The Gadfly

Dying for the Truth since 399 BCE

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Photo by Degnis Lucero

LaGuardia Community College's Philosophy Club in Collaboration with the Department of Social Sciences Presents

The Gadfly

Dying for the Truth Since 399 B.C.E.

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Note from the Editor

This issue of *The Gadfly* compiles essays presented at the 2024 and 2025 LaGuardia Undergraduate Philosophy and Social Science conferences, co-organized by the Philosophy Program and faculty from the Social Sciences.

I'd like to thank the 2024 conference's keynote speaker, Professor Esther Rosario for delivering a thought-provoking keynote address in 2024, which urged us to consider the concept of *love* as a public good. And I want to thank Dr. Richard Brown for stepping in to deliver the 2025 keynote address at the last minute. I also want to thank the LaGuardia Humanities Department, and the Philosophy and Critical Thinking Program, particularly the program director Dr. Cheri Carr. Thank you to the instructors who brought their students to the conference, and the student attendees. Thanks also to the College Association for its continued support in funding the conferences over the years, and to Flora Florez and Chris Singh for their assistant in Campus Life and Precious Harewood for assistance in the business office.

My two co-chairs, Dr. Choon Shan Lai and Dr. Koun Eum from Social Sciences, deserve tremendous praise and thanks for their hard work and mentoring of the students whose essays are included in this issue.. Finally, I want to thank the students who presented at the conferences, and the larger LaGuardia community for supporting it as well. Thanks also to Degnis Lucero, guest editor for this volume, for his thoughtful presentation at the conference, editorial work in putting this issue together, and for the fantastic cover photography for the journal.

-Andrew McFarland, Editor

Note from the Guest Editor

Never in my life did I imagine having an opportunity like this one; editing *The Gadfly* journal—it feels like a dream. As I read each essay, I remember the teachings of my professors, which I try to apply to every sentence. The most challenging part was preserving the author's voice while also ensuring that their argument was clear. This required me to understand the premises and think deeply about what needed to be done. But after nights of little sleep and pulling my hair to find ideas, I was gratified to see the final work and to understand my flaws more. LaGuardia Community College gives so many opportunities to reinvent myself and to find a place in the academic environment.

The essays in the edition are diverse in the sense that they come from many backgrounds, looking at the same problems from many perspectives, but at the same time, there are a couple that are really thought-provoking, making the reader part of that moment.

I like to thank all and each of my professors as well as their work, because without them, I would not be here.

I hope you, the reader, enjoy this edition of *The Gadfly* journal as much as I did. And I hope to have the opportunity to be part of this project again in the future.

-Degnis Lucero, Guest Editor

Refractured Mirror

Angela Sherpa Lama

The studies on humanity and the constant strive to make it better than it once was and now is, seems never-ending. During my time in this class, one important factor that I learned is the question of the known and the unknown. In hindsight, nothing truly is solidified; the constant evolution surrounding us takes form in multiple ways, so that one thing is never the same as it once had been. However, as for my final project, I had been really drawn towards the topics of adultism and nature versus nurture. At first glance, these topics seem very simple and general, which, contrastingly enough, is the complete opposite. However, I believe these very two concepts discussed in class to be one of the few essential pillars in the foundation of the implications of what a child's known world consists of and how it truly cultivates the world they will and do currently live in.

We have discussed theories from many important people whose studies have shown how their ideas and beliefs have influenced the formation of a child's formative years. Still, even with these beliefs, nothing truly can counter the implications beyond what can be seen nor understood. Before I discuss the two topics that inspired this piece, I will provide a description behind the thoughts and meaning of the piece as a whole and the impact it had on my own understanding as well.

This piece is called "Refractured Mirror"; it was produced through my own questioning of the reality of life that had lived within my mind, which never felt inherently my own at times. During our late teens and early twenties, many begin to regain a sense of autonomy beyond the home—a shift shaped by fresh experiences and newly formed beliefs. As autonomy is rediscovered, lingering questions about ideas and our understanding of the world are constantly questioned in ways that lead us to question our own reality. As I had begun to explore this idea for myself, the unsettling feeling of self had lingered a lot and still does to this day. I had wondered if this could ever be truly removed by understanding the reasons behind everything I had done and believed, yet nothing had provided a complete understanding, but during the moments that had felt the most familiar, I had not even understood what I felt, but

rather who I had felt like—based on my reactions and the solutions I created. These reactions had very much been my parents', whether through the correlation between our responses, our understandings, or the differentiation of self and emotion. These aspects had remained too unscathed, shaped not by what was seen, but by what was thought and felt.

The phrase "you are a reflection of your environment" at times feels like a horrific commentary. It does not offer a clear distinction between one person and another, but instead suggests an enmeshment of self with another—an idea that blurs the boundaries of individuality.

At its purest understanding, all animals are influenced by their environment and adapt accordingly to it as a survival instinct. I wouldn't take it that far, but it can be applicable to some, to a certain degree. This very statement holds much provenance, as the structure and culture placed on people before us continue to influence their everyday way of being and living. It creates an alluded, unwavering sense of solidification in what is known—not only collectively, but even within myself. Inherently, it is all we have ever known. What else could there be? Even with society and media offering new alternatives for what can be seen, the gap between reality and idea often feels too far to bridge. The unwavering stance that the nature of one's culture shapes how people live cannot be dismantled by a single showing, but only through a true unveiling of its depth—not just within yourself, but in everyone around you.

Especially when a parental figure or adult is said to circumvent your daily life—whether through what you understand of yourself, your emotions, or simply what it means to be a person—there is always a traceable print, no matter who you are. The engraving of a familiar life is formed through experiences and, be it said, the nature of what has been shown throughout our lives up to this point. Even at this age, the consistent act of looking for answers to questions that feel beyond my comprehension is often found through people who hold more life experience, but also share similar beliefs and perceptions of the world. This is one example of the cultural implication of what I was brought up to do and believe in—rooted in the idea that elders hold the "key to life." This belief holds only a mere level of value to some, depending on what one may believe. However, I personally believe that experience carries significance beyond age—through what has been learned, but also understood. The untraceable influence behind much of what it means to

be you lies in the people who have not only helped cultivate your identity, but in many ways, created it. This dynamic is terrifying, yet it holds immense power. For me, the embodiment of self I've created is deeply infused with the mesh of cultural beliefs and actions of my family—now seen as the nature of who I am. As I begin to question what has been believed, taught, and learned, the process of questioning everything feels unimaginable—but not entirely impossible.

The life of imperfection is what makes humanity thrive—a philosophy I've created for myself. The people we love most also have the ability to hurt us just as deeply, and this, at its core, is what creates passion and leaves an everlasting impact on a person. I hold immense belief in the statement that "experiences mold people." Even personal experiences that shape a singular person can, at times, also leave an impact on those who surround them.

One aspect that challenges my beliefs is adultism, which holds that "the philosophy of an elder is said to hold wisdom throughout generations." This wisdom, however, has been altered and manipulated over time, becoming the foundation for many of the beliefs and ideas people hold today—passed down by the adults in their lives. It's similar to using an equation designed to produce only one solution. You follow the steps expecting the correct answer, but that answer may not be right for the specific situation or formula you're dealing with. What's considered the "right answer" is simply what has worked in the past, not necessarily what is right for you.

At the end of the day, we come to understand ourselves through the people who bring out the most conflicting emotions in us. While having peace in knowing who we are can feel good, the absence of conflict can actually be a conflict in itself. Growth and learning don't happen in spaces that only reflect what we already think. They happen in moments when we act unconsciously, beyond our own control. A well-structured and flourishing life is important, but without questioning or considering different alternatives, it can become stagnant. Whether the solution comes from adults or from within yourself, it only makes sense if it feels applicable in that moment. This all connects back to adultism. We often look to others for answers to our struggles, but they are not us. Their experiences and values may help shape a philosophy of how life should be lived, but that philosophy shouldn't be followed blindly.

Instead, it should help build the foundation for your own ideology—a manifestation of your life, expressed in your own words

The most terrifying thing is coming to terms with the reality of yourself—seeing who you truly are, not who you wish or think yourself to be. That pain, as heavy as it may feel, brings with it a fruitful insight into what we genuinely need as people. Often, the persona we see in ourselves or through others is just a veil, one that hides the deeper, more unsettling truths of humanity. And yet, I believe that truth ends up being the rawest reflection of who you are. As frightening as it is to look behind the covers, that very act is what sets you free—not in what you are, but in who you are. Life becomes what you allow yourself to believe it is. The person who defines it is you, and it can only ever be you.

Written illustration of the drawing

The drawing had been my own depiction of trauma, "generational trauma." The influence of the parental figure in one's life is undeniably present, shaping how a child is raised through ideas of what that child must be, do, and show up as. For me, my immigrant parents were raised in a culturally rooted way, where religion and language were central to their sense of identity and vitality. Their idea of a well-raised child was one who never questioned their judgment, who offered support, and who revealed life's possibilities through achievement and success. This is something I've seen reflected in many households, regardless of background. Parenthood has often been understood as unconditional love and providing, and while those are vital aspects, they are not the only ones. My parents raised me based on what they had been taught and shown about what it meant to be a parent. But their understanding and my reality have long been in conflict. As I grow older, that conflict hasn't faded—it has only widened the gap between our perspectives

Because the environment I was raised in is so different from what my family experienced in their past, the frustration—and the fear—of a new life makes everything more difficult. In this drawing, I focused more on the way speaking is depicted. The words and ideas a parent expresses to their child carry deep value, simply because of what a parent represents to a child. From shaping subconscious beliefs to influencing their inner world, the impact is real and lasting. At a certain point in my life, these repeated expressions made me reflect on what it must have felt like to be a child during my parents' time. No matter how many stories

I've heard or how much empathy I've tried to hold, I could never fully comprehend their experience because I didn't live it firsthand. Now, I've come to believe that even with all the differences between us, the things I understand are not just mine—they belong to the people in my life too. Nothing can undo what's already been done, but I've realized that this experience is personal. I can help their beliefs evolve, but only if they choose to let them evolve. The human experience isn't meant to be easy, but the life one lives is ultimately shaped by how they choose to live it.

