condition our brains through meditation and mindfulness practices, the greater the likelihood there is for the neural pathways associated with promoting wellbeing to be strengthened. In a nutshell, PSPs work through challenging situations, there is a mental health concern in policing in Canada, and mindfulness and self-compassion could prove to be beneficial means to support PSPs.

Moreover, Loving Kindness Meditation (LKM) is a mindfulness practice that helps nurture compassion and self-compassion. This is encouraged through the experience of

genuine love and acceptance (Diggins et al., 2021). LKM is described as a technique used to amplify feelings of care and warmth for self and others and can help cultivate the intention to feel positive emotions (Fredrickson et al., 2008). This practice has been noted to shift emotional states as well as reshape enduring personality traits. As explained by the broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions, positive emotions can broaden attention and thinking, granting higher-level connections and an increased range of percepts or ideas. LKM has also been found to mitigate effects of the hedonic treadmill, which speaks to the successes of interventions within laboratory settings and the decline of efficacy once it is repeated daily, as it becomes inert once the novelty subsides and regresses to the trait-like baseline. Evidence found indicates that LKM can counteract the hedonic treadmill, as LKM seems to be a positive emotion induction that continues generating positive emotions and effects long after the practice has been completed (Fredrickson et al., 2008). This speaks to the longer-term impacts and benefits that LKM could help individuals cultivate.

LKM connects to Mindful@Work curriculum as it shares the same philosophies as Present Moment Tools numbers 4, 6, 7, and 10 (Abdelrahman et al., 2022). These tools are shared at the end of the Mindful@Work program and encompass many concepts taught throughout the curriculum, such as kindness and compassion. The authors of the program emphasize the importance of practicing your craft, refining one's technique, and reflecting on which tools require more attention and which could be further developed. "It takes practice to turn your best intentions into positive actions" (Abdelrahman et al., 2022, p. 72). These tools can connect to LKM because they can support with practicing compassion, expressing gratitude for the world and others, showing respect even during hardships, and being our best selves – all of which showcase the love, intention of positive emotions, and connection to self and others.

Figure 1

Present Moment Tools

PRESENT MOMENT TOOLS

Tool 1: breathe mindfully

Take time throughout your day to use your breath to anchor your awareness in the moment.

Tool 2: listen deeply

Give your undivided attention. Don't talk or do, just listen with your full presence and an open, curious mind.

Tool 3: cultivate insight

Take in everything around you and allow each experience to be an opportunity for learning.

Tool 4: practice compassion

Relate to yourself and others with less judgment and more kindness.

Tool 5: limit reactivity

Reflect before you react—acting in ways that are consistent with moral principles and values.

Tool 6: express gratitude

Notice and say “thank you” for life’s blessings, challenges and vulnerabilities. In every experience, there is a seed of wisdom.

Tool 7: nurture mutual respect

Treat yourself, others and the environment with a mindset that appreciates and honours similarities as well as differences.

Tool 8: live with integrity

Stress test your thinking. Recognize your attachment to assumptions and biases, and let your words and actions demonstrate care and concern for others.

Tool 9: steward leadership

Work diligently toward embodying your life’s purpose and take action in being an agent for social good.

Tool 10: be peace

Live the best life you can—nurturing your inner peace and passing it forward.

Note. The final Chapter of Mindful@Work includes the Mindful Living Pledge and Present Moment Tools. Tools numbers 1-10 are developed throughout the training and summarized above.

PSP, Mindfulness, and Self-compassion

PSPs deal with a lot for our community, therefore it is imperative to care for PSPs in return. Mindfulness and self-compassion can support staying grounded within the moment.

Benefits of this mindfulness program include but are not limited to: it is a cost-effective program that was shown to be both recommended and helpful for participants, it could be implemented within schooling programs or as onboarding training, would support with destigmatization and address a large gap and need in training and mental health awareness, and the curriculum is evidence-based. If PSPs are taught mindfulness practices and skills early-on, that could result in much more compassionate, emotionally intelligent, and skillful helping professionals. This would, consequently, reduce the stigma and self-stigma faced by many PSPs. If PSPs can learn how to be kinder to themselves and their emotions, they can in turn be kinder to the individuals they are serving and the emotions of those in crisis.

Methods

Rationale

The rationale for this study involves the mental health gap within the field and training of Public Safety Personnel (PSP), also referred to as first responders. Efforts to fill this gap include interventions with police officers that could support mental health. In specific, mindfulness and self-compassion are traits that work in tandem and can support the mental health of practicing individuals. This paper will address the findings of a mindfulness intervention within a large police organization.

Design

The methodology is a within-subject mixed methods with a descriptive phenomenological, constructivist-interpretivist approach meaning multiple realities will be accepted (Ponterotto, 2005, p.129). In essence, “proponents of constructivism–interpretivism emphasize the goal of understanding the lived experiences (Erlebnis) from the point of view of those who live it day to day” (p. 129). This approach will allow for multiple interpretations of the data and understanding that the intervention impacts could vary depending on the individual

participant. Descriptive phenomenology will allow for participants' feelings to be shared and taken into consideration. A mixed methods approach will be best suited for this research because it will allow for a richer collection of data; as Östlund and colleagues (2011) mentioned, a value of mixed methods is that it could "potentially capitalize on the respective strengths of quantitative and qualitative approaches" (p. 369).

