

Live and Learn: Understanding Mind-Body Connections

- Interdisciplinary course that includes writing skills alongside exposing students to scientific principles of wellness practices
- Mellon grant funding - fitness and health technology to monitor the physiological processes and support personal self-care goals
- The lab reinforces students' personal stake in the course through endorsing wellbeing activities outside class

Wellness Vision

- Consistent with President Johnson's call to educate the whole student, without compromising intellectual rigor
- Prioritize health and wellness of students, both physical and mental health, "...which really sets them on a path of a healthy mind and a healthy body, and being prepared to meet the world's challenges and make a difference in the world."
- Student wellbeing is as important as intellectual growth

Mellon Grant Goals

- Teach mind-body skills that assist students with developing positive strategies that enhance cognition and stress resiliency.
- Components: exercise, meditation, sleep, yoga, tai chi (Headspace app, fitbit)
- Develop a combination of wellness practices to support a positive transition to college and enhance academic performance

Henry Durant – Founder and Visionary for Women’s Health and Fitness

“All students will
exercise not less than 60
minutes in the open air
unless excused by a
physician.”

Founder, Henry Durant



Exercise = Brain Power

- Why does exercise create more brain power in ways that thinking might not?
- How does exercise create more brain power?
- What type of exercise creates more brain power?

Neuroscience Studies

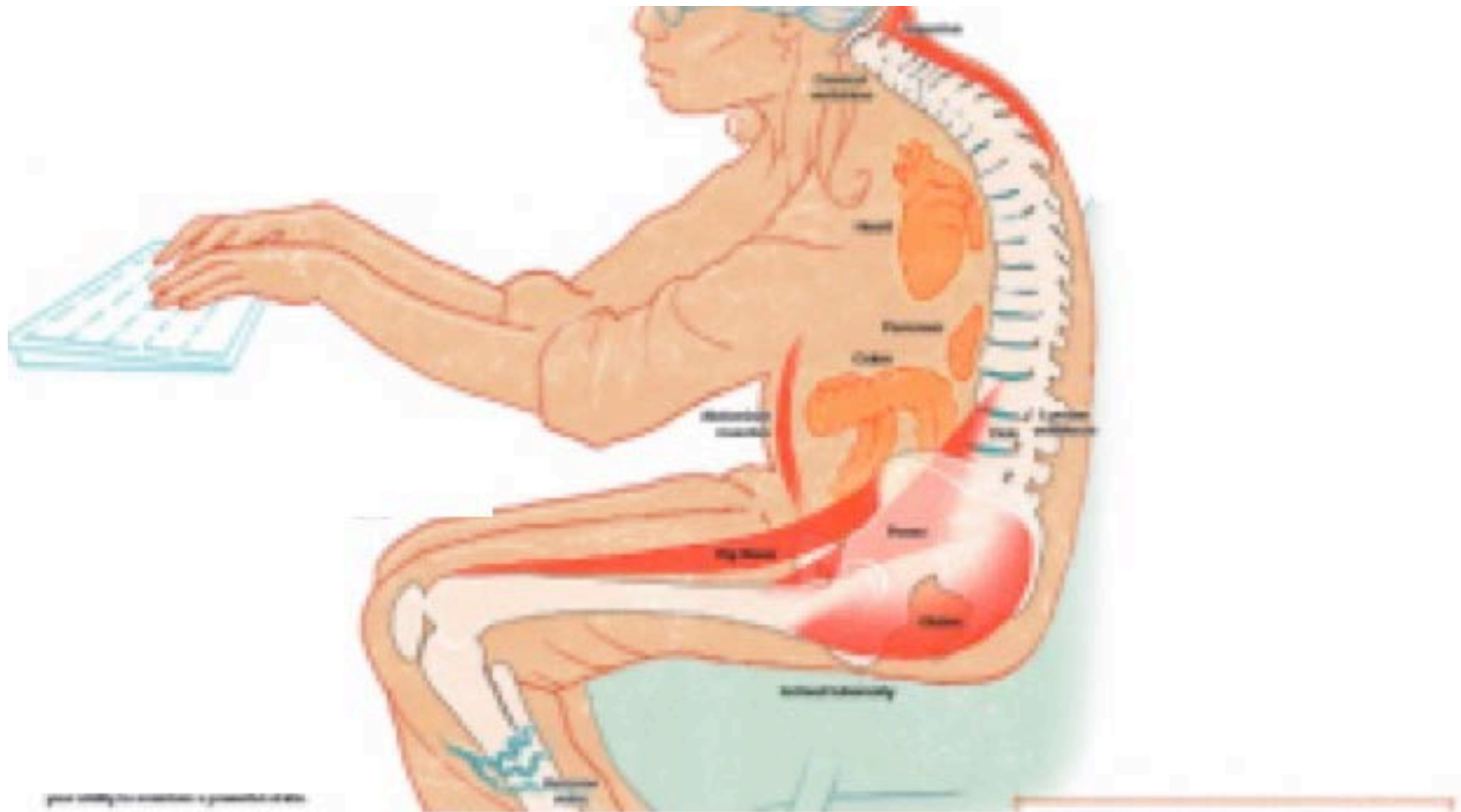
Neurogenesis

Exercise Reflection

“I have not done a workout in the morning in a very long time. I had lift at 7am and did not struggle to stay awake in my classes throughout the day. I felt more energized and focused all day.”