The study of humanity and its constant effort to improve itself feels never-ending. Throughout my time in this class, one of the most important ideas I've come to understand is the tension between the known and the unknown. Looking back, nothing ever feels fully solidified. Everything around us continues to evolve in ways that show how nothing stays the same. For my final project, I was especially drawn to the topics of adultism and nature vs. nurture. At first glance, they may seem simple or general, but that assumption is far from the truth. These two concepts, as discussed in class, stand out as key pillars in understanding the foundation of a child's known world. They shape how that world is cultivated—both the one they live in now and the one they will grow into.

Throughout this class, we've explored theories from many important thinkers whose studies show how their ideas and beliefs

appear during the early formation of a child, even in the fetal years. Yet, even these beliefs, nothing truly can counter the implications beyond what can be seen or fully understood. Before I dive into the two topics that inspired this piece, I want to first describe the thoughts and meaning behind it as a whole. This work reflects the impact these ideas have had on my own understanding.

In the end, the reflection of self is never just your own—it is refractured through the lives, beliefs, and experiences of those who came before you. The ideas passed down, the words spoken, and the silence held all leave a traceable print, one that shapes not only how we live but also how we come to understand what living even means. The concepts of adultism and nature versus nurture are not just theories—they are lived realities, ones that continue to evolve as we begin to question what has been taught, what has been felt, and what has been believed. The process of unlearning is not easy, nor is it linear. But it is necessary. Because the life we live is not just inherited—it is chosen. And in that choice, even through the discomfort and uncertainty, there is a quiet power. A power to redefine, to reshape, and to reclaim what it means to be you.

Happiness, Well-Being, and Contentment

Josh Surillo

Merriam-Webster's dictionary defines happiness as "a state of well-being and contentment" ("Happiness," 2023). The way in which to pursue this state has been a long-discussed topic in philosophy. Whether it is through acting upon our wills in a moment of decision, or cultivating a view of proper actions which we deem appropriate to guide us to the most favorable solution to the question of how best to construct a life of happiness, well-being, and contentment, has been one of the questions asked and answered with varying levels of success for centuries. Two philosophers who have endured to answer this question in the past are: Aristotle, through his thoughts on *eudaimonia* - or wellbeing, happiness, flourishing – as well as Immanuel Kant, through his idea of hypothetical imperatives.

Aristotle, using the term *eudemonia*, which translates from Ancient Greek as "happiness" or "wellbeing," sets out to describe the conditions in which we are to live a good life, which, inescapably, is a happy one. For Aristotle, *eudaimonia* is an activity exercised over a lifetime in the presence of a sufficient number of external goods. (Capuccino 2013) Aristotle thinks that all voluntary action has a goal, and that goal is one that we ourselves deem to be good, for us or for others, and that no one is aiming-action they know to be evil. We first deliberate before executing a voluntary action, deliberate on our choices, and whether this or that action is to give us the outcome we desire. These choices are informed by our *ethos* or we would say, the morals under which we were brought up, as well as the wisdom we have cultivated throughout our lives. Aristotle, therefore, is saying that we first deliberate our action, then we act, and then we assume the performed action will bring good. Aristotle then brings up the question of whether the actions are good *in themselves,* which will not bring any further desires; a chief good which is "complete" and "perfect". (Capuccino, 2013) Aristotle asserts that there is a chief good which is of *human* nature, and common to people, that happiness is the

achievement of this *chief good*. He does not associate the *chief good* with pleasure, saying that pleasure is driven more by desire than by will, and that it depends on happiness (eudaimonia) rather than shaping or defining it. However, Aristotle does not have a sufficient answer to what chief good, *eudaimonia*, or happiness *is*. Yet he does certain prescriptions about it, such as that it must be (1) something "personal and difficult to lose"; (2) the "most perfect" of all ends, a good pursued for its own sake; and (3) self-sufficient, or enough on its own (Capuccino, 2013).

Immanuel Kant's views on attaining happiness as a function of abiding by *hypothetical imperatives* given to oneself to achieve a wanted result (in this case, happiness). Kant expresses the concept of a hypothetical imperative as follows: *if a person has a certain end in mind, and has the means to achieve that end, then they should use the means they have to achieve that end* (Hill, 1973). This contrasts with Kant's highly contested concept of the *categorical imperative*, which says: *act only in a way in which at the same time you will that it should become moral law;* said another way: *act only in a way which you'd want others to act* or *treat others the way you wish to be treated*. In Kant's view of the hypothetical imperative, propositions such as "If I want to become rich, I must steal at every opportunity" are valid hypothetical imperatives to follow (will) to achieving one's goals, even if not considering them valid in a moral or *categorical* sense. For Kant, happiness is identified with the satisfaction of the totality of inclinations or desires (Hills, 2006). With the satisfaction of desires, you will gain pleasure and for Kant, this is an inevitable connection. However, Kant does not have a clear definition of what ultimate happiness looks like; he does, however, think happiness is living in the world you want to live in, living in a world that is the way you'd like it to be (Hills, 2006).

Kant, similar to Aristotle, believes that voluntary action is involved in the pursuit of happiness; they both believe that achieving happiness is inextricably linked to receiving pleasure. However, where Kant and Aristotle differ is that Kant does not suppose happiness is inherently ingrained in a common good; people can have a choice, which

would be perceived as selfish, even if Kant might suggest they are misguided in their pursuits, as a way to achieve personal happiness. Aristotle, however, believes happiness is a consensus good, that all can identify with the greatest good and that it is to be known as *perfect*. Aristotle believes, like Kant, that the achievement of happiness is of a personal nature, but they differ on if it is difficult to lose. Aristotle believes the greatest good entails happiness–which, once achieved is hard to lose because it is total and complete; Kant has no mention of this aspect, as his hypothetical imperative does not involve the preservation of a good–it focuses solely on the conditions for achieving one, simply satisfaction of personal desire, whether it entails others' happiness or not, is not his primary concern so much as abiding by a manner which makes attainment of personal goal fulfillment possible.

Though they were able to identify ways in which to reach *eudaimonia* (happiness), neither Aristotle nor Kant was able to deliver a concrete definition of what happiness is without exception. The greatest attempt from either man was only to arrive at a guide map for a personal discovery of happiness for us to take on. Aristotle, through deliberation and subsequent willingness toward what *good* or *chief good* we are seeking to achieve; and Kant, through his hypothetical imperative, not so much telling us what to do, but asking us to look inward, to figure out what kind of life we want for ourselves, and then to act in ways that move us towards that we want in our lives to be like, concentrating on acting in such way that brings those desires to fruition for ourselves

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Tariffs: The Effects on U.S. Economy

Toe Htin Lin Nyo

Abstract

This paper focuses on the economic effects that tariffs have had on the economic life of the United States. This paper will also provide the arguments that support and oppose tariffs, as well as the ways in which these tariffs effects will express themselves in the most recent tariff policies that have been imposed by the administration of President Trump. Tariffs are favored by several arguments, including the protection of national security, the restoration of job and domestic business opportunities, and a growth in the U.S economy. These are just a few of the reasons why tariffs are supported. The imposition of tariffs, on the other hand, can result in many negative outcomes, such as retaliatory trade wars, disruptions in supply chains, elevated costs, and economic inefficiency. This paper presents a comprehensive analysis of both theoretical and empirical research of the effects of tariffs.

Introduction

A setting for studying the theoretical mechanisms by which trade protectionism affects domestic economic activity is the increase of tariffs during President Trump's 2025 administration, particularly the announcement of a 125% tariff on Chinese imports. A comprehensive study of current empirical data shows that tariffs impact both current price levels and more systemic aspects of the economy through a complex network of interrelated mechanisms. A particular branch of thought holds that tariffs have the following effects: they promote domestic production, local businesses; however, they raise prices, disturb global supply chains, make specific sectors more vulnerable, and cause inflationary pressures between producers and consumers through the higher prices. This discussion presents five main theoretical frameworks that explain the complicated and compounding effects of tariffs on the U.S. economy. The frameworks are based on a synthesis of data from the

Yale Budget Lab, many publications from the Federal Reserve, and current academic research.

Findings

During President Trump's reelection in 2025, the United States imposed a significant amount of tariff increases, including a 125% tariff on Chinese imports. A high 125% tariff on Chinese imports has had a significant impact on inflation and the Consumer Price Index (CPI). According to the Yale Budget Lab, these tariffs have caused prices to rise 2.9%, which is equivalent to an average yearly cost of $4,700 per household in 2024 dollars. Approximately $2,100 in yearly losses hit low-income households severely. Particularly, as a direct result of these charges on China's imports, clothing prices have increased by 64 percent in the near run.

Effects on Consumers by Income Level

Where We Stand: The Fiscal, Economic, and Distributional Effects of All U.S. Tariffs Enacted in 2025 Through April 2

Income Group	Average Annual Cost Increase ($)	CPI Increase (%)	Apparel Price Increase (%)
Low-Income	2,100	3	64
Middle-Income	4,700	3	64
High-Income	7,000	3	64

Source: Yale Budget Lab, April 2025 • Created with Datawrapper

American businesses have been significantly affected by the tariffs because they rely on imports, and it has a measurable effect on the global supply chain. Exports of goods most hit by these import duties fell from 2018 to 2019, with 2019 seeing the biggest drop. The analysis was published by the American Economic Journal: Applied Economics. Showing how interdependent contemporary supply chains are and how bad tariffs are; this drop is the same as a 2% to 4% extra charge on American exports.

Consumer prices are expected to rise in 2025, especially for imported products from China, which are likely to face significant price increases due to the high number of duties imposed. The CPI, which

tracks the average change in prices paid by urban consumers for a market basket of goods and services over time, is likely to reflect these price increases, as businesses often pass added cost on to consumers.