Participants

Participants are police recruits. In total, 17 participants attended the program and completed pre- and post- surveys. Demographic information was not collected due to the nature of confidentiality and intimacy of the participant group. Names were removed and participants were tracked by badge numbers to match the pre and post data. Once the post-data was collected, the dataset was further anonymized with the exclusion of badge numbers. Eligibility criteria involved police officer recruits (first year in the field). Exclusion criteria involve non-recruits and non-officers.

Measures

The batteries utilized were administered pre- and post- a 4-week mindfulness program ran within a large policing organization consisting of a two-hour practice per week.

Self-report Measures

Quantitative data was derived from the Mindfulness Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS) and the Self-Compassion Scale Short Form (SCS-SF) – both of which are reliable, proven scales that have had great success within the current literature.

The MAAS is comprised of a 15-item self-report measure to evaluate the link between mindfulness and wellbeing (Hepburn et al., 2021). It does not produce subscales, rather produces an overall score for mindfulness, also known as attention awareness. The MAAS has

a 6-point Likert scale with items such as *I find it difficult to stay focused on what's happening in the present, I could be experiencing some emotion and not be conscious of it until some time later, and I find myself preoccupied with the future of the past*. The internal consistency levels vary between .80 to .90 (Hepburn et al., 2021).

The SCS-SF includes 12 items and 6 subscales, being “Self-Kindness; Self-Judgement; Common Humanity; Isolation; Mindfulness; Over-Identification” (Cunha et al., 2016). It utilizes a 5-point Likert scale and has 6 items that are reverse scored. Items included were *When I fail at something important to me I become consumed by feelings of inadequacy* and *When I'm feeling down, I tend to feel like most other people are probably happier than I am*. Reverse scored items were *When I'm going through a very hard time, I give myself the caring and tenderness I need* and *I try to see my failings as part of the human condition*. The internal consistency is .92, with subscale consistency ranging from .75 and .81 (Cunha et al., 2016).

Procedures

The facilitator who delivered the mindfulness program was Sarah Hunter Ph.D., head researcher of the OPP and certified Mindfulness Without Borders facilitator. The participants completed a 4-week, 2-hour Mindful@Work program. Participants were provided a Mindful@Work Workbook and completed all eight chapters.

Data Analysis Plan

Quantitative

The anonymized data was analyzed using Microsoft Excel and JASP. Non-parametric Wilcoxon t-tests were completed, as well as gathering the mean of quantitative data. Boxplots were utilized to showcase results. The statistical significance measure used will be 0.05%. A thematic analysis was conducted on qualitative results alongside semantic diagrams.

Qualitative

Qualitative data was collected from the following open-ended survey questions:

1. When you hear the word mindfulness what comes to mind?
2. How do you think mindfulness might help you at work?

A thematic analysis was conducted on qualitative findings. The thematic analysis was completed following the methodology's steps as defined by Braun and Clarke (2006):

1. Familiarizing yourself with your data
2. Generating initial codes
3. Searching for themes
4. Reviewing themes
5. Defining and naming themes
6. Producing the report (p. 87).

Throughout the conduction of a thematic analysis, the positive changes were noted and more evident in comparison to quantitative data.

Results

Quantitative

A Wilcoxon signed-rank test indicated that there was no significant difference between mindfulness and self-compassion levels and pre- and post- completing a mindfulness training program. The MAAS results were $z = 1.633$, $p = 0.109$. Results from the pre- survey ($M = 4.067$,

$SD = 0.865$) were similar to the post- survey results ($M = 3.933$, $SD = 0.726$). SCS-FC results were $z = -0.331$, $p = 0.757$. The SCS-SF pre- survey results ($M = 3.417$, $SD = 0.471$). and post- survey results ($M = 3.417$, $SD = 0.535$) were very similar, indicating little to no differences. There were no significant differences between SCS-SF subscale results to report, as seen in the descriptive statistics in Table 1 below.

Table 1

SCS-SF subscales pre- and post- results.

Paired Samples T-Test

Measure 1		Measure 2	W	z	df	p
Pre Self-Kindness Average	-	Post Self-Kindness Average	48.000	0.175		0.886
Pre Self-Judgement Average	-	Post Self-Judgement Average	49.000	-0.220		0.847
Pre Common Humanity Average	-	Post Common Humanity Average	48.000	0.175		0.887
Pre Isolation Average	-	Post Isolation Average	41.000	-1.396		0.164
Pre Mindfulness Average	-	Post Mindfulness Average	38.500	0.489		0.649
Pre Over-identification Average	-	Post Over-identification Average	39.500	0.039		1.000

Note. Wilcoxon signed-rank test.

Note. The results do not indicate significant differences, although reliability of subscales is lower in the SCS-SF (ranging from .54-.75) given each subscale contains two items.

