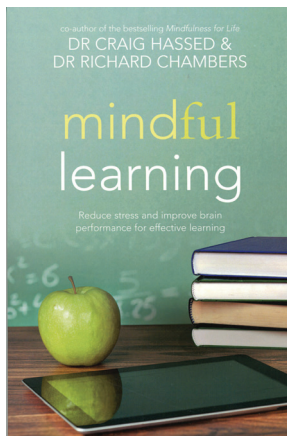


ET Books



Mindful Learning

Reduce stress and improve brain performance for effective learning

Dr Craig Hassed and Dr Richard Chambers

Exisle Publishing

ISBN 9781921966392

RRP \$29.99

RRP eBook \$9.99

Doctors Craig Hassed and Richard Chambers argue that a good deal of the \$2 billion Australia spends each year on education is wasted because of the inability of students to really focus on what's being taught.

Their solution is mindful learning, a technique that provides students with practical exercises designed to make it easy for them to improve their performance, develop personally, enhance their physical and emotional health, and deal with study and exam-related demands. Dr Hassed is an internationally recognised expert in mindfulness. He is co-author of *Mindfulness for Life* and *Mindfulness for Life: Techniques and Applications CD*. Dr Chambers is a clinical psychologist in private practice. He specialises in mindfulness-based therapies and consults to educational institutes. He is a developer of *Smiling Mind*, a free web and iPhone app designed to make mindfulness accessible to young people.

Following a four-page introduction headed *What is Education?* the authors set about defining what mindfulness is all about. It's not a new concept: "Mindfulness is both old and new: old in the sense that the world's great wisdom traditions have used various meditative and contemplative practices for millennia; and new in the sense that the world has all of a sudden 'discovered' mindfulness.

Over the last ten to twenty years there has been a veritable explosion of research on mindfulness-based approaches for diverse endeavours such as enhancing mental and physical health, education, sport and leadership training."

A simple way of defining mindfulness is, the authors state, "a mental discipline aimed at training attention."

And the good news is, learning to pay attention, to concentrate on the task at hand and absorb what is being experienced, or taught, is a skill can be learned. In school, getting started can be as simple as daily five-minute mindfulness meditation sessions all the way up to structured six-week courses. The pay off, the authors state, can be all of the positives described in the second paragraph above.

Food for thought... this book is well worth a read.



Full Throttle

The real story of life, business and partnerships in the fast lane

John Caldwell and Trish McLean

With Paul Little

RWR IP Partnership

ISBN 9780473228279

RRP Amazon \$US24.95 paperback or

\$US18.99 Kindle

This book isn't about schools or pedagogy so it doesn't really belong in *Education Today*. That said, it's an interesting and quite enjoyable read for anyone with a streak of the entrepreneur somewhere inside.

A first glance, something looks wrong – there are two covers, one with the female

cartoon character prominent and the other with the male to the fore. Open the female cover to meet Trish McLean; turn the book over and flip it to meet John Caldwell.

Turn to the middle pages and read about their business life together and the triumphs and disasters they experienced over the decades since 2001 when they established Retailworld Resourcing, a recruitment agency specialising in retail staff.

Neither had a very promising start in life.

Trish McLean was an ambitious Kiwi country girl, who made her boyfriend sign a pre-nup before the moved in together. At age 26 with no hospitality industry experience she ran her own restaurant. Spotting a business opportunity in recruiting retail staff, she co-founded Retailworld Resourcing. But a week before the business was due to launch, she underwent a double mastectomy and then worked right through reconstructive surgery and treatment, sleeping in a corner of the office when overcome with Nausea or fatigue.

John Caldwell was raised in Australian caravan parks by parents whose lives were a cycle of violence, alcohol and promiscuous sex. He was bullied at school, abused by foster parents and was present when his father used a shotgun to take his own life. Despite his dreadful start in life he became the owner of two pizza franchises and won the Franchise Store of the Year before he turned 21.

In 2004, McLean and Caldwell launched Retailworld Resourcing in Australia and over time built it to be the most successful company of its type on either side of the Tasman. A foray into the UK market ended in disaster but the partners have since bounced back.

For 'With Paul Little' read 'As told to...' it's an uneven book, the flip cover is a bit contrived but for all of this, it's an entertaining read and a change for pace for educators needing a break from the serious stuff. **ET**

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