It is important to understand the calculation of the CPI to fully comprehend the possible effects. The Bureau of Labor Statistics gathers price data analysis from several different goods and services, giving each a weight based on the consumer's purchasing behaviour. The CPI does not include tariffs per se, but it does account for the price changes that arise because of tariffs. For example, the CPI will show a rise in the price of imported goods and materials if tariffs make them more expensive and consumers continue to buy them.

According to the Boston branch of the Federal Reserve, basic price inflation might rise by at least half a percentage point due to additional tariffs on foreign imports, and by as much as two and a half percentage points, depending on how firms set their prices. Additionally, S&P Global Ratings predicts that if the tariffs remain in effect during 2025, U.S. consumer prices could increase by 0.5% to 0.7%, also as a result of higher costs on imported goods and services.

The impact of U.S. tariffs on China's imports is studied in a paper published in the *Journal of International Money and Finance* in 2025 by Chen et al., which highlights how these tariffs may indirectly affect the U.S. CPI. However the article itself does not directly examine the index but it provides a helpful context for understanding how shifts in the global supply chain may impact U.S. consumer pricing. Chinese enterprises' sales to American buyers increased by 0.235 percent for every one percent increase in U.S. import taxes. This pattern suggests that, as export costs rise, suppliers may respond by redirecting goods towards domestic markets, where selling becomes more economically viable.

It is important to show how China's imported intermediates and domestic goods balance each other, as a comparable increase in opposing import taxes resulted in a 0.995% decline in domestic purchasing power.

If such shifts occur they may signal changes in the cost or availability of Chinese imports.

Selmi, Errami, and Wohar explored the effects of tariffs on Chinese imports in a study published in the *Journal of Economics Integration* in 2020. The researchers concentrate on the impact of tariffs on American enterprises and the broader economy. Using a case study approach, they analyze sector-specific effects by examining U.S. stock price responses to tariff announcements. Their findings reveal that industries such as energy, technology, and maturing sectors have been disproportionately affected. This outcome indicates that these sectors were already vulnerable, facing heightened uncertainty and financial strain, which trade tensions and tariff policies have further intensified.

Although the research is mainly focused on the impact on the stock market, it also suggests wider economic consequences, such as possible impacts on the CPI. U.S. Businesses may decide to pass the increased cost of tariffs on to consumers in the form of higher pricing, a response that adds to existing inflationary pressures. According to Selmi et al., consumer prices climbed because of the tariffs that were put in place during the U.S.-China trade war, even if they don't give exact quantitative estimates of the tariffs' impact on CPI.

According to Byers and Ferry study in 2019, "Decoupling from China: An Economic Analysis of the Impact on the U.S. Economy of a Permanent Tariff on Chinese Imports," they analyzed the possible consequences of imposing tariff on everything that comes from China. The study mostly looks at big picture economic indicators like GDP and employment, but it also discusses pricing indicators like CPI and PPI as well.

In their findings, the authors suggest that if the United States were to impose taxes on Chinese imports,domestic American businesses would likely expand, and reliance on Chinese goods would decline. These shifts could stabilize or even reduce production cost over time, potentially easing certain inflationary pressures. However, manufacturers

and consumers may have price increases because of shifting to cheaper imports and other suppliers.

For the consumer price index (CPI), the research indicates that, although higher import prices can cause an early surge, increased domestic production efficiency could lead to neutral or even deflationary impacts in the long term. As manufacturers take on greater input costs, the producer price index (PPI) would probably impact at first. These pressures may eventually decrease, allowing producer prices to settle down, as domestic businesses expand, and supply chains rebalance.

The United States Producer Price Index (PPI) has clearly gone upwards due to the new tariffs. The Economic Brief (2025) from the Richmond Federal Reserve shows that American businesses see a direct increase in their input costs because of tariffs, which make imported goods and materials more expensive. According to the article, PPI has been steadily rising since 2018 and will continue to do so through 2024 in import-heavy industries like construction and production. As an example, after the initial round of tariffs, the PPI for intermediate goods increased by about 4.5 percent, as compared to a baseline trend of 2.8 percent in the absence of trade barriers (Richmond Fed, 2025). The producers are either taking a hit on their profit margins from the higher expenses themselves or are passing the cost increases on to consumers in the form of higher prices, which is adding to all its forms of a rise in inflation.

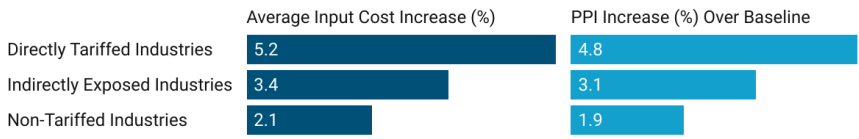
Tariffs also have an impact on PPI, including not just on the goods that are specifically targeted, according to the Richmond Fed. Those "downstream" industries that rely on imports impacted by tariffs can lead to higher prices. When the cost of intermediate goods rises, the price of all products, including those created mostly with domestic components, rises, as the article indicates. Overall, PPI growth has been improved by approximately 1.2 percentage points compared to what would have happened in the absence of tariffs, thanks to this broader spillover impact (Richmond Fed, 2025).

Due to increasing input prices in different industries, the new tariffs implemented on April 9 have greatly increased pressure on the US Producer Price Index (PPI). The Yale Budget Lab found that the industries most impacted by this were those that depend significantly on imported intermediate goods (Yale Budget Lab, 2025). Generally, input costs increased by 5.2% in industries like automobiles and construction, which rely on steel and aluminum directly hit by the tariffs, while they increased by 2.1% in non-targeted sectors like education or healthcare services, according to the research. As a result of this increase in manufacturing costs, PPI has risen throughout all sectors, adding to the inflationary pressures caused by disruptions in the supply chain and a tight labor market.

There is an unpredictable impact of tariffs on industries downstream of the supply chain, as the Yale Budget Lab states clearly. According to the Yale Budget Lab (2025), industries that were not directly affected by tariffs experienced a 3.4% increase in their PPI compared to the initial projections. The impact of production costs, even for companies not directly involved in international trade, is demonstrated by these indirect consequences, which are significant since they highlight the importance of tariffs. As a result, the tariffs imposed on April 9 by the Trump Administration have a higher impact than originally anticipated, adding to the inflation.

The Impact of the New Tariffs on PPI on April 9th

The Fiscal and Economic Effects of the Revised April 9 Tariffs



Source: Yale Budget Lab, April 2025 • Created with Datawrapper

After the recent tariffs, there is a significant increase in producer-level inflation, as shown by comparing the 2024 and 2025 Producer Price Index (PPI). In 2024, the PPI for the final goods and

products was 2.4%. There was considerable tariff-induced cost pressure across every industry in early 2025. Following the implementation of tariffs, the PPI increased quickly to an annualized rate of 3.7% (BLS, 2025). The service sector had a more moderate PPI rise, in opposition to the more robust gains seen in industries like agriculture and manufacturing, which rely substantially on imported commodities. While the data shows that supply chain and labor market situations are already contributing to PPI inflation, new tariffs have affected the increase in costs, making them even more noticeable across every industry, especially those that rely on imports from the global supply chains. This indicates the ways in which trade policies can speed up the tendency to inflation that is already present, making it more difficult to stabilize producer prices.

The Change in the PPI Prior to and After the Tariff

Year	PPI Final Demand Growth (%)
2024 (Pre-Tariffs)	2.4
2025 (Post-Tariffs)	3.7

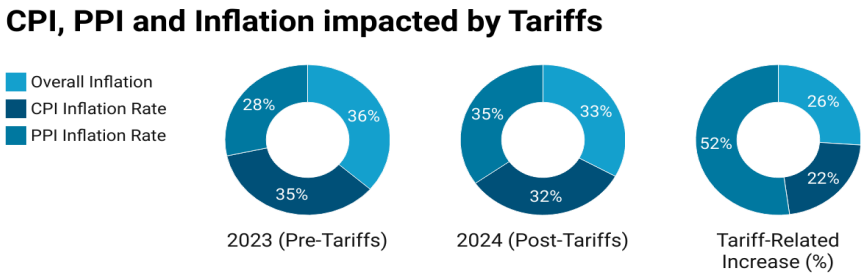
Producer Price Index News Release Summary, April 2025
Source: U.S. BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS • Created with Datawrapper

Rising pricing pressures in the US economy, including the CPI, PPI, and overall inflation, have been significantly contributed by the current wave of tariffs. The Consumer Price Index (CPI), which tracks the average annual change in prices paid by consumers, saw an expected increase after tariffs were imposed, according to the University of Michigan RSQE Forecast (November 2024). According to the analysis, the CPI inflation rate increased from 3.1% in 2023 to 3.7% by late 2024. The increase occurred due to changes in the supply chain and higher import costs (University of Michigan, 2024). Consumer prices increased in every sector, particularly for goods sectors linked to the global supply

chain, because of tariffs, which pushed up the cost of all goods and services.

Tariffs have significant impacts on producers. From 2.5% in 2023 to 4.0% by the end of 2024, according to the RSQE prediction, PPI inflation which shows the price changes from the sellers' and producers' points of view increased. This increase happened due to both the direct effect of higher import prices on intermediate goods, services and the secondary effect of domestic American enterprises passing on increased input costs to consumers. Core goods PPI (excluding food and energy) rose faster than overall PPI, indicating growing cost rises beyond short-term inflationary price shocks, which particularly impacted manufacturing businesses. There is a strong correlation between changes in producer prices and larger changes in consumer prices, as this cost pressure at the producer level also served to fuel additional consumer price inflation.

The latest tariffs, according to the RSQE evaluation, contributed an additional 0.6% to total inflation by the end of 2024, on top of other inflationary factors like substantial service sector pricing and high wage growth (University of Michigan, 2024). The Federal Reserve's monetary policy tightening did its part to reduce inflation expectations, but tariffs' structural cost rises made complete price control a major challenge. Inflation remained higher above the Federal Reserve's 2% target as the economy entered 2025, as both the Consumer Price Index and the Producer Price Index showed higher-than-expected rates of inflation at the end of the year. These results strongly indicate that tariffs have a significant impact on producer and consumer prices, leading to long-term inflation.