“I feel that exercising really calms me down so much that I did not feel the need to meditate.”

Sitting Stressors on the Body



Stretch Break

Students lead stretch break

What is in your mind-body (self-care) toolbox?

Mentimeter

What is your mind-body toolbox that promotes your academic performance and wellbeing?



Meditation Studies

Types of Meditation

- Lying down
- Sitting
- Standing
- Walking
- Writing
- Tactile

Meditation Reflection

“Our meditation lab showed me which type of meditation I liked best, which was sitting and laying down. I find myself getting better at emptying my mind and solely concentrating on my breathing, which is very soothing and calming. Hopefully, I will get better with meditation over time with class labs and on my own time.”

Walking Meditation

“The mindfulness walk in the labyrinth was very relaxing for me. My heart rate was lower than my resting heart rate after the walking activity. Also, it was wonderful to be aware of how my body feels when I walk. Often when walking, I am rushing to a class and not thinking about what I am actually feeling and doing.”

Meditation and Academic Performance

“I did a writing meditation before a math quiz today to help calm myself. I think it definitely helped me focus during the quiz.”

Meditation Reflections

“Practicing meditation outside of the classroom is what I enjoyed the most in this class. I incorporated the mindfulness meditation techniques into my lifestyle to manage stress and overall give me a better quality of life.”

“My heart rate reached a new low while meditation (59bpm)

“Meditation enhanced my overall state of mind—calmer, positive, and big picture perspective.”

Meditation practice

2 minute meditation activity

Writing Exercise

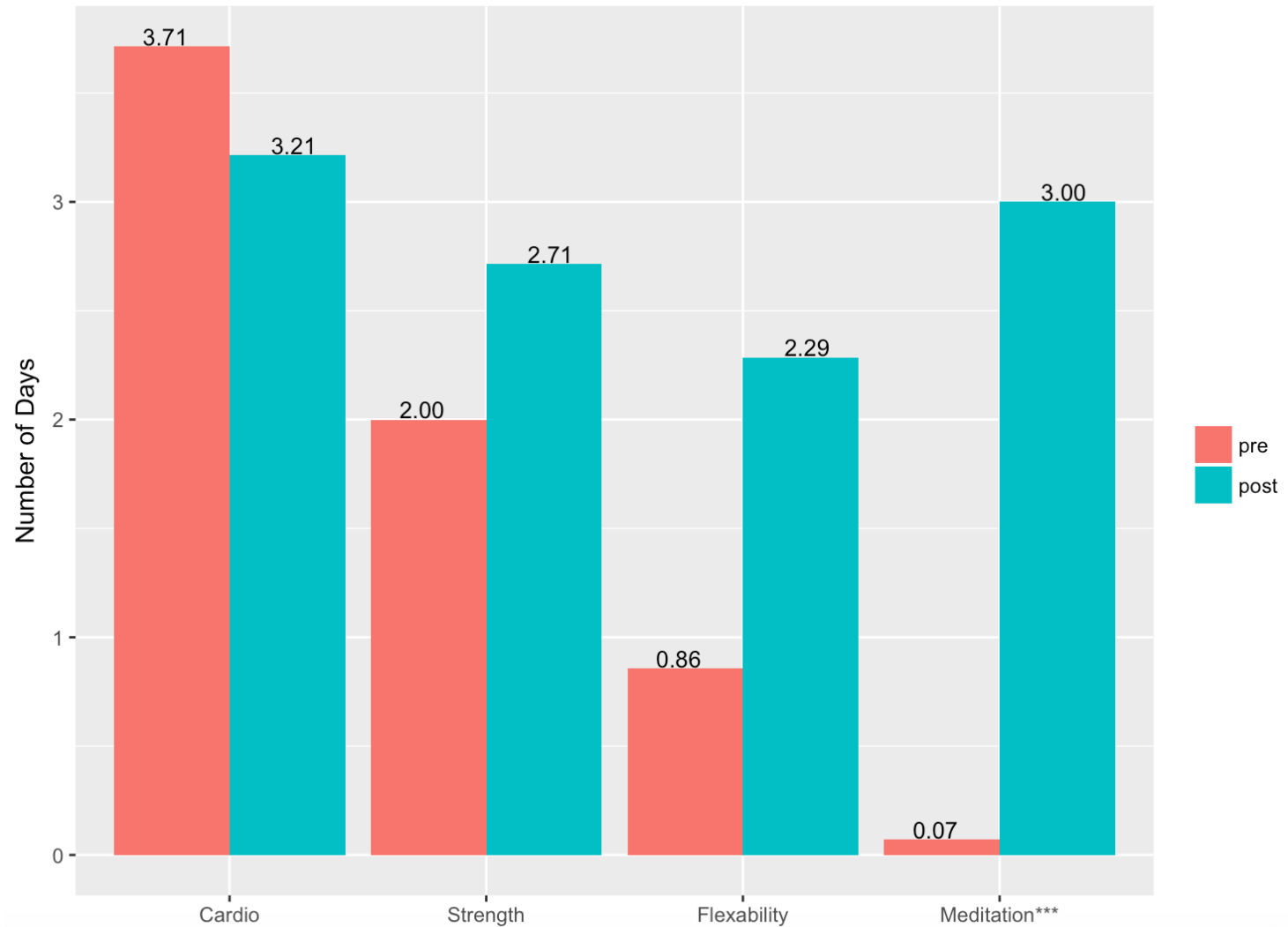
- Writing Exercise on Intensifiers with partner feedback – make it better – elicit the SR

