

Mind-Body Medicine: The New Science of Optimal Health

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In recent decades, science has revealed that the mind and body are intimately connected in ways we haven't previously realized—and this field of knowledge is now changing our understanding of health and disease. While it's easy to see that stress affects health and well-being, or that your blood pressure rises when you're angry, cutting-edge research shows that the mind-body connection goes much further.

Numerous studies on the brain's interaction with the body demonstrate that health is directly affected by our social environments, socioeconomic status, culture, behaviors, relationships, psychological states, and habits of mind, among many factors. Current mind-body science reveals facts such as these:

- As few as eight weeks of mindfulness meditation can meaningfully boost your immune system.
- Extreme stress and low social support increase the risk of breast cancer by a factor of 9.
- Contact with nature is correlated with numerous positive health outcomes, including improved attention for children, reduced stress, and enhanced work performance.
- Chronic hostility portends calcification of the coronary arteries, even in young people.
- Expressive writing by patients is correlated with improved outcomes for both asthma and rheumatoid arthritis.

Mind-body medicine—working in tandem with traditional medical practice—makes use of a large spectrum of psychological, physical, and behavioral treatments, drawn from many disciplines, in an approach to health care that aims to treat the whole person. It provides highly effective resources for preventing and treating a wide range of medical conditions, such as cardiovascular disease, stress, cancer, and depression—as well as

for fostering the ultimate goals of health care: truly optimal and lasting physical health, and emotional and psychological well-being.

A knowledge of this exciting field offers you critical understanding of the state of the art of health care and a significant new direction in medicine. But beyond valuable knowledge, a grounding in mind-body medicine gives you numerous practical, empowering tools for your own health care, as well as that of your family—tools that can make a profound difference for healthful, vibrant living.

In **Mind-Body Medicine: The New Science of Optimal Health**, you'll study this subject in compelling depth, with the expert guidance of Professor Jason M. Satterfield of the University of California, San Francisco. These 36 eye-opening lectures offer you a comprehensive overview of the field, providing rigorous answers to the questions of what makes us sick, what makes us well, and what we can do about it.

You'll look closely at the anatomical and biological systems through which what is "outside" in the environment gets "inside" to affect our minds and bodies. You'll also examine recent research on subjects ranging from the impact our emotions and psychology have on health to the crucial roles that social, cultural, and behavioral factors play. And you'll learn about effective mind-body treatments for numerous common medical conditions and diseases.

Finally, you'll finish the course with a toolbox of ideas and interventions for your personal wellness goals, empowering you to partner more effectively with your medical providers and maximize your own health.

A Remarkable New Context for Health Care

Professor Satterfield, a highly respected professor of clinical medicine and a specialist on the intersection of psychological factors and physical health, brings to the table his deep knowledge of mind-body science and extensive clinical experience in its application.

In the course's opening, he introduces you to the model of "biopsychosocial medicine," which looks at the relationship between biological, psychological, and social factors in health.

In studying how the biopsychosocial model is applied in modern medicine, you delve into these core subject areas:

Biological pathways: You first investigate the anatomy and physiology of four biological systems through which the "outside" gets "in."

- By reviewing a detailed study of the autonomic nervous system and the neuroendocrine system, discover how the brain activates the body's two stress-response systems, and how these systems crucially affect health and well-being.

- Learn also about the physiology of immune function and the effects of stress on immune response and healing.
- Study the mechanisms of genetics as well as fascinating research indicating that your behavior can alter your genetic material, for better or worse—changes that can be passed on to future generations.

Psychological factors in health: In the course of nine lectures, you look in depth at the critical ways in which psychology affects the body.

- Learn how negative emotional states such as anger and hostility can influence both the onset and progression of disease, and how positive emotions aid substantially in healing and wellness.
- Study how cognition—the ways in which we think and process our experiences—affects emotional states and behavior. Drawing from cognitive and other behavioral therapies, learn effective techniques for reshaping thinking, emotions, and behavior.
- Review evidence that certain personality types may be predisposed to conditions such as cardiovascular disease and depression, and learn how we can compensate for risk-carrying personality traits by working with cognitions and emotions.
- Investigate the neuroscience of behavior and the important effects of our behaviors on both disease and disease prevention.
- Look at stress as an integration of biological, cognitive, and social factors, and see how we can approach stress response and coping as a developmental skill.

Social and ecological factors: You also study the important effects on health of factors such as culture, identity, socioeconomic status, social support, communities, and public health policy.

- Examine the studied correlations of income to health, education level to longevity, and ethnicity to susceptibility to disease, and consider how we can use this knowledge to benefit both individual and public health.
- Review research linking social support to health in many medical conditions, such as heart disease, cancer, and pregnancy; and do a detailed assessment to evaluate and strengthen your own social support network.
- Investigate how spiritual affiliations and practices have distinct physical benefits, such as reducing blood pressure, cortisol, and inflammation; improving lipid profiles and cardiovascular health; and extending life expectancy.
- Assess how physical environments affect health, how national and local culture impacts health-related behaviors, and how public initiatives can create healthier behaviors, environments, and communities.

Tools and Strategies for Optimal Wellness

Building on the biopsychosocial model, you study mind-body treatments for common conditions such as cardiovascular disease, stress, cancer, obesity, chronic pain, depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder.