Qualitative

The thematic analysis was conducted using Braun and Clarke's (2006) steps. Familiarization was done by reading the qualitative data multiple times and doing so in chronological order with pre- and post- data being reviewed independently. Generating codes was done following the search and review of themes. Once themes emerged, they were then coded with acronyms. Themes were searched for by analysing words utilized by participants and identifying underlying psychological terms corresponding with the literary descriptions. The themes were color-coded during the coding process and theme colors were kept consistent throughout. Six themes were originally found. Themes were then reviewed after pre- and post-

data were both analysed. This review led to the emergence of the theme “resiliency”, resulting in a total of seven themes. In defining and naming themes, key words were taken into consideration. The naming of themes led to the development of nine subthemes. Steps 2-5 were repeated multiple times in nonsequential order. Following various reviews, the report was then produced.

The emergent themes and their respective codes were emotional regulation (ER), compassion (C), emotional intelligence (EI), self-awareness (SA), present focus (PF), positive mental health (+MH), and resiliency (R).

Defining Themes

Emotional regulation could involve emotional stability, less reactivity, (Beshai et al., 2022), increased awareness of emotions, as well as the ability to manage challenging emotions (Orellana-Rios et al., 2018). This theme signified the participant’s abilities to implement coping mechanisms upon the identification of feeling emotionally heightened or unwell. *Compassion* can be defined one who is other-oriented; this is characterized by positive feelings of concern for the pain or sorrow of others, paired with a desire to relieve it (Orellana-Rios et al., 2018). This is similarly defined by Diggins et al. (2021), who note that compassion is feelings of concern for the pain and misfortune others experience, and the willingness to act and help. While both definitions are comparable, the former mentions having a desire to help while the latter emphasized action and intervention. Both definitions were utilized for the purpose of coding. *Empathy* is described as the ability to understand and resonate with the feelings of others, without confusion of what is one’s emotion versus that of others (Decety & Lamm, 2006). Diggins et al. (2021) describe empathy as feelings of concern and understanding of another’s emotions and motives. Empathy was not originally coded, but emerged as a subtheme of compassion following revisions of themes. *Emotional intelligence* was also similar to emotional

regulation, although this more so encompassed the knowledge of one's and other's emotions, while emotional regulation spoke to the actions and coping mechanisms implemented.

Emotional intelligence is the ability to identify, apply, comprehend, and manage emotions in positive manners to alleviate stress, communicate effectively, practice empathy, and overcome challenges and conflict (Diggins et al., 2021). *Self-awareness* can also be referred to as meta-awareness of self which one can achieve with certain forms of mental training (Vago & Silbersweig, 2012). This theme could share features with emotional intelligence, as both require introspection. *Present focus* is the ability to bring one's attention to the present moment, usually facilitated with grounding techniques such as body scans and engaging the senses. This is a core component of mindfulness. *Positive mental health* is the absence of symptoms as well as a state of wellbeing and realization of one's abilities, competency to cope with stress, working productively and making a contribution to others (Aeschbach et al., 2022). This includes hedonic well-being (feeling good and fulfilled with life) and eudaimonic well-being (functioning positively in life). *Resiliency* is the ability to recover, face adversity, or bounce back from stress (Beshai et al., 2022). It was found that "officers of a special force unit in Italy high on resilience were less likely to experience depression than less resilient officers" (Argawal & Singh, 2020, p. 42). Resiliency and positive mental health are interconnected, as both involve mental wellness.

How Themes Emerged

The thematic analysis was conducted by a certified Mindfulness Program facilitator. Qualitative data was reviewed multiple times, commencing with the pre-survey data, and following with post-survey data thereafter. Most themes emerged during the pre-survey analysis and were further solidified during the post- analysis. Participants did not necessarily utilize specific terminology or jargon when completing their surveys – rather, the data provided in layman's terms was interpreted and represented with clinical terminology. The key words associated with each theme are described in Table 2 and 3 below.

Table 2

Themes and paraphrased qualitative data from participant pre-survey results.

Theme	Key Words from Pre- Survey
Emotional Regulation (15)*	Decreased anxiety, control emotions, ways to cope, distress
Compassion (9)	Being aware of the mental health of others, connected, helping others, effectively serve
Emotional Intelligence (15)	Being aware of emotions, spotting signs, awareness of state of mind and triggers, recognize stress, checking-in with emotions, knowing when one's burning out
Self-awareness (9)	Connected to self, body, mind, listening to what body is communicating, aware of emotions, assessing emotions often
Present Focus (4)	Aware of the present and surroundings, paying attention, present focus
Positive Mental Health (10)	Positive emotions, peace, treat problem, healthy
Resiliency (5)	Post-traumatic growth, how you cope and bounce back from instances

Note. due to confidentiality, key words were paraphrased for public access.

(*) numbers are representative of the quantitative occurrence of themes in participant survey data.

Table 3

Themes and paraphrased qualitative data from participant post-survey results.

Theme	Key Words from Post- Survey
Emotional Regulation (14)	Self-care, gain control, destress, using coping strategies, conflict resolution, calm
Compassion (8)	How to interact with emotions, gratitude, thoughtful and considerate
Emotional Intelligence (15)	Awareness and recognition of emotions and feelings, understanding of behaviors
Self-awareness (19)	Connected to inner self, aware of self, in tune with body, thoughts and emotions, reflecting before reacting, recognize triggers, keep track of emotions
Present Focus (8)	Present focus, in tune, awareness of moment, surroundings, and emotions
Positive Mental Health (7)	Self-care, peace, self-improvement, optimal health and performance, coping
Resiliency (8)	Overcoming challenges, proactive, self-improvement, committed, focus

Note. Self-awareness had the largest shift (from 9 to 19), with present focus following suit (from 4 to 8).