Sleep

“I started a new program on Headspace that is 30 days. I am on day six and was happy to see that the quality of my sleep has much improved.”

Mellon Grant Data

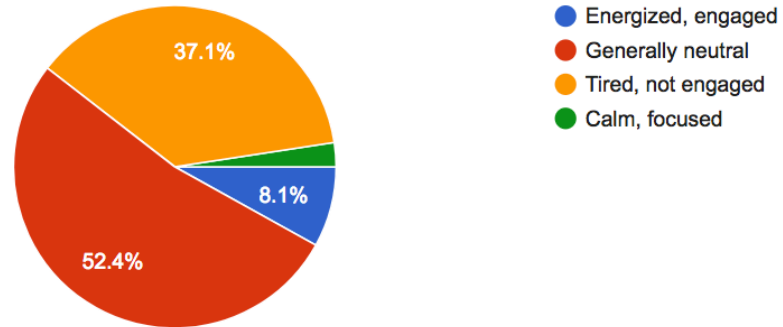
Mean Numbers of Days Participating In:



Exercise and Mood

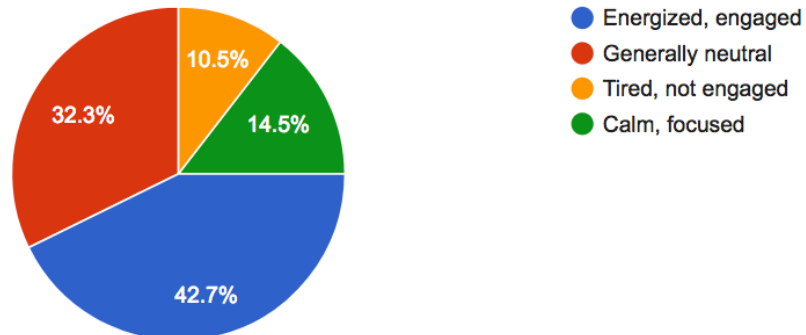
What was your mood state before exercise?

124 responses



What was your mood state up to 4 hours following exercise?

