



# Mindfulness in learning Chemistry

UCFS



555101

N.M. Samarakkody

M.Sc. (Chemistry Education)

Chemistry Department

University of Colombo

March 2011

## Abstract

Meditate; don't be negligent, lest you may later regret it!

British (Cambridge) Secondary School Chemistry curriculum is designed to place less emphasis on factual material and greater emphasis on the understanding and application of scientific concepts and principles. This approach has been adopted in recognition of the need for students to develop skills that will be of long-term value in an increasingly technological world rather than focusing on large quantities of factual material that may have only short-term relevance. The concept of 'learning mindfully' is hardly seen in highly competitive schools. Many, only focus on the facts or hints which are needed to perform well in the examinations or competitions; and the knowledge and skills they possessed at the time of examination or competition, fade away soon afterwards.

Meditation is a simple tool to develop the mindfulness. In this study, sixty secondary students of a competitive inner city school were trained to practice breathing meditation and loving kindness meditation regularly for six months. They were assessed formatively and summatively using three questionnaires. The last two questionnaires were based on Cambridge Chemistry curriculum. The average percentage of students achieved aims through mindfulness was 41.37%. and the average percentage of students who neither achieved mindfulness nor aims was 45.65%, yielding an average of 85.75% supporting the hypothesis. i.e. an average of 14.25% did not support the hypothesis.

Thus, it was clearly illustrated that with mindfulness, one can gain a better understanding of the scientific concepts and principles, beyond the limit of gaining good results at the examinations or winning the competitions; and applies them for the benefit of one-self and others!