As additional taxes on imports, tariffs make the prices of imported goods higher and directly affect inflation, according to one important theoretical structure explaining their effects. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) tends to grow as businesses pass on the increased cost to the customers, and customers experience higher prices from imported items. Evidence from the Boston Federal Reserve and the Yale Budget Lab shows that tariffs, especially on Chinese imports increased inflation by an estimated 0.5 to 0.7 percentage points and higher household costs. Inflation for consumers is what happens, according to theoretical models, when the cost of production increases without a matching increase in supply.

The second framework considers the possibility of global supply chain delays. The costs of intermediate goods used in domestic production were higher due to tariffs, in addition to the prices of financial goods and products. Therefore, this is reflected in the PPI, which tracks the pressures on companies' input costs. Input costs increased dramatically for businesses such as construction and automobiles that depend on imported intermediate goods, according to research from the Yale Budget Lab and the Richmond Federal Reserve. As a result, this is consistent with the commonly accepted theories of supply chain disruption, wherein tariffs have second-round effects—in which increased costs lead to price increases for everything—even though these sectors are not specifically targeted by the tariffs, such as education and healthcare services industries.

The effect of tariffs on the global supply chain is another important topic. Trade diversion and increased production domestically happen when tariffs make the final outputs from imported goods and materials higher. In the long term, this can cause less inflation by reducing reliance. Costs tend to surge, causing transitional inflation, in the short term, as businesses are seeking to find alternative suppliers or invest in local production. This model falls in the classical theories of trade, such as the Stolper-Samuelson theorem, which shows that protectionist policies help some American businesses while costing consumers.

Because of tariffs, many businesses and industries also act as a liaison. Trade restrictions have negatively impacted sectors that already highly rely on imports, according to the sectoral sensitivity framework. These sectors include energy, technology, and manufacturing. According to Selmi, Errami, and Wohar's research, tariffs increased uncertainty in specific industries, which caused economic instability more generally. In theory, systemic risks, capital discouragement, and increased inflationary pressure on producers and consumers equally might result from businesses in vital industries experiencing higher costs or instability.

A significant and frequently bypassed effect of tariffs is retaliation, which has the potential to increase disruptions in both international trade and the stability of the local economy. Retaliatory trade actions by the targeted countries are a real possibility when the US applies high tariffs, as the 125% tariff on imported goods and materials from China. While not specifically stated in the data, past experiences and the larger body of economic theories imply that policies usually result in reciprocal tariffs. As an example, China could react by taxing American agricultural and industrial exports, reducing demand for American exported goods and materials to China. Not only would American export volumes fall because of this retaliation, but domestic production would also reduce, export-oriented jobs would be harmed, and global supply networks would become even more unstable.

On the other hand, Tariffs have some advantages. The growth of American local businesses is an important advantage. Byers and Ferry (2019) found that tariffs can reduce reliance on imports, particularly from China and other developing nations, by increasing the price of imported items. As a result, American enterprises and consumers in the United States will have less competition, and those companies and consumers may end up buying more products made in the United States. This kind of policy has the potential to improve the manufacturing industry of the United States, increase industrial production, and restore the country's economy over the long run.

Tariffs play an important geopolitical role in the U.S. strategy by providing industries like energy, technology, and steel. Tariffs increased financial strains on already struggling sectors, according to research by Selmi, Errami, and Wohar (2020). To reduce dependence on foreign companies, imported goods and materials are considered critical to national security and to protect employment, tariffs can be employed in this situation. To add insult to injury, tariff policies can be used as a weapon in trade discussions, forcing trading partners into fairer practices or concessions. Implementing tariffs strategically can provide powers that go beyond simple price rivalry and support long-term strategic goals and a country's economy.

There is a common justification for protectionism that uses tariffs and restrictions on trade to protect domestic industries from foreign competition. But traditional economists have long maintained that protectionist policies affect resource allocation and comparative advantage, which in turn causes economic inefficiency. Consumers will experience welfare losses due to increased prices and fewer options caused by tariffs that unfairly increase the cost of imported goods. The economy as a whole suffers from an insufficient allocation of resources due to the fact that protected industries are less likely to innovate or cut costs (Bhagwati, 1992). The protected sectors' total competitiveness and productivity are eroded over time as a result.

These theoretical inefficiencies are pointed out by empirical facts. Using an economic elasticity model, Caliendo and Parro (2020) analyze the impact of protectionist policies on industrial productivity and figure that tariffs cause substantial losses in efficiency. According to their findings, economic production decreases when trade costs rise because fewer benefits from specialization and technology diffusion are realized. As an example of how trade imbalances might affect global supply chains, consider the impact on world GDP if significant economies were to impose tariffs of 40% on each other (Caliendo & Parro, 2020). These results highlight the intangible economic consequences of protectionist policies, which might not show up in the short term when looking at employment or output.

Industries that rely on imported goods and materials are particularly vulnerable to tariffs' effects on production and the real economy. Tariffs on intermediate goods increased production costs for American enterprises during the U.S.-China trade war, which led to decreased investment and output in certain sectors (Li, He, & Lin, 2020). U.S. export volumes were reduced, especially in the agricultural and high-tech manufacturing sectors, due to this increased cost pressure and retaliatory tariffs imposed by trading partners. Net losses in employment and output occurred in multiple industries as a result of tariff-induced changes in trade patterns, which led to decreased exports and an absence of growth in domestic replacements.

In addition, protectionist policies can worsen a country's trade relations and decrease welfare, according to macroeconomic modeling. Countries with high tariffs see less investment and more trade volume instability, according to research in the Journal of Risk and Financial Management (Nataraj, 2024). Businesses, particularly those operating in highly integrated global markets, are unable to make adequate long-term plans when trade policy is unclear. While certain industries may experience temporary relief from tariffs, the whole economy often has setbacks including decreased innovation, less market efficiency, and

missed export prospects. This only continues to show that protectionism fails to be without its long-term economic consequences.

Conclusion

To sum up, the high tariffs imposed by Trump's administration in 2025 reflect the complex economic consequences of trade protectionism. Increased inflation, global supply chain delays and disturbances, and rising prices for both consumers and businesses are among the immediate consequences. However, the theoretical framework suggests that these disruptions may lead to long-term advantages. It is crucial to weigh the potential long-term benefits against the risk of retaliation and the possibility of heightened inflationary pressures. Comprehensive, focused solutions are necessary to address the full scope of tariff-related issues and to ensure that results are maximized. One way to reduce supply chain risk and expand sourcing options is by strengthening trade alliances. In addition, providing subsidies to industries most affected by tariffs offers a direct and practical way of support, helping them remain competitive. One way to reduce supply chain risks and enhance other sourcing possibilities is to strengthen trade alliances. To control inflation and the promotion of industrial growth, tariffs policies can be sector-specific rather than general hikes. Lastly, it will be necessary to continuously develop and adapt new tariff policies to enhance global competitiveness. For trade protectionism to be effective in creating economic growth, maintain prices, and support long-term national prosperity, a strategic approach that is both thorough and flexible must be prioritized.

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Centering Self-Compassion A Mindful Approach to Well-Being for Community College Students

Leslie Koren

How does a daily mindfulness practice impact well-being, especially for community college students? And, given the opportunity to dream, what kind of mental health programming would one add to the already robust schedule for the students at LaGuardia Community College? In this paper and presentation, I answer those questions by exploring research in the growing field of mindfulness, and, in particular, Mindful Self-Compassion (MSC), especially as it pertains to this population. I also provide a first-hand account of the experience of practicing mindfulness and MSC for more than a month—identifying both the benefits and challenges that can easily prevent students and others from doing the practice. Finally, I analyzed several of the existing programs designed to support LaGuardia students—DBT training, support circles, and mindfulness meditation. With those in mind, I present a new program centered on MSC in both Spanish and English, which would be available to students, faculty, and staff on Sunday evenings to start the week on a positive note and add resilience when challenges arise.

What is Mindfulness?

The American Psychological Association defines mindfulness as "awareness of one's internal states and surroundings." Mindfulness teaches people to pay attention to their thoughts and feelings without applying judgment. It can be cultivated through meditation, by tuning into sensations in each moment and focusing on one specific thing, such as the breath. When the mind inevitably wanders, the practice involves noticing that it has wandered and returning to the touchstone. This process is repeated, training the mind to remain calm and focused even during challenging moments. One offshoot of mindfulness is MSC, which uses a mindful approach to building self-compassion by training

the mind to respond to difficult feelings and experiences with kindness and support rather than self-criticism and judgment.

Mindfulness Literature Review

There are more than 21,500 results for the term "mindfulness" in the APA PsycInfo database, one indication of the significant increase in research in mindfulness-based interventions targeting everything from depression to binge eating to opiate misuse in the past several decades. (Goldberg et al, 2017). Research is mixed on an important aspect: what dose is most effective. A dose-response meta–regression analysis of 203 studies found no evidence that larger doses, i.e. longer meditation sessions—are more effective than lower doses—meaning shorter sessions, for improving psychological outcomes; in fact, the analysis found a strong relationship between depression and longer home practices (Strohmaier, S., 2020). While the author states additional research is necessary, prior findings indicate that long mindfulness sessions result in attrition from mindfulness-based programs and are perceived as barriers to continued practice. Because this is a critical element of optimal program development, it seems crucial to determine proper dosing. It's also valuable to look at different types of mindfulness-based programs. One growing area is MSC, which stems from Kristen Neff's initial definition of self-compassion—a three-pronged mix of self-kindness, understanding our common humanity, and mindfulness—and her introduction of the Self-Compassion Scale measurement tool (Neff, 2003). She also co-developed an MSC course for nonclinical populations. Research shows participation in the program led to significant increases in self-compassion, mindfulness, compassion for others, life satisfaction, and decreases in depression, anxiety, stress, and emotional avoidance. Just as important for program development, informal practices like putting one's hand on one's heart were as impactful as formal meditation. (Neff, 2023). When exploring the effect of brief protocols of MSC delivered online to university students, researchers found increased indicators of self-compassion, self-efficacy and mindfulness and lower levels of

depression, stress, rumination, and worry (Torres Lancheros et al, 2023). They chose this population with the understanding that college students are more vulnerable to stressful events and the findings are particularly relevant for programs designed for LaGuardia Community College students.