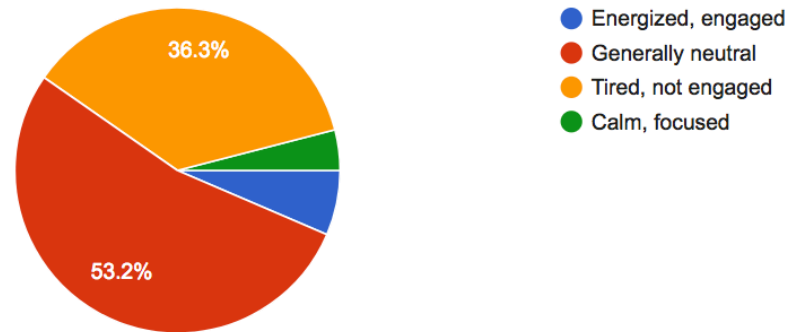
124 responses



Exercise and Cognition

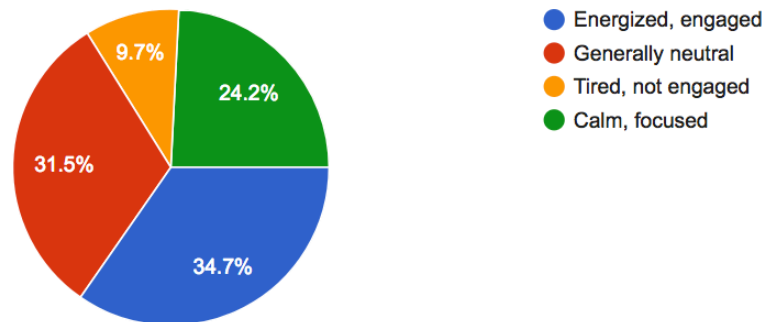
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124 responses



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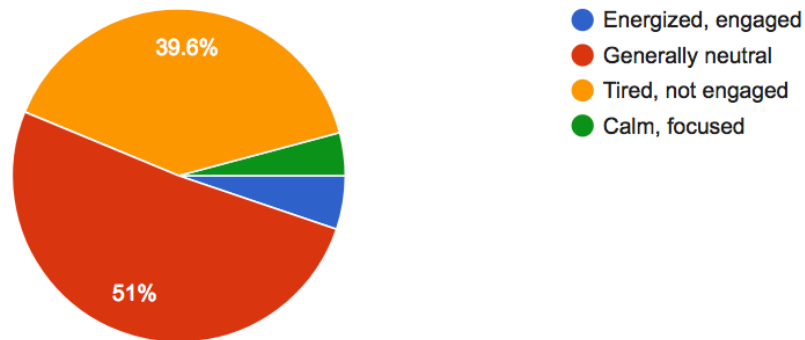
124 responses



Meditation and Mood

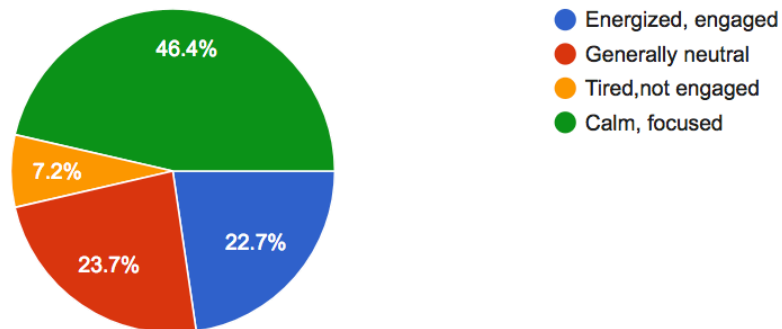
What was your mood state before meditating?

96 responses



What was your mood state up to 4 hours following meditation?

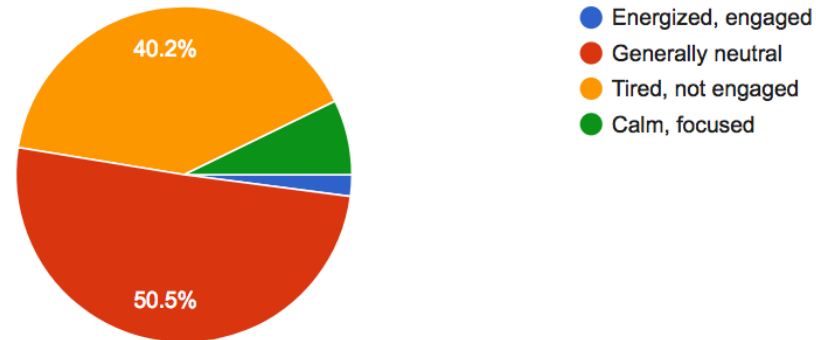
97 responses



Meditation and Cognition

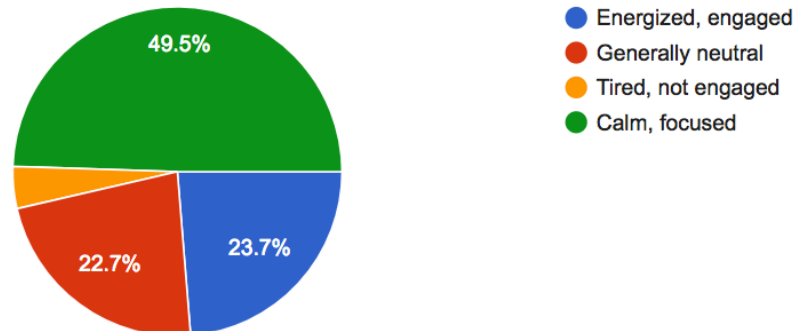
What was your cognition status before meditating?