There was a slight shift in people's narratives, as seen in Tables 2 and 3 above, which can connect to the hypothesis, being that mindfulness training would increase understanding of mindfulness and self-compassion, as well as shift people's narratives.

Figure 2

Quantitative counts of pre- and post- theme occurrences.

Thematic Analysis		
Theme	Pre	Post
Emotional Regulation	15	14
Compassion	9	8
Emotional Intelligence	15	15
Self-Awareness	9	19
Present Focus	4	8
Positive Mental Health	10	7
Resiliency	5	8

Note. The pre- and post- qualitative results indicate a change in themes and narrative.

Upon dissecting the definitions of each theme, it is evident how much overlap can be observed from one or more theme, notwithstanding all themes as a whole. Resiliency was interpreted as one of the main themes, with compassion and positive mental health following suit. These three themes were found to develop and function in unison. It was found that mindfulness practices can nurture the development of all the aforementioned themes, while quantitative findings suggest the need for longer interventions for the development of certain themes. The themes additionally generated several subthemes: *tactile skills*, *conflict resolution*, *neuroplasticity*, *post-traumatic growth*, *connection to others/world*, *coping skills*, *stress management*, *gratitude*, and *empathy*. Each theme and subtheme was found to impact and communicate with another. The development of these themes indicate support with PTSD, burnout, compassion fatigue, and could result in the decrease of police brutality and PSP

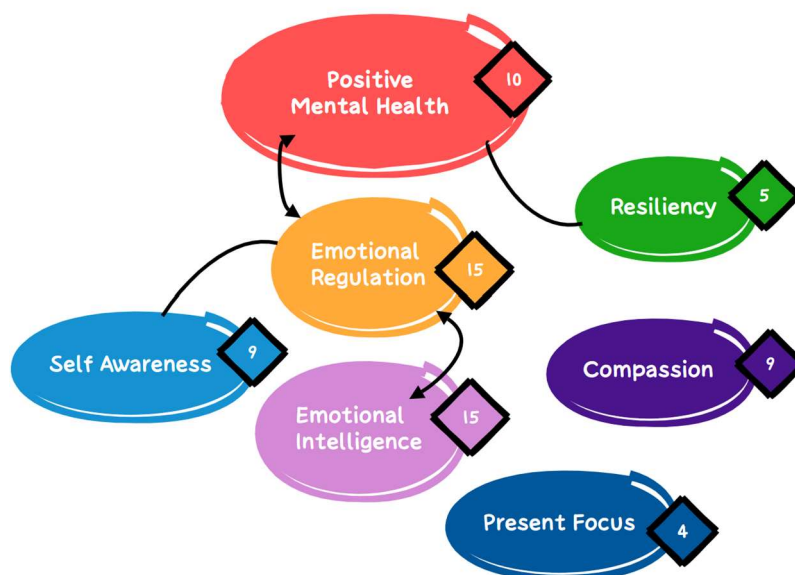
suicide rates. There is an evident shift between pre- and post- surveys observed from the language utilized by participants given the difference in quantity of themes inferred.

Themes were captured in semantic diagrams, as seen in Figures 3, 4, and 5. Figure 3 represents pre-survey themes, Figure 4 represents post- and Figure 5 ties themes and subthemes together. Figure 5 resembles a human brain, being a suitable fit given the discussion of neuroplasticity and neurological impacts of mindfulness practices. Overall, the core themes found were resiliency, positive mental health, and compassion. It can be argued that they cannot exist entirely siloed from one another. Following the mindfulness intervention, participants demonstrated an increase in self-awareness, increasing from 9 to 19. Present focus also increased by 100%. Resiliency increased by 3, emotional intelligence did not change, and the remaining themes saw a slight decrease between 1-3. Scores will be analyzed further in the subsequent discussion section, although the decreases could indicate a longer intervention is needed for maximum benefits.

Amongst the semantic diagrams, the complexity of the interconnected nature of emergent themes are evident. Throughout the pre- diagram, the themes are starting to communicate with one another, but others are off in their own orbit.

