

Title: Mindful Resilience and Cognitive Fitness

Speaker: Dr. Leigh Ann Perry and Dr. Jay Hickey

Date: 1 June 2023

Time: 1200-1315

Where: Spruance Auditorium and via Zoom

POC: Dr. Leigh Ann Perry, College of Leadership & Ethics and Dr. Jay Hickey, Office of the Provost

SYNOPSIS:

Mindfulness is often thought of as a way to promote emotional well-being and resilience and to reduce stress. While it has indeed been shown to be a useful tool in achieving those outcomes, research has also indicated that it can strengthen areas of cognitive performance.

Findings indicate that mindfulness practice can improve working memory, sustained attention, cognitive flexibility, empathy, and decision making. While improving cognitive skills is useful for everyone, these outcomes point to a particular benefit for members of high-stress occupations such as the military and for leaders at all levels (across a variety of fields) whose jobs rely on these cognitive skills not only for their own benefit but for the benefit of those they lead and serve. Many of us use exercises like running and weight-training to enhance our physical fitness. In the same way, research is pointing to the use of mindfulness exercises to strengthen our cognitive fitness and resilience.

Please join Dr. Leigh Ann Perry and Dr. Jay Hickey for a discussion about utilizing mindfulness tools to build resilience and foster cognitive fitness. The discussion will also include an introduction to a new Naval War College mindfulness program that will begin in June.

BIOs:

Leigh Ann Perry, PhD -

Dr. Leigh Ann Perry joined the Naval War College's College of Leadership and Ethics faculty in 2021 with a background in clinical and community psychology. She has worked for the FBI's Behavioral Analysis Unit, Naval Criminal Investigative Service and Facebook focusing on the analysis of human behavior, violent crime and extremism. She supports Navy leader development in the areas of operational psychology, psychological well-being, holistic wellness, resilience, and mindfulness and is a nationally board-certified health and wellness coach. She received a Ph.D. and an M.A. from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign in clinical and community psychology and a B.S. in psychology and sociology from Fordham University. She also studied psychology and sociology at Oxford University.

Jay Hickey, PhD -

Jay Hickey is a 1980 graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy. He holds graduate degrees from Troy University and King's College, London and a Ph.D. from Salve Regina University. A career Naval Flight Officer, prior to joining the S&P faculty in 2000, he taught for three years at the U.K.'s Joint Services Command and Staff College. He joined the College of Distance Education

in 2005 to help launch the Navy Knowledge Online-based series of PME courses. From 2007 to 2010, he served as the non-resident graduate degree program manager and then as the director of CDE from 2010 to 2015. The associate provost from July 2015, he was the Acting/Interim Provost from July 2020 to August 2022.