

# Positive Psychology, Happiness, Mindfulness, and Wellness

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## Education in the Age of Anxiety: The Impact of Mindfulness Activities on First-Year College Students

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This mixed-methods study explored how mindfulness practices can positively shape the experience of first-year full-time undergraduate students participating in first-year seminar courses. The literature points out that mental health concerns, like stress and anxiety, are becoming a significant and detrimental aspect of the college experience. The scholarship also suggests that the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated first-year students' self-reported stress levels. However, mindfulness practices show promise in reducing college students' anxiety. As educators strive to support students transitioning to college, they must find ways to help them manage stress. Integrating mindfulness practices into the first-year program curriculum could help to equip students with the necessary strategies to effectively manage stress and anxiety and help them persist through their first semester. The study highlighted the factors contributing to perceived stress among first-year students in their first college semester while evaluating the impact of consistent mindfulness practices on students' self-reported stress and anxiety levels in a first-year experience program. This study can offer higher education leaders and faculty the strategies and resources to help students manage emotions, cope with stress and anxiety, and maintain overall well-being during the first semester of their college experience.

**Keywords:** mindfulness meditation, stress and coping, higher education, college students, mental health

### Biography

Trina Bryant has over a decade of mentoring faculty and students, curriculum design and program development experience in secondary and higher education. She is currently the Executive Director of the Center for Student Enrichment at Eastern Nazarene College, where she helps to manage the First-Year Writing, Academic Support, Accessibility Services, Career and Professional Development, and the Bridge program

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