Figure 3

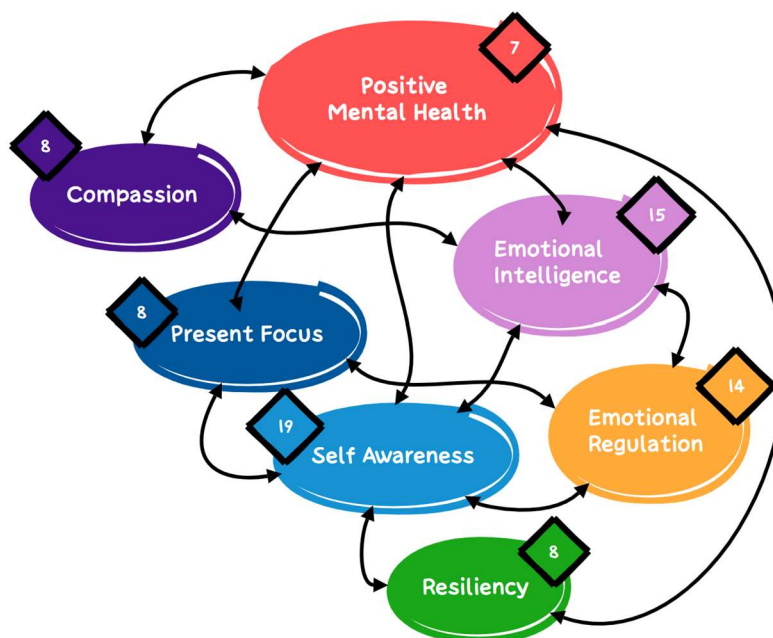
A semantic diagram of pre-survey themes.



Note. The numbers within the word bubbles represent the quantity of how often the themes arose from participant responses.

Figure 4

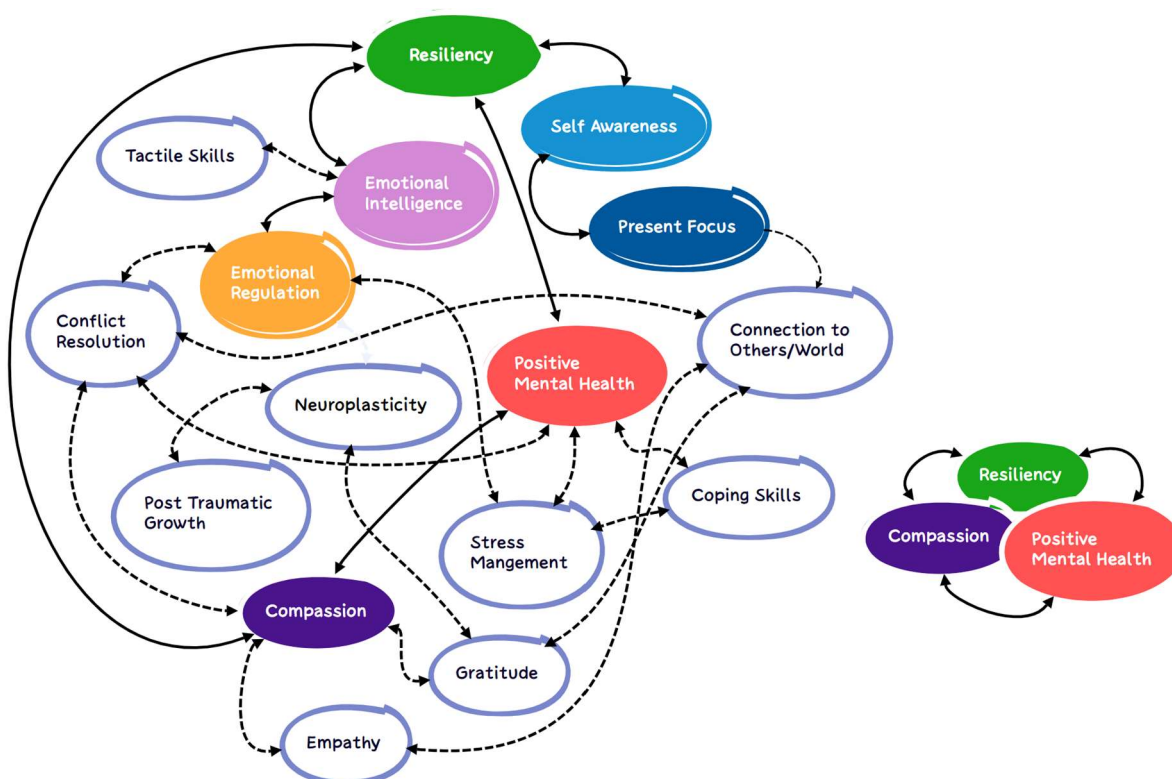
A sematic diagram of post-survey themes.



Note. The relational dynamic of themes is noted by reciprocal arrows.

Figure 5

A sematic diagram of themes and subthemes.



Note. This arrangement closely resembles the human brain. The 3 main themes are represented to the bottom right. Solid lines represent relationships between themes, while dotted lines represent relationships between subthemes.

Discussion

Summary

The objectives of the study were to investigate the impacts mindfulness training can have on police officer recruits. It was hypothesized that mindfulness training would increase

understanding of mindfulness and self-compassion, as well as shift people's narratives. The quantitative data findings were not statistically significant, indicating that longer mindfulness training and time allocated for practices is warranted. However, qualitative key themes were counted and generated a change in results. There was a slight shift in people's narratives, as seen in Tables 2 and 3. The qualitative data discussion explored the commonalities between themes and mindfulness program sessions. The results yielded good generalizability that could support PSP and particularly police officers. While the quantitative data did not indicate any significant results, when paired with the qualitative data, it is understood how subjective and beneficial mindfulness can be. Alternative interpretations of the results could include the intervention as not having been beneficial or impactful given the lack of statistically significant results. In contrast, another explanation could be the lack of practice impacted participant results, as more practice would have been necessary to maximum benefits. Studies have found that practice can improve practice quality, which predict treatment outcomes (Goldberg et al., 2020). Higher quality practice can facilitate the acquisition of mindfulness skills, hence impacting treatment outcomes.