Mindfulness in Daily Practice

To gain a personal perspective, I committed to a month-long mindfulness practice challenge for myself. While I had previous exposure to mindfulness, including taking classes, participating in meditation groups, and attending a silent retreat, I wasn't regularly practicing and saw this experiment as an opportunity to jumpstart regular meditation.

Through the process, I learned how to overcome challenges to practicing, including what time of day works best, how I prefer to sit and more. I knew that committing to a one-month mindfulness would be difficult because of my past experiences struggling to meditate daily. That proved true again this time, especially on days I didn't do the meditation first thing in the morning. Because I write in a journal every morning, I tried to anchor my mindfulness practice to journaling. However, on days when I woke up late or had to get my child to school and didn't have time to practice, I found it hard to remember to practice later. I tried setting an alarm on my phone's calendar, but it often came during dinner or at another inconvenient time. In the end, I almost always remembered as I was getting ready for bed and would quickly meditate. It wasn't ideal as I was so tired, but however imperfect, I did practice most days.

Another barrier was my internal debate over whether to use a guided meditation or meditate on my own with a timer. I've found guided meditations can help focus the mind, and used Insight, Metta and MSC meditations from teachers including Jack Kornfield, Sharon Salzburg and LaToya Cooper. However, after realizing that sometimes the voice pulls me out of my internal experience, I also did sessions in which I sat quietly and focused on my breath using Insight Timer. In the end, I believe there is room for both in a mindfulness practice.

One decision I debated but ultimately found very helpful was giving myself permission to do shorter mindfulness sessions on days when I was especially tired or busy. In the past, I have always discounted the idea of short practices, yet, as stated in the Literature Review, I found a study that showed the onus of overly long mindful meditation can lead to negative outcomes because people are more likely to stop practicing due to the stress and difficulty of meeting the time commitment. With that in mind, I experimented with practices of 5 and 10 minutes. When I had time, I always opted for the 10-minute practice but the option of a 5-minute practice allowed me to consistently show up for mindfulness meditation on my most stressful days. This was a powerful learning experience.

I also noticed that my mind often wandered during the mindfulness practice. In Sharon Salzberg's meditation, she talks about how this is a magical moment in the practice—a chance to be kind to yourself in this moment of realization and return. Rather than being judgmental, upset or angry, I tried to just notice and bring it back to the breath. I did find my mind wandered equally throughout the month; however, it was easier to be nonjudgmental in the morning, when I wasn't tired. In terms of the ideal position while meditating, I noticed that I preferred sitting cross-legged on the floor with my back against a wall, as this allowed me to feel really grounded and supported. I also tried putting my hand on my belly and my heart to help focus on the breath and much prefer the latter.

Over the course of the practice, I saw more and more how regular mindfulness allows me to feel calmer and less reactive in other parts of my day and life. It did not feel like a burden but rather something I was excited to do, especially when I could find time in the morning. However, once the challenge ended, I noticed a slow decline in the frequency of my meditation practice. Several months later, I still meditate a few days each week but no longer have a daily practice.

Existing Mindfulness-Based Events and Programs at LaGuardia Community College

LaGuardia Community College students are among the most diverse in the country, hailing from 133 countries. The college has the largest English as a Second Language program in New York City, with 62 native languages spoken among degree students; it is a "Hispanic-Serving Institution" with almost half (47%) of its population Hispanic; more than half (54%) of its students have family incomes of less than $30,000 per year, which adds significant stress as many must balance school and work; and finally, 50% of the degree students are full-time and 50% are part-time. Unlike traditional college students, many LaGuardia students often have additional responsibilities, whether for their parents, their siblings or their own children. There are a variety of existing campus-wide programs aimed at minimizing stress and promoting relaxation and well-being, including:

- Nurturing a Wise Mind: Applied DBT Skills Group. This Wellness Center offering meets weekly on Wednesdays to empower participants through Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT). The program promises to help people deal with intense emotions, learn to be present, manage conflict and tolerate distress. Students first meet with an intake facilitator before joining the group, which can help both tailor the sessions and ensure this will be appropriate for all participants. DBT is an evidence-based psychological treatment for a variety of mental health conditions, and it's exciting to see it available to students at no charge, especially given how expensive it can be for private patients. If students attend four sessions, they can earn potential credit, making it more likely they will continue.
- Support Circles. These meetings, which bring students together to talk about themes like stress, healthy relationships, navigating obstacles and others, happen twice weekly. One is explicitly for women, and one is open to all. These are regular on-campus spaces for students to express themselves and build community.

They help people deal with normal but difficult feelings and feel less alone. The support circles are guided by peers and group facilitators and promoted through the Women's Center, LGBTQIA Safe Zone Hub and the Wellness Center.

- Mindful Meditation (Wednesday and Thursday). These virtual meditation sessions are run twice weekly—Wednesdays at 8pm and Thursdays at 12pm—by The LaGuardia Mindfulness Project. They are open to all and incorporate meditation, instruction, and Q&As. There was also a pop-up mindfulness program, organized by the Women's Center and LGBTQIA Safe Zone Hub, which provided an opportunity for the LaGuardia community to learn how mindfulness might help with the demands of being a college student by offering 15-minute mindfulness practices for breathing, eating, and body-based meditations. Mindfulness has been proven to help college students (and everyone else) deal with emotions and anxiety and enhance focus. Virtual sessions at lunchtime and in the evening mean students can join whether they are regularly on–campus or not and allows for flexibility with work schedules.

Potential areas of improvement for campus-wide psychological well-being programs

Clearly, there are many wonderful programs offered to students. Following the review, the author identified three potential areas for growth:

- *Expanding the language offerings:* The programs are offered in English only, and given that more than 50% of students are foreign-born and speak 100 languages natively, it may benefit some of the population to offer programs in additional language(s). A natural place to start is Spanish, given that LaGuardia identifies as a "Hispanic-Serving Institution."
- *Additional marketing and promotion:* If someone is not inclined or struggling, they might not think to explore the Wellness Center offerings. Perhaps a monthly email to all students highlighting all

the mental health support options available to students that month might encourage participation and certainly sends a message about the college's commitment to well-being.

- *Expanding the virtual offerings:* The support circles and DBT training require students to be present in person at specific times, potentially making it harder for the many LaGuardia students who work or are parents to participate. One alternative is to have some of these events on weekends and/or have additional virtual sessions.

Program Proposal: Self-compassion Sundays/Domingos con Autocompasión

Self-Compassion Sundays/Domingos con Autocompasión would be a weekly gathering, with the first half-hour conducted in Spanish and the second in English. The proposed program would meet weekly online on Sunday evenings from 8:00 to 9:00 p.m. throughout the school year. The first half-hour will be in Spanish, the second half-hour will be in English. The program is open to the entire LaGuardia community. The same format, detailed below, will be used for the Spanish and English sessions.

- *Minutes 1-8, Teachings about MSC*: Each session begins with an exploration of relevant themes, including an overview of MSC, how to practice mindfulness and loving-kindness, how to develop a compassionate voice, how to handle difficult emotions and other related topics.
- *Minutes 9-14: MSC Exercises:* Some time will be dedicated to teaching MSC strategies for the participants to use throughout the week and beyond. Two examples include "Self-Compassion Breaks," where participants practice responding to a difficult or uncomfortable situation with mindfulness and self-kindness, and "Soothing Touch," where participants will learn to physically comfort themselves by putting their hand on their heart.
- *Minutes 15 - 25, Meditation:* The facilitator will lead the group in meditation, either conducting the meditation themselves or using a recorded meditation from Insight Timer or elsewhere. The

exact meditations will rotate from loving-kindness (participants repeat a series of loving-kindness phrases) to affectionate breathing (participants notice the breath and appreciate its nourishment and steadiness) to centering (participants are invited to listen for a word or phrase that is meaningful to them in that moment).

- *Minutes 26-30: Discussion and Reflection:* In the closing minutes, the facilitator will invite participants to share any thoughts or questions about MSC, the teaching, the meditation, practicing MSC during the week, etc.

Potential collaborators:

If given the opportunity to create such a program, I would recommend reaching out to the following individuals and organizations:

- Deema Bayrakdar at the Women's Center, Nathan Tosh at the LGBTQIA Safe Zone Hub and the director and counselors at the Wellness Center. Communication would highlight that this is complementary to the many programs already on offer and request their guidance and support in starting the program, and assistance in promoting the event.
- The co-facilitators of the LaGuardia Mindfulness Corp., including Dr. Koun Eum of the Social Science Department, Ellen Quish, CTL, Paul Arcario in Academic Affairs, and, again, Deema Bayrakdar, Women's Center and LGBTQIA Safe Zone Hub. Outreach would request their guidance in refining the program and finding the right facilitator, and assistance in garnering support and promoting the program.
- Co-directors Dr. Ryan Mann-Hamilton and Dr. Ingrid Veras at the Casa de las Américas program. Communication would request support and promotion of the Spanish aspect of the program given that MSC is a tool to help Latinx community members enter, advance, and excel in a multifaceted professional arena, which is one of La Casa's goals.

- Dr. Lara Beaty, Dr. Lily Shohat, and Dr. Lisa Silverman, the Psychology Program Co-Directors. Outreach would specifically request that psychology professors offer bonus points for regular attendance at the sessions during the semester.
- Sarah Frantz, the staff mentor, and all students involved in the Psychology Club are helping promote the program and recruit participants.

