

2014

Creating a Mindful World - One Place at a Time, One Mind at a Time - Kathrin Arcari (Psychology, Faculty of Arts)

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Creating a Mindful World - One Place at a Time, One Mind at a Time

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Spotlight

Student Researcher Profile

Faculty of Arts

Creating a Mindful World – One Place at a Time, One Mind at a Time.

Snapshot

Kathrin Arcari is a KPU student majoring in Psychology and minoring in Counselling who has a keen interest in education abroad and human interaction. She has travelled to over 21 countries developing deep personal connections with people, land, and culture. One country she is particularly fond of is Uganda. There, Kathrin was able to develop close relationships with the local people. This opportunity arose while Kathrin was working as a KPU research assistant for Dr. Kyle Matsuba and his research surrounding mindfulness. Kathrin and Kyle brought this research to Uganda, where they taught the locals new mindfulness practices, such practices can help those suffering from post-traumatic stress – a necessary skillset for those dealing with the psychological aftermath of the 2006 civil war.

Key Research

While travelling the world and promoting human rights advocacy, Kathrin has been given the opportunity to develop her research through dynamic participation as a field observer (her favourite aspect of research). Her research projects include the following:

Is Gender and Memory Linked?

In this research, Kathrin set-up a mixed gender participant group to uncover whether or not gender plays a part in memory skills. Participants were given 10 sets of 10 words and were asked to remember them and later write them down, at which point they would be given some type of distraction or "interference" to disrupt the mind. The overall findings? - Gender difference does not play a part in memory.

Social and Psychological Impacts of Klinefelter's Syndrome for Men

Klinefelter's syndrome is a genetic disorder that occurs when a man has at least one extra X chromosome resulting in a total of 47 chromosomes, rather than the typical 46. Kathrin's research focused on the social and psychological impacts of Klinefelter's syndrome on men. In order to obtain this

A portrait of Kathrin Arcari, a young woman with long blonde hair, smiling. She is wearing a grey t-shirt. The background shows a blurred outdoor setting, possibly a sports field.

Kathrin Arcari

information, Kathrin had a close male friend display Klinefelter symptoms, in a public environment, to see how society would treat him. Overall, she concluded that Klinefelter's syndrome can cause severe emotional and behavioural distress in males.

Mindfulness & Development Research in Uganda

Mindup - is a mindfulness program developed by actor Goldie Hawn. The program's purpose is to boost academic performance through "life-enhancing strategies for well-being."

Working alongside Dr. Kyle Matsuba, Kathrin's main part in mindfulness research in Uganda involved travelling to Uganda and teaching the program to the local primary and elementary schools. Kathrin spent ten weeks teaching students to treat their lives without judgment and to be aware of their environment and themselves in the present moment. The program consisted of things such as: mindful smelling, tasting, listening, choosing optimism, acts of kindness, body movement, core practice, all while focusing on the present and existing without judgment on the self.

Kathrin's daily duties included making field observations about the program to see what was working and what could be changed in order to achieve the best results. She would rotate between different classrooms each week and take notes. Sometimes she would jump out of her role as a field observer and would encourage mindfulness practices to teachers, for example, when students would lose concentration.

To date, the program is promoting the Ugandan community's overall psychological well-being and is fully functioning as the result of the people.

Impact of Research

Kathrin Arcari's research is enhancing the way people see themselves and their own environments. Her research began with observing the way society judges others (specifically her research on Klinefelter's syndrome), to observing how society self judges (Mindfulness Uganda). Kathrin's area of study (combining her passion for travel and helping others) is transforming the world - into a more mindful world - one place at a time, one mind at a time.

What's Next?

Kathrin's future plans include:

- Attending graduate school. She is interested in topics such as population health, international development, and humanitarian aid.
- Travelling. Kathrin would like to go back to Uganda for at least 6 months. She would like to get more hands on experience, build connections, and implement change.
- One day, she hopes to build an organization that oversees the implementation of funded programs and the distribution of money to countries, which will in turn better facilitate those in need.

Check out Kathrin Online:

- Check out the Mindfulness & Development Research, visit: <http://www.maadlab.org/members.html>
- To learn how to get involved like Kathrin, visit: <http://stjudechildrenshome.com/>