Quantitative

The hypothesis proposed was that increased mindfulness would lead to an increase in compassion and a shift in individual's narratives. The results did not support this hypothesis, as the findings were not statistically significant. The MAAS results pre- ($M = 4.067$, $SD = 0.865$) and post- ($M = 3.933$, $SD = 0.726$) were very similar; as were the SCS-FC pre- survey results ($M = 3.417$, $SD = 0.471$) and post- survey results ($M = 3.417$, $SD = 0.535$), indicating little to no differences. In addition, the SCS-SF subscale results did not yield significant results. The findings were comparable to available literature in this phenomenon regarding the limitations of small sample sizes, unreliability of self-report surveys, and short-term nature of many studies that are not offering longitudinal interventions or pre- and post- reports (Goldberg et al., 2020).

Aeschbach et al. (2022) recommend longer Mindfulness-Based Programs (MBPs) in addition to consistency in sessions. This demonstrates the importance of reinforcement in the active learning and conditioning process.

Qualitative

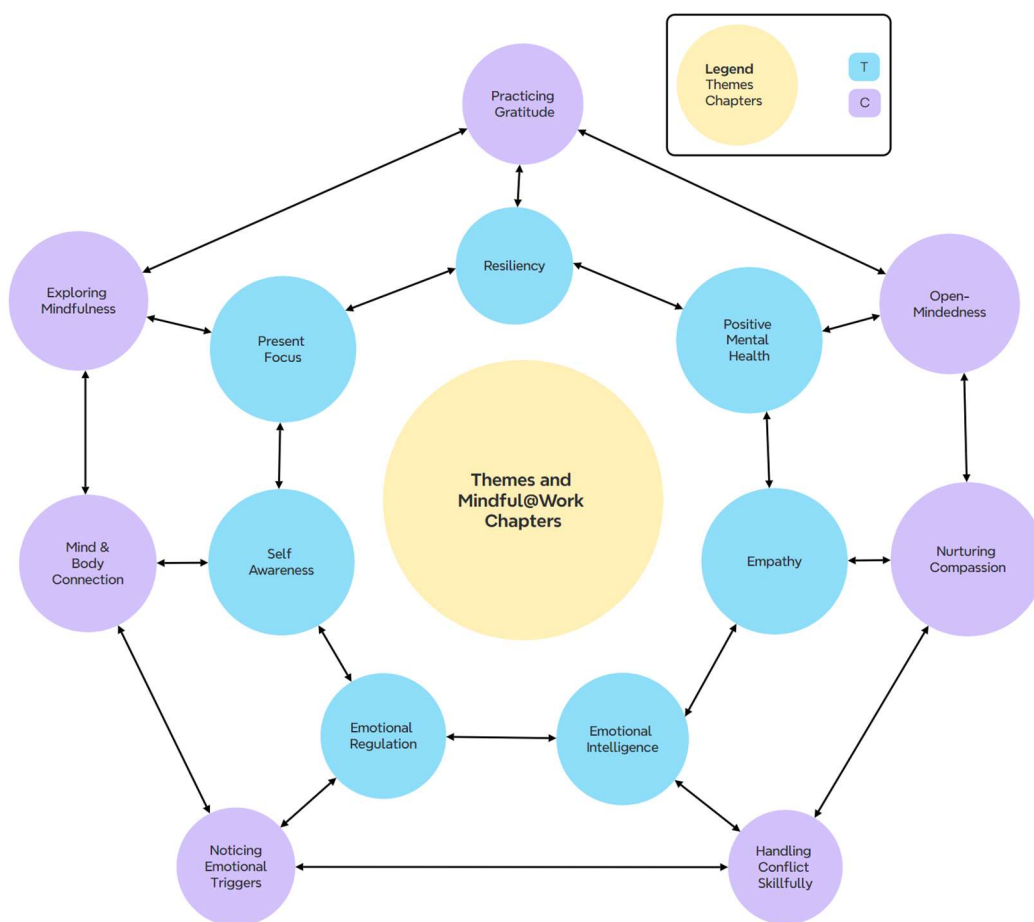
During the thematic analysis, themes that arose were emotional regulation, compassion, emotional intelligence, self-awareness, present focus, positive mental health, and resiliency. The language participants utilized changed pre- mindfulness training versus post-, as seen in Tables 2 and 3. This could connect to the hypothesis, being that mindfulness training would shift narratives. An interpretation of these results could be offered by Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which classifies types of motivation (Kotera et al., 2022). Intrinsic motivation involves enjoyment and curiosity, extrinsic is driven by external or materialistic rewards such as financial gain or fame, and amotivation entails no work ethic or willingness to engage. It could be proposed that mindfulness training impacts intrinsic motivation and possibly decreases extrinsic and amotivation. As participants continued throughout the training, they could have reflected on their responses and their newfound, personal meaning of mindfulness during the post- survey. Perhaps a better understanding of mindfulness concepts could have resulted in a decrease in response bias and development of intrinsic motivation. In synthesizing the qualitative data, the potential for a Mindful&PSP training program is seen. It would be interesting to include tactical components, crisis and terrorist negotiations, case scenarios, and more field-specific components. A connection between self-compassion and mindfulness and how they simultaneously impact one another is an area for future research. A closer look at the connections between themes and mindfulness training curriculum will follow.