Advertising and attraction efforts:

- Posters in English and Spanish will be placed around campus.
- Posters will also be used for social media posts on the accounts of the LaGuardia Women's Center and LGBTQIA Hub and the LaGuardia Wellness Center.
- Request for psychology professors to assign bonus points for regular attendance throughout the semester.
- Listings on the campus-wide events calendar.
- Request for a campus-wide email about the well-being offerings available to students, faculty and staff.
- Cross-promotion through the Wellness Center, Women's Center, LGBTQIA Safe Zone Hub and Casa de las Américas.

Potential Challenges and Solutions:

Before formally proposing this program, I would ask all potential collaborators for input to minimize mistakes, especially those at the Wellness Center, Women's Center, LGBTQ+ Safe Zone Hub, and LaGuardia Mindfulness Corp. as they regularly solicit feedback and have created many similar programs. That said, there are always issues when creating a new endeavor. Some potential areas include:

1. *Timing:* Sunday night might or might not work to attract students, yet it would be a good opportunity to start the week in a positive manner while mitigating issues with both work and class obligations. However, there is a chance people are home with their families and don't want to log on to Zoom. If the timing is

bad, I would suggest creating a survey to determine the times that work best and changing the schedule.

2. *Facilitators:* It might be difficult to find a facilitator who is willing to work every Sunday night. Also, because the program is in Spanish and English, we would need to hire one person who can do both. However, I think this challenge is surmountable, as there are many bilingual meditation teachers. If not, we could hire two different facilitators.
3. *Lack of attendance/interest:* There are already two weekly meditations as well as weekly yoga classes and other offerings for LaGuardia students. Do they want another? Also, many people are resistant to self-compassion, thinking it is akin to self-pity and self-indulgence. To overcome this, we need to advertise the positives and find other ways to encourage participation, such as the bonus points for psychology classes, so people can experience the practice.
4. *Crowded agenda:* There is a lot to cover in a short amount of time, with minimal time for discussion at the end. I want to keep the meetings short because people have limited time and research has indicated that long practices can be a deterrent. However, if, in practice, the program feels too rushed we would need to reimagine what parts are most important and cut some aspects or add a second meeting if there was significant interest.

Conclusion

This paper explores the practice of mindfulness as well as research about the benefits of mindfulness programs and MSC, such as the optimal dosage. It also details the author's experience in practicing mindfulness meditation, touching on key learnings and ongoing challenges. Finally, it explores the programs around mindfulness and well-being that exist at LaGuardia and proposes a new program centered around MSC, conducted on Sunday nights in both Spanish and English. Mental health treatment is often discussed in terms of one-on-one counseling, but the robust support programs at LaGuardia Community

College highlight the potential of group offerings and educational seminars. Areas for further investigation include the relevance of MSC to a community college population as well as whether students would be interested in participating in a weekend offering, showing up for an online program or taking advantage of a bilingual meditation program.

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Can Cannibalism Be Accepted in Society?

Delia Vargas

We know a little about cannibalism and as soon as we hear that word people can feel disgust and repulsion just at the idea of it. This reaction makes a lot of sense. How can people imagine eating a person or being eaten by another human being? This practice was common for prehistoric or ancient societies like Prehistoric Europe, American tribes, Central Africa among others. Some of those cultures practiced cannibalism as spiritual rituals, others as a sign of love for their deceased; others during wars, ate their enemies as a symbol of power (Tikkanen). Through the years this practice became a taboo, and is now illegal in many countries. In this essay I am going to argue that cannibalism can be accepted in a survival situation. I will be basing my argument on a real story that happened in 1972 where an airplane crashed in the Andes mountains of Chile. To support my argument, I am going to make use of "Value Theory", focus on metaethics where we are going to think about friendship, religion, and moral values (Smith 237).

The study of "metaethics focuses on moral reasoning and foundational questions that explore the assumptions related to moral beliefs and practice" (244). In this tragedy the people who were in the accident never in their lives thought about the possibility of practicing cannibalism. They were religious people who were placed in a situation where they evaluated their beliefs and broke taboos to save their lives. It seemed like all the conditions and features of this accident were purposely set to challenge the survivors and prove to the world that anything is possible in extreme situations. The flight that crashed over the Anden mountains was transporting 45 passengers including a rugby team. Most of the 16 survivors were part of this rugby team, they were friends since childhood and attended the same Catholic school.

For Aristotle friendship is "necessary for our life" and he classifies friendship in three parts (1) friendship of pleasure, (2) friendship of utility and (3) friendship of character (254). During those 72

days lost in the mountains they applied all these forms of friendship that Aristotle proposed. For example, one of the survivors was a student of medicine and he used his knowledge to treat wounds and assist those who were in very bad condition. This survivor with his cousin who was in the accident, volunteers to cut the flesh of the corpses with a shard of glass making it possible to have something to eat. One of them named Numa Turcatti, who survived until day 60 was the one who motivated them all the time, he was against the option of eating the bodies, but he ended eating with a lot of sadness, and he authorized his friends to use his body as needed to survive, which all of them did. His loss was the instance that pushed them even more to keep on fighting, inspired by the note he left behind that reads: "There is no greater love than giving your life for your friends" (Bacigalupo). In the end, they recognize in one another the love, empathy, and affection they all needed during in that terrifying moment in their lives.

They had a lot of basic needs since day 1, shelter, proper clothing, water, and especially food. The most terrifying thing in that situation was the food shortage. They spent about 10 days eating chocolates, cookies, and cigarettes to survive but when they heard on a radio that the "Chilean force stopped looking for them and considered them dead" (Mulvaney), is when they started to contemplate the possibility of eating the bodies of the deceased who were buried by the snow. They all were Catholic, and this idea was against their religious beliefs. Those bodies were their friends, relatives, and the plane crew. At this point, the new society had changed the rules of the community they once lived by — the ones they had followed before the accident. Afterward, many doubts began to arise among them.

The philosopher David Hume said, "if people have room for doubts, then they have room for skepticism" (225). Skepticism appears in their beliefs of the existence of God and in their moral values. Was practicing cannibalism a sin? Who could judge them? Where was God? Who can say what is right or wrong in that situation? "Divine and religious foundations for moral values support that. The concept of God

can function as an ultimate judge who decides what is right and wrong from an omnipotent and infallible position" (246). After hours of reflection and tears in the crashed plane, most of them came to a painful agreement that to stay alive they would have to eat the only thing available to them, the corpses of the crew. In their minds, as Catholics they were sharing a communion. The bread that symbolized the body of Jesus the God's son where in other form there to give them hope and live. Also, here without realizing they applied the concept of *telos*—the idea that values are based on the fulfillment of a goal (242). They were in an extreme situation, with no time to think about anything but their goal—to find for themselves the way to go home. Since they created a new society in the middle of the snow, they built their rules around a single common goal; their own telos.

Big decisions always come with big consequences, and even though they regretted and felt ashamed having to eat human flesh, they understood what that choice meant. Although it could not guarantee that they will survive, hope is the last thing humans lose, and it is precisely that hope that gives them the motivation to stay strong. The value of what they did by eating those bodies lies in its consequences for their well-being and flourishing. Well-being, as understood here, centers on three points: (1) pleasure, (2) desire, and (3) objective goals (250). Certainly, they did not experience pleasure in swallowing that food, but hunger drives people to satisfy their needs with whatever is available, even if the food is repulsive. And despite being on the brink of death, they were filled with desire and driven by goals. It is both incredible and heartbreaking to imagine the desperation and determination it took to reach a mental state that, from the outside, seems almost impossible to comprehend. They understood that morality is subjective, and it was the exceptional nature of their circumstances that led them to such an extreme decision.

I want to hold onto something I heard from the mother of one of the deceased, Coco Nocolich. A journalist asked her if she felt hatred toward those who ate her son. She answered no. She said she felt that her son had made a kind of organ donation. That is why the 16 survivors

were able to return home—and that makes her happy, because in each one of them, there is something of her son (@viajeroseneltiempo).

To conclude, this case shows how many aspects of metaethics were fundamental in helping these people return home. Without their friendship, their skepticism and critical thinking, without the presence—or absence—of God, and without their unwavering determination to flourish and recover their well-being, they likely would not have survived. Many people may oppose cannibalism, even in such an extreme situation, and that is completely reasonable. However, to truly understand those who endured this tragedy, one must try to imagine being in their place. No one can predict how they would act in a situation like this, but at the very least, people can offer respect and empathy to those who have endured such horror. The answer to whether their actions were morally acceptable depends on each person's principles. But for me, in an extreme situation, a practice like this is permitted.

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The Moment on Joy

Degnis Lucero

Happiness is something that every individual seeks, but searching for happiness is something that can be vague to pursue. Luckily, there are concepts that can give us ideas about what it means to be happy. This essay will discuss three ideas related to happiness and their focus. The first concept is the hedonic view, which focuses on finding happiness in pleasure. The next concept is Eudaimonia, in which being happy strives by overcoming difficulties. And finally, Psychological Richness ties in with the Aztec philosophy of "*Neltiliztli*," which both ideas explain that the individual is not the center of happiness.

It is easy to compare Hedonic and Eudaimonic as concepts to explain happiness. Hedonic views of happiness, as a way to fulfill the needs for pleasure and avoid pain in the best possible way, but it recognizes a baseline of individual happiness, most commonly referred to as the "Hedonic Treadmill," which says that in life, there are ups and downs, but it all stabilizes at some point, which in every person will have a different level of happiness. In this way, hedonics will prioritize immediate gratification to get a rush of happiness; over time, the intense pursuit of euphoric experiences tends to stabilize, even though the desire for that rush never truly ends. On the other hand, Eudaimonia's view of happiness focuses on achieving happiness through self-awareness and becoming a better person every day, without falling into extremes. This is what Aristotle referred to as a *virtuous person*. Being a *virtuous* person only means being in the middle between *deficiency* (cowardice) and *excess* (recklessness), striving to become a person of courage. In other words, it is being able to assess every situation, make the right decision, and find happiness (courage), through suffering after achieving a goal. It is more common to see debates on these two points of view of happiness, telling us to search for a happy and balanced life, as well as exploring ways to become virtuous by overcoming suffering and engaging in pleasures.