Here, you learn about specific practices and interventions that you can use in your own health care program, such as these.

- **Stress management:** For both personal and occupational stress, learn about a spectrum of stress management approaches, from cognitive restructuring and perspective shifting to meditation, breathing techniques, relaxation training, and the learnable skill of resilience.
- **Strategies for successful behavior change:** With reference to concerns such as lifestyle change, weight management, and disease prevention, study the leading models of effective behavior change, as well as specific approaches such as the strategies of motivational interviewing, the four key elements of change, and the internal skills of self-regulation.
- **Heart disease—prevention and treatment:** Survey psychosocial interventions for heart disease, including a range of behavior change approaches, stress and emotion management, somatic quieting, social connection, and dramatic evidence that cardiac disease can be reversed through lifestyle change.
- **Treatment of pain:** Study mind-body factors in pain experience, and learn about treatments including cognitive and behavior change, acupuncture, mindfulness-based stress reduction, and biofeedback.
- **Fatigue, headaches, insomnia:** Investigate the variety of medical conditions that show no clear organic cause, such as chronic fatigue, tension headaches, and sleep disorders; and review effective psychological, physical, and behavioral approaches to treatment.

Professor Satterfield's teaching combines an extraordinary breadth of knowledge, clear and accessible explanations of the science involved, and a highly compassionate approach to patient care. He enriches the lectures with stories and case studies of patients in treatment for stress, heart conditions, insomnia, trauma, and other health challenges, showing you what mind-body medicine looks like in clinical practice and how you can integrate its lessons into your health program and daily life.

With the knowledge and tools you'll learn in **Mind-Body Medicine: The New Science of Optimal Health**, you can begin your own biopsychosocial assessment, identify your strengths and challenges in partnership with your medical providers, and take authentic steps toward your fullest physical and mental wellness.

Disclaimer:

These lectures are not designed for use as medical references to diagnose, treat, or prevent medical illnesses or trauma. Neither The Great Courses nor Professor Jason Satterfield is responsible for your use of this educational material or its consequences. If you have questions about the diagnosis, treatment, or prevention of a medical condition or illness, you should consult a qualified physician.

36 Lectures

Disk 1

1. Weaving the Biopsychosocial Braid
2. Vital Signs—Defining Health and Illness
3. Fight or Flight vs. Rest and Digest
4. Simmering Soup—The Neuroendocrine System
5. Deploying the Troops—Basic Immunology
6. Nature vs. Nurture—Genes, Health, and Disease

Disk 2

7. Forget Me Not—Cognitive Function
8. Mind over Matter—Cognition in Everyday Life
9. Emotions Revealed—Psychology of Emotions
10. Agony and Ecstasy—Biology of Emotion

11. What's Your EQ, and How Can You Improve It?

12. What's Your Type? Personality and Health

Disk 3

13. An Apple a Day—Behavior and Disease Prevention

14. Staying on the Wagon—Making Changes That Last

15. Ease the Burn—Modern-Day Stress and Coping

16. The Iceberg—Visible and Hidden Identity

17. Ties That Bind—Relationships and Health

18. Building Bridges—Intimacy and Relationships

Disk 4

19. Touched by Grace—Spirituality and Health

20. A Matter of Class—Socioeconomics and Health

21. A Cog in the Wheel—Occupational Stress

22. The Power of Place—Communities and Health

23. The Master Plan—Public Health and Policy

24. Heart and Soul—Cardiovascular Disease I

Disk 5

25. Heart and Soul—Cardiovascular Disease II

26. The Big C—Cancer and Mind-Body Medicine

27. Bugs, Drugs, and Buddha—Psychoneuroimmunology

28. Fire in the Belly—The GI System

29. Obesity—America's New Epidemic

30. The Strain in Pain Lies Mainly in the Brain

Disk 6

31. Catching Your Zs—Sleep and Health

32. Chasing Zebras—Somatoform Disorders

33. Seeing the Glass Half Empty—Depression

34. Silencing the Scream—Understanding Anxiety

35. Lingering Wounds—Trauma, Resilience, Growth

36. Tomorrow's Biopsychosocial Medicine

ABOUT THE PROFESSOR



Professor Jason M. Satterfield is Professor of Clinical Medicine, Director of Social and Behavioral Sciences, and Director of Behavioral Medicine in the Division of General Internal Medicine at the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF). He earned his B.S. in Brain Sciences from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and his Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology from the University of Pennsylvania. He currently directs the UCSF Behavioral Medicine Unit, which integrates mental and behavioral health services into adult primary care.

Professor Satterfield's book, *A Cognitive-Behavioral Approach to the Beginning of the End of Life: Minding the Body*, was recognized as a Self-Help Book of Merit by the Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies. He served on the Behavioral and Social Science Subcommittee that revised the Medical College Admission Test—work that was recently featured in the *New England Journal of Medicine* and *The New York Times*. Professor Satterfield is also part of a core interdisciplinary team that is writing a medical textbook based on the biopsychosocial model.

He has been nominated for multiple teaching awards at UCSF, and he is often competitively selected to teach at national conferences for a wide variety of health professionals, including physicians, nurses, social workers, and psychologists.