Themes and Mindfulness

The emergent themes relate to mindfulness training as many are explored within the mindfulness program. Teachings within the Mindful@Work program (and their respective chapter numbers) that connect to the themes found are: exploring mindfulness (1), mind and body connection (2), noticing emotional triggers (3), handling conflict skillfully (6), nurturing compassion (7), open-mindedness (5), practicing gratitude (4). One could note the parallels amongst themes and curriculum teachings, indicating that participants retained core concepts.

Figure 6

A semantic diagram showing the possible connections between themes found and mindfulness training curriculum.



Note. The relationships between the Mindful@Work chapters and themes emergent from the thematic analysis are suggestions as more research is warranted.

Themes that strongly connected with existing literature include self-awareness and empathy. According to Aeschbach et al. (2022), mindfulness is interconnected with self-care, as it is argued that mindful self-awareness allows for self-care behavior – therefore, without mindfulness, self-care behaviour would not be possible. Mindfulness is also said to improve prosocial behavior and social cognition, and is believed to “cultivate a framework for interdependence of self in a social network and include a cognitive framework supporting empathy and mentalizing” (Vago & Silbersweig, 2012). The conceptual form of meta-awareness, otherwise known as meta-cognition, can allow individuals to disengage from contents of awareness and become grounded or more connected to sensory or affective states. Both themes and literature also connect to positive mental health, as improvements in self-care and prosociality can consequently facilitate mental health improvements.

It would be valuable if possible replication studies could incorporate longer training and independent practices, and compare themes found to those of this study.

Limitations

Limitations include data having been gathered by self-report surveys, which can be prone to a response bias and inaccurate results (Navarro-González et al., 2016). With a total of 17 participants, data was limited given the small sample size. The SCS-SF questionnaire is not recommended for subscales given the smaller reliability (ranging from .54-.75). Utilizing the SCS instead of the short-form version could have produced different subscale data. The mindfulness intervention was originally designed to be one hour once a week for eight to twelve weeks, while the intervention in this study was two hours in four weeks. This did not allow for adequate time for participants to complete independent practices as takeaway assignments

were not assigned. Furthermore, the program ran in the evenings after recruits completed a full day worth of training, which resulted in tired or disengaged individuals. Moreover, the conclusion will discuss overall implications and elaborate on recommendations for further research.

Conclusion

In essence, PSP need additional supports given the extensive PPTE and trauma officers endure. A finding within the coroner's report included the need for resources, although this was not conceptualized through program recommendations or development. Mindfulness and self-compassion have been proven to be reputable and beneficial interventions that can offer officers and PSP additional supports and increase neuroplasticity. This phenomenon is of interest to the counselling psychology field because it could give practitioners evidence- and science-based tools to share with clients, in addition to a vast area of research. Moreover, this is of interest to educators as it could support the development of courses or curriculum that embed mindfulness teachings within for police students or all students. Strengths of the research include the qualitative data and collaboration with a large policing organization. Limitations included the program delivery time, as it ran in the evenings after recruits completed a full day worth of trainings, which could have impacted engagement. Another limitation was that participants did not engage in mindfulness practices outside of the training, which could impact the data.

Longer interventions and a larger sample size would be recommended for future studies. Future studies should also include a Likert-scale asking for participants' baseline knowledge pre and post intervention; this would generate more quantitative data to pair with the qualitative, allowing for numerical indications of how understandings shifted. The addition of scales on depression or mental health is strongly encouraged. Based on the findings generated from this study, a recommendation could be made to develop a PSP or police-specific mindfulness

program. This program should include the same components within the original Mindful@Work, with an added component of tactile skills, field-specific jargon and scenarios, as well as case studies. An additional recommendation is the development of a police course integrating mindfulness and field-specific concepts. A course proposal is seen in the Appendix.

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Appendix

Recommendations

In analyzing the findings of this study, the argument and urgency for increased resources made available to PSP is clear. Aligned with findings from the literature review and qualitative data, the recommendation of developing a Mindfulness in Policing course was made. If PSP or officers can identify common terminology and field-specific lingo, in addition to relating to the material presented, this could increase the likelihood of the intervention yielding positive impacts. Which, in turn, could produce a more memorable experience, increasing the ability to retain the knowledge learned. Proposed course information could include:

Table 1

Proposed Mindfulness Policing course evaluation breakdown.

Evaluation type	Value
Discussion Board Posts (5% each x5)	25%
Reflection	15%
Research Essay Thesis	5%
Research Essay References	5%
Research Essay Outline	10%
Research Essay Final	20%
Presentations	10%
Final Reflection	15%

Note. Course evaluations listed by title of assignment and value or weight of marks.

Table 2

Syllabus recommendation and weekly course breakdown. Assignment instructions and descriptions follow suit.