There is, however, a third option that is a better approach to happiness. The concept of Psychological Richness holds greater significance. Humans seek novelty and understand complexity, motivating us to explore and discover other ways to be happy.

Psychological Richness resembles the Aztec philosophy of "*Neltiliztli,*" which can be translated to "strong roots" or "feet on the ground", yet at the same time it could mean "truth" or "kindness". In this form of philosophy, the individual is not the center of happiness; rather, it is the environment that surrounds them that actually molds happiness. Being part of a community is the reason of happiness, and it is where individuals can find help to overcome their deficiencies. This philosophy understands that the individual is not perfect and tends to fail in their goals, which is why setbacks are a natural part of the journey toward happiness, and like Psychological Richness, *Neltiliztli* seeks happiness outside of the individual.

Doing challenging yet meaningful activities can still bring us happiness. Let us take for example, being a parent. Being a parent does not bring immediate pleasure, nor does it require virtuosity, but it can bring a lifelong full of experience in which we find joy in little moments. Teaching a baby to eat on their own and later—seeing them do everything by themselves is what makes parents feel joy and eventually, happiness. *Neltiliztli* and Psychological Richness refer to engaging in activities that create complexity and significant life changes, showing that the individual is not the center of their own happiness, but rather the surroundings will ultimately bring us happiness. Happiness is a collection of experiences, customs, and complexities that affect our lives and at the same time, happiness is not something we can directly pursue. Instead of having it as a clear goal, happiness is more like an ability to read between the lines of our experiences.

I agree with the Aztec philosophy and the concept of Psychological Richness that life is complex and there are more ways to

find joy, even in mundane tasks. Nowadays, having a degree and preparation does not guarantee success; in the same way, seeking a virtuous life does not guarantee a happy life. However, what is it to live a virtuous life after all? What is a happy life? I have been asking myself these questions since I began working in the workforce, especially during my young adult stage. At that time, I would spend hours submerged in social media; I realized this was making me doubt myself, and I was constantly unhappy, always looking for the next goal to accomplish, but why? As neuroscientist Nicole Vignola says in her book *Rewire*, "Dopamine doesn't want you happy, but to get more." I think this is the reason why the appetite for pursuing fame and material things does not fill the rabbit hole of desire that many philosophers have written about. However, this constant search for a happy and virtuous life is still not the answer we are looking for.

What is it to be Happy? There are many variables that can influence the search for happiness, like enjoying a cup of coffee in a deli before going to work on a cold winter morning or watching photo of a pair of feet in the middle of the night, these are two extreme ends what a moment of little moments that makes people happy, and yet, the common thing is this little joy before an end goal. Even in unpleasant things, it is possible to find happiness. Looking at your teeth after having braces removed, you had for years, surviving a natural catastrophe, or, in my case, having an existential crisis while writing this essay, all these unpleasantness bring happiness, like finding order in chaos. So, is being happy a permanent state of being or a fleeting moment of joy?

As I mentioned earlier, happiness is influenced by various factors, and because it affects our inner selves, it will also impact our outcomes. It is easy to confuse this pursuit of happiness because we tend to believe certain ideas as truth. There is a viral case about a woman in Mexico who faked all her medical credentials and gave patients powerful drugs. Yet, in one of her video responses, she mentions, "I did everything I wanted to do and lived my life the way I decided," so, is she happy after all? Was it

worth it to harm others for her to be successful and happy? This is not the only case we can see this behavior. Many Americans seem to have a specific idea of what they consider a "perfect American." This image typically includes a white female or male who believes in Jesus and follows the teachings of the Bible. This belief system often leads them to accept fallacies as truths, all in the pursuit of happiness, which they view as a goal rather than a moment to be experienced. The same can be said for our justice system. One study shows that judges are more severe when they are hungry or tired; in other words, they are unhappy. Happiness is a crucial state when it comes to decision-making.

As we can see, happiness is just a tiny moment that requires us to learn to enjoy, to stop, and to recognize this small pleasure because it influences our daily life, our decisions, our beliefs, and our reality. Being aware of our emotions is essential for finding happiness. Just like we recognize our sadness, anger, or fear, we must acknowledge them. As the teaching of Tao Te Ching says, "The short complements the long, the night complements the day." Your emotions complement who you are. Happiness is what is happening right here, right now; it is just a little moment on joy.

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Muscle to Mind: Unveiling Benefits of Progressive Muscle Relaxation

Anna Teklits

Introduction

For this paper, I will be discussing Progressive muscle relaxation (PMR) as a regular relaxation activity by describing my own experience with the practice and the positive effects it has on psychological well-being. For over a month I've been practicing this relaxation exercise almost daily, compiling reflections written after each practice so I can share what I've learned in comparison to the data I found from three research articles that discuss their own findings from research studies. I'll also be providing information on existing events/programs so others are aware of the opportunities they can take, also to have a positive experience with PMR. Based off all that I've learned from this topic, I will then create my own event proposal, targeted towards all LaGuardia students looking to expand their knowledge on PMR as a relaxation practice and receive the benefits it provides.

Progressive muscle relaxation is a calming technique in which a person tenses and then releases their muscles, focusing on different parts of the body one at a time, often paired with deep breathing. The exercise is typically performed in a specific order, moving through various muscle groups from head to toe or vice versa. This focus on the body's physical sensations helps individuals develop increased awareness of tension and learn how to release it (Toussaint et al., 2021).

As part of this project, I needed to find a guide that could teach me how to perform the technique. I chose a YouTube video titled *"Progressive Muscle Relaxation – Simple Guided Calming Exercise for Beginners,"* posted by Hands-On-Meditation; this video also includes deep breathing as a complementary technique, though it is not a necessary or inherent component of PMR itself. It is worth noting that I preferred to do this exercise while practicing deep breathing, as I found it aided in reducing

my stress levels more effectively; however, it's really a matter of personal preference. I would listen to this video consistently for the first few weeks until I was confident enough to do PMR without any guidance.

Daily Practice Reflection

Although the first few days I started doing PMR, it felt slightly inconvenient as I would have to remind myself to make time for it, but I quickly began to look forward to it, since I find it to be an enjoyable experience because of the calming effects it has on me. I also found it to be helpful in temporarily alleviating any back or neck pain after being hunched over a computer or phone. After experiencing relief from the pain, I noticed that my mood also improved, considering I was not experiencing any physical discomfort anymore.

A significant challenge I faced was not getting distracted by my surroundings or stressful thoughts, which was more common at the beginning and less so as I continued this practice. This would occur when I had a lot on my mind during the day, mostly regarding homework or other obligations I had to complete, as well as practicing in a busy environment. I overcame this by not setting strict limitations on myself, allowing me to consider the exercise completed. For example, when I wasn't listening to the YouTube video guide, I would often listen to calming music or lie in bed before going to sleep to do PMR. This way, I would have some non-distracting background noise to help me focus on physical sensations rather than thoughts that would increase my anxiety.

Doing PMR right before falling asleep was a great way to release any tension I had carried throughout the day, which I noticed helped me fall asleep faster. Another positive change I noticed in myself after completing the exercise was a clear mind. Whatever tasks or thoughts that were causing me stress earlier no longer seemed so overwhelming, and I felt ready to either continue my day or face the next task.

Another positive outcome of practicing PMR daily was that I learned two things about myself: first, I was more patient than I had initially thought, and second, that I carry a lot of tension in my muscles. Learning to notice how much tension I carry in my muscles has helped me a great deal in finding a temporary solution for a stressful day, or even any soreness I may be experiencing in my body.

Literature Review

My personal experience with PMR aligned with the key findings from the three articles I found on the topic. Dolbier and Rush (2012) delve into the effectiveness of twenty-minute PMR sessions in reducing stress within high-stress college environment. They found a significant reduction in stress levels among participants and the efficacy of this study suggests that even brief sessions of PMR can produce noticeable benefits in stress reduction, making it a convenient option for those with busy schedules (Dolbier et al., 2012).

Toussaint et al. (2021) make a comparative exploration of the effectiveness of three relaxation techniques—PMR, deep breathing, and guided imagery in promoting psychological and physiological states of relaxation. They found that all three relaxation techniques were effective in promoting physical and mental states of relaxation, PMR showing particular efficacy in reducing physiological stress (Toussaint et al., 2021).

The investigation conducted by Rausch et al. (2006) focuses on the immediate effects of a single session of large-group meditation and PMR practice on stress reduction, reactivity, and recovery. They found that the meditation and PMR training were effective in reducing stress levels during the session (Rausch et al., 2006). However, interestingly, meditation showed a more long-lasting impact, with participants maintaining lower stress levels during the recovery period compared to the PMR group (Rausch et al., 2006). These findings suggest that the choice of relaxation technique may influence the longevity of stress reduction.

While each of the three research studies investigates different aspects of relaxation techniques, several common threads and similar findings emerge when analyzing their results. All studies explored the efficacy of PMR in relation to reducing stress levels, finding that it was in fact successful in doing so. The three investigations also used a short duration of time for the PMR practice, lasting no longer than 20 minutes. The effectiveness of these sessions in reducing stress suggests that individuals, especially those with time constraints or in high-stress environments such as college, can benefit from incorporating short and focused PMR practices into their routines.

Promoting Relaxation Practice: Current On-Campus Programs/Events

LaGuardia Community College, with its diverse student body, needs targeted strategies to address the unique needs and characteristics of its students within the campus atmosphere. Related characteristics of LaGuardia students that I've noticed are commute and time constraints: many students commute, and time constraints are common, often due to family or work commitments. Secondly, diversity: LaGuardia's student population is diverse, representing a wide range of cultural backgrounds and identities. Thirdly, academic pressures: it's no surprise that students often face academic pressures and may experience stress related to their coursework, making it critical for the school to offer support through these events or programs. Lastly, socioeconomic diversity: the student body of LaGuardia is comprised of individuals with various economic backgrounds. Many students may face financial struggles, resulting in limited access to resources and reduced time availability due to work or family commitments.

The stressors that all these characteristics may induce are reasons why LaGuardia students would benefit from regular relaxation activities.

With so many techniques available, it's hard to imagine that a student would not find at least one that suits their individual needs.

One of the programs that LaGuardia offers is the Wellness Center's workshops on stress management. These workshops grapple with topics such as stress management, mindfulness, and anxiety management, with the goal of helping students develop important coping skills that they can use beyond the campus. These workshops recognize LaGuardia students' time constraints by offering short yet impactful sessions.

A significant strength of this program is its accessibility, offering these workshops free of charge and being available to students both on campus and virtually. Another strength is the sense of community that workshops provide. Students may feel more comfortable sharing their experiences and learning from others who have faced similar challenges. Additionally, the effectiveness of this program is enhanced by the professional guidance it provides. Having mental health professionals lead the workshops ensures that students receive accurate information and guidance. Professionals can also provide resources and referrals for additional support when needed.

Participation in LaGuardia Community College's stress management workshop offers a multitude of benefits for students. By engaging in these workshops, students can gain valuable insights into recognizing and addressing their stressors, creating a deeper understanding of mental health. This experience not only equips students with useful skills for stress management but also helps reduce the stigma surrounding mental health challenges. The skills acquired in these workshops contribute to long-term well-being, fostering a positive campus culture and encouraging students to seek support when needed.

LaGuardia offers various events throughout the school year that can be attended for free, with the intention of alleviating students' stress levels. One of these events is yoga and meditation sessions by the

Women's Center. Yoga and meditation are well-known techniques in promoting relaxation and reducing stress or anxiety; there's no level of experience required to participate in these experiences.

These sessions are designed to be inclusive and welcoming to students from diverse backgrounds. By fostering an environment that embraces these diversities, the Women's Center creates a space where all students can feel included and comfortable participating in the session. Another strength of this program is its recognition of the connection between mental and physical health. This often seems to be overlooked in society, and it's important for the school to raise awareness on the matter. Lastly, it builds a sense of community and connection among students. Fostering a sense of community is crucial for students to feel supported and heard, especially when they are experiencing any stress or anxiety.

The benefits of this event include participants learning skills for stress reduction, relaxation and improved mental clarity. The combination of yoga and meditation provides a holistic understanding of health that students can use in the future without needing further guidance. By teaching students these valuable skills, they'll have an improved sense of confidence in their ability to tackle challenges that may have seemed daunting before. Community building also has its own benefits for students, in which they may find others with shared interests and goals, creating a supportive environment for personal growth and an opportunity to make friends.

The last program I'll be discussing is the Wellness Center's short-term individual counseling. This type of counseling involves one-on-one sessions between a student and a trained counselor or mental health professional. The focus is on addressing immediate concerns, developing coping strategies, and providing support within the sessions—overall promoting psychological well-being.

This program's strengths lie in its confidentiality, accessibility, timeliness, and resource referral. Confidentiality of individual counseling

allows students to openly discuss their struggles without fear of judgment. This promotes a safe and trusting environment, creating a space that is conducive to addressing psychological challenges. It is designed to be readily available, allowing students to address their concerns before they escalate and supports those who have a busy schedule due to work or family matters. Another strength of this program is the counselor's ability to refer to other available resources due to their knowledge. This includes workshops, support groups, and off-campus services.

Students who do not feel comfortable sharing their challenges or concerns with others, would benefit from this service the most. The confidential support that individual counseling provides can give individuals a sense of security and remove barriers to seeking help, and they can also benefit from the program's accessibility and timeliness, since this is crucial for managing stress and preventing mental health challenges from worsening. Resource referral allows students to gain a stronger support system and ensures a structured approach to their well-being. Most importantly, individual counseling provides guidance on understanding and regulating emotions, helping students navigate stressful situations and preparing them to handle future challenges that may arise.

All these programs and events discussed address the needs of LaGuardia's student body by offering a wide range of support. However, there are still areas for improvement to enhance campus-wide psychological well-being efforts. An area I think could use improvement is the Wellness Center's webpage, considering it offers all services related to mindfulness and overall well-being. I found it to be lacking in information about the services provided, although they do provide contact information for students to call or email if they have any questions. I think this would be more convenient for LaGuardia students who have a constrained schedule and may be discouraged by a lack of content. Secondly, I think there should be mental health resources more tailored to the diverse student population, such as those addressing the socioeconomic aspect. This could include workshops for budgeting and

stress management related to financial struggles. Lastly, considering the diverse cultural backgrounds of the student demographic, I believe there should be more culturally inclusive counseling services. By training the counselors to better understand the unique mental health needs of students from different cultural backgrounds, they'll foster a more inclusive and supportive environment.

Promoting Relaxation Practice: Proposed Event

Based on what I have learned about the benefits of PMR and what LaGuardia currently offers in terms of events, I'd like to propose my own:

Title: *Relax & Revive: Campus Relaxation Sessions*

Date, Time, Location, and Frequency: This event will be held every Wednesday starting from the second week of the semester. The sessions will take place from 3:00 PM to 4:30 PM in the courtyard of the E-building and the gym during the winter session. These weekly sessions will last for over 10 weeks each semester, with each session lasting 90 minutes. Yoga mats will be provided to the students for every session and participants are encouraged to wear comfortable clothing.

Description of the Event: The aim of "Relax & Revive" is to promote daily relaxation practices with a specific focus on progressive muscle relaxation (PMR). The peaceful setting of the courtyard gives students a sense of calmness and fresh air. Each session will begin with a brief welcome and optional icebreaker (for students to participate) to create a welcoming atmosphere. A certified PMR instructor will then guide participants through a 30-minute PMR session. After the PMR session, attendees will rotate through different relaxation stations, including soothing music, aromatherapy, and mindfulness exercises. These sessions will conclude with a 15-minute group reflection, participants will share individual experiences, and provide any suggestions or requests for future events, aiming to create a supportive community. Healthy refreshments will also be provided at the end of each session to emphasize the connection between mental and physical well-being.

Collaboration: To ensure the success of "Relax & Revive", collaboration with various campus offices is essential. Certified PMR instructors from the Wellness Center will lead the sessions. The Student-Parent Initiatives will work hand-in-hand to provide childcare support for student parents, taking into account their busy schedules and promoting inclusivity. I will also work with the Women's Center and LGBTQIA Safe Zone Hub for feedback on how to create a safe and welcoming place for everyone participating.

I would also consult professors in the psychology department such as Dr. Eum, Professor Frantz, and Professor Podlucka for feedback and ideas on how to effectively promote relaxation and create an inclusive environment. These professors specifically are well-versed in the topic of relaxation techniques and their benefits. I would trust them to offer helpful advice and guidance in organizing the event and on how I could improve it later.

Advertising and Attraction: The event will be promoted through flyers with calming imagery and visual aesthetics distributed across the campus. A social media campaign will be launched to post engaging content, information about the sessions, and take polls. Students and some faculty members will have the opportunity to share their positive experiences on social platforms, and I'll be hosting bi-weekly wellness-themed giveaways to encourage participation and capture interest. Some of the items that'll be offered are aromatherapy gift sets, sun lamps, wellness journals, and weighted blankets. These are all items that I believe can help improve overall well-being by promoting relaxation.

Potential Challenges and Solutions: Some challenges that might be faced are attendance consistency, accessibility for all students, and balancing relaxation with active participation. Most college students have busy schedules with commitments such as classes, jobs, and personal responsibilities, which can make it hard for them to consistently attend a 10-week program. A solution to this would be flexible drop-ins, allowing students to attend sessions based on their availability and welcoming

latecomers. Additionally, I would provide recorded sessions that students can access at any time, ensuring more participation.

LaGuardia has a wide student demographic, and ensuring accessibility requires considering factors such as childcare needs for student-parents and accommodating individuals with any physical disabilities. Solutions to this would be to collaborate with Student-Parent Initiatives to provide childcare support for student-parents during the sessions, allowing them 90 minutes without worrying about any responsibilities. We can also prevent exclusivity by offering alternative relaxation methods for individuals with physical limitations, thereby ensuring inclusivity. Some relaxation methods that would be included are guided imagery, deep breathing, and listening to soothing music.

Successfully creating a balance between having a relaxed atmosphere and encouraging active participation requires thoughtful planning. Some students prefer a more laid-back and passive experience, looking for some quiet time for themselves, while others may be looking for more interactive elements. This could be solved by including a rotation with both interactive workshops and those where little movement and interaction with others is necessary.

These specific challenges and their solutions aim to address potential issues that may arise during the execution of "Relax & Revive: Campus Relaxation Sessions." Being prepared for these challenges will help ensure the event begins smoothly and serves as a positive, supportive experience for LaGuardia students.

Conclusion

This paper provided an opportunity to share my personal experiences, academic insights, on-campus programs, and ideas on events related to relaxation techniques. The daily PMR practice not only affirmed that it has stress-relieving benefits but also provided firsthand knowledge of its positive influence on mood. Personally, this assignment deepened my understanding of self-care and the integration of relaxation practices into daily routines. Analyzing on-campus programs deepened my awareness of LaGuardia's diverse student needs and the efforts made to support mental health. The proposal for "Relax & Revive: Campus

Relaxation Sessions" is an effort to contribute to this supportive environment, recognizing the unique characteristics and challenges faced by LaGuardia students.

In terms of academic growth, this project allowed me to apply my knowledge gained from the Abnormal Psychology class to practical scenarios. It emphasized the significance of preventative measures and community support in promoting mental well-being. Writing this assignment has reinforced my belief in the power and necessity of efforts in promoting a positive and inclusive campus culture. As I continue my academic journey, I plan on carrying the awareness and insights gained from this project, fostering personal growth and a holistic understanding of mental health within the college community.

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