Week #	Topics	Mindfulness Practices & Assignments
Week 1	- Introduction - Going over the syllabus - Pre- survey distribution	- Time to Breathe practice
Week 2 (POLC4000)	- Chapter 1: Exploring Mindfulness - PSP Concept: Ethics in Policing	- Time to Breathe - Integration Strategy: Setting Intentions - Discussion Board #1 post due Sunday
Week 3 (PSYC1000)	- Chapter 2: Mind & Body Connection - PSP Concept: Introduction to Psychology	- Body Scan practice - Integration Strategy: Creating Choices - Discussion Board #2 post due Sunday
Week 4 (POLC2007)	- Chapter 3: Noticing Emotional Triggers - PSP Concept: Mental Health Issues	- Take Five & Mindful Listening - Integration Strategy: Cultivating Self-Regulation - Discussion Board #3 post due Sunday
Week 5 (SOCI1000)	- Chapter 4: Practicing Gratitude - PSP Concept: Introduction to Sociology	- Everyday Gratitude and Loving Kindness - Integration Strategy: Noticing Experiences - Research Essay Thesis due Sunday
Week 6 (POLC4015)	- Chapter Five: Open-Mindedness - PSP Concept: Criminal Behavior and Analysis	- Cultivating Equanimity - Integration Strategy: Exploring Diverse Perspectives - Research Essay References due Sunday
Week 7	- Recap of the semester - Guest Speakers	- Reflection due Sunday
Reading Week		
Week 8 (MNGM1000)	- PSP Concept: Leadership Models and Theories	- Research Essay Outline due Sunday
Week 9	- Guest speakers	- Discussion Board #4 post due Sunday
Week 10 (POLC1008)	- Chapter Six: Handling Conflict Skillfully - PSP Concept: Community Policing	- Cultivating Equanimity - Integration Strategy: Applying Emotional Intelligence
Week 11 (POLC1009)	- Chapter Seven: Nurturing Compassion - PSP Concept: Diversity, Equity, and Human Rights	- Mindful Walking - Integration Strategy: Holding Self-Compassion - Research Essay due Sunday

Week 12 (POLC4001)	- Chapter Eight: Embodying Mindfulness - PSP Concept: Professional Standards in Policing	- Present Moment Tools - Integration Strategy: Mindful Living Pledge
Week 13	- Presentations in-class	- Discussion Board #5 post due Sunday
Week 14	- Recap - Post- survey distribution	- Final Reflection due Sunday

Note. Table of recommended weekly outcomes for a 14-week Mindfulness in Policing course.

Course codes provided are Georgian College (n.d.) Honour's Bachelor of Police Studies courses that correspond to the curriculum presented.

Course Assignments

- Discussion Board Posts = 25%

Students will be given prompts of 2-3 questions to answer in 100-250 words. Students will be expected to pull from mindfulness and policing concepts and utilizing a minimum of two references from class material. Students will receive 3% for their discussion board post, and 2% for responding to one peer. Proper APA citations and usage is required.

- Reflection = 15%

Prior to the mid-point of the course, students will complete a 1–2-page reflection of how the course learnings have impacted them personally and professionally. References are not required. APA title page is expected.

- Research essay thesis = 5%

Students will have the liberty to choose their own research topics. Once the research topic has been granted approval from the professor, students will submit a 1-2 sentence long thesis incorporating 3-4 main ideas. The research essay will be argumentative and will need to incorporate both mindfulness and policing theories, gaps, or benefits.

- Research essay references = 5%

Following their essay thesis, students will need to submit 6-8 peer reviewed references to use for their essay. APA conventions are expected.

- Research essay outline = 10%

In one page, students will describe their 3-4 main points in depth and include supporting details. Outlines can be completed in paragraph or bullet-point form. Students are encouraged to include references in their outline to facilitate the analysis of literature and final essay completion. Although, references are not required.

- Research essay final = 20%

In 5-8 pages, students will complete a research essay on their chosen topic incorporating mindfulness and policing concepts. Students will be expected to focus on a particular demographic or systemic challenge and propose innovative and holistic solutions. Essays can be connected to areas of research Honours Bachelor students have chosen for their thesis.

- Presentations = 10%

Students will be given a short case study and complete an plan of intervention from arriving on scene, to supporting the individual(s) in distress, and concluding with final referrals, documentation, and plans of action. Implementing course learnings thus far, students will be expected to give a 5-minute presentation in class. References and APA usage are required. Students can use visual aids such as PowerPoint if they choose.

- Final reflection = 15%

In this final assignment, students will complete a 1–2-page reflection on their personal and academic growth experienced throughout the course. Students will have the opportunity to provide course feedback, reflect on their biggest takeaways, and leverage metacognitive skills

to conclude how mindfulness will impact Policing or other Public Safety Personnel careers.

References are strongly encouraged.

The proposed curriculum is a suggestion for future course development opportunities. The objective is to reinforce mindfulness teachings and practices to students prior to entering the field. This could better support many aspiring PSP, while also facilitating a culture of intentional information sharing across programs and disciplines as it could be offered to all students completing degree programs. This course could provide a tangible, hands-on component incorporating mindfulness and policing concepts in a practical way that could compliment theoretical teachings.

Additional recommendations include further studies and research.