97 responses



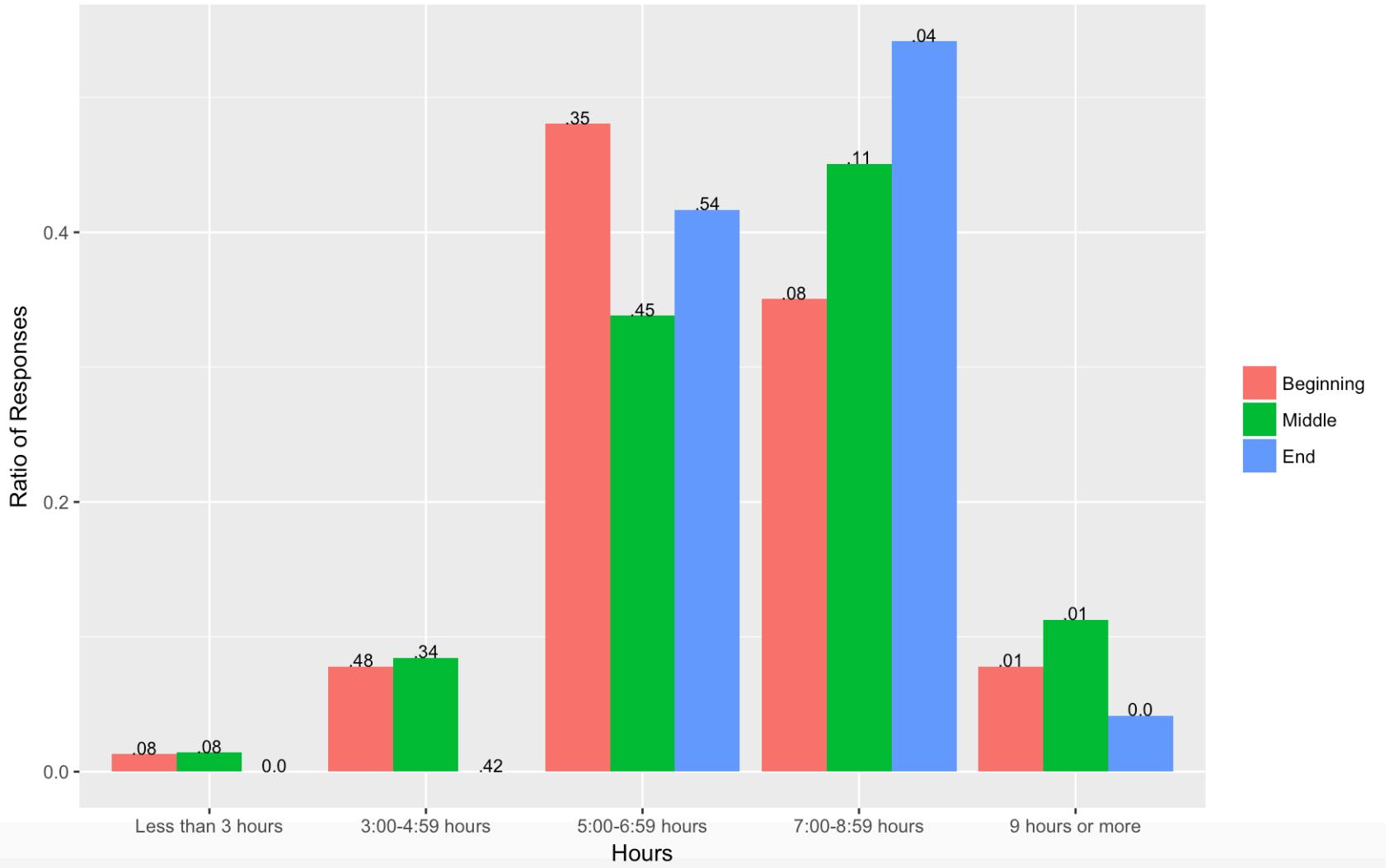
What was your cognition status up to 4 hours after meditating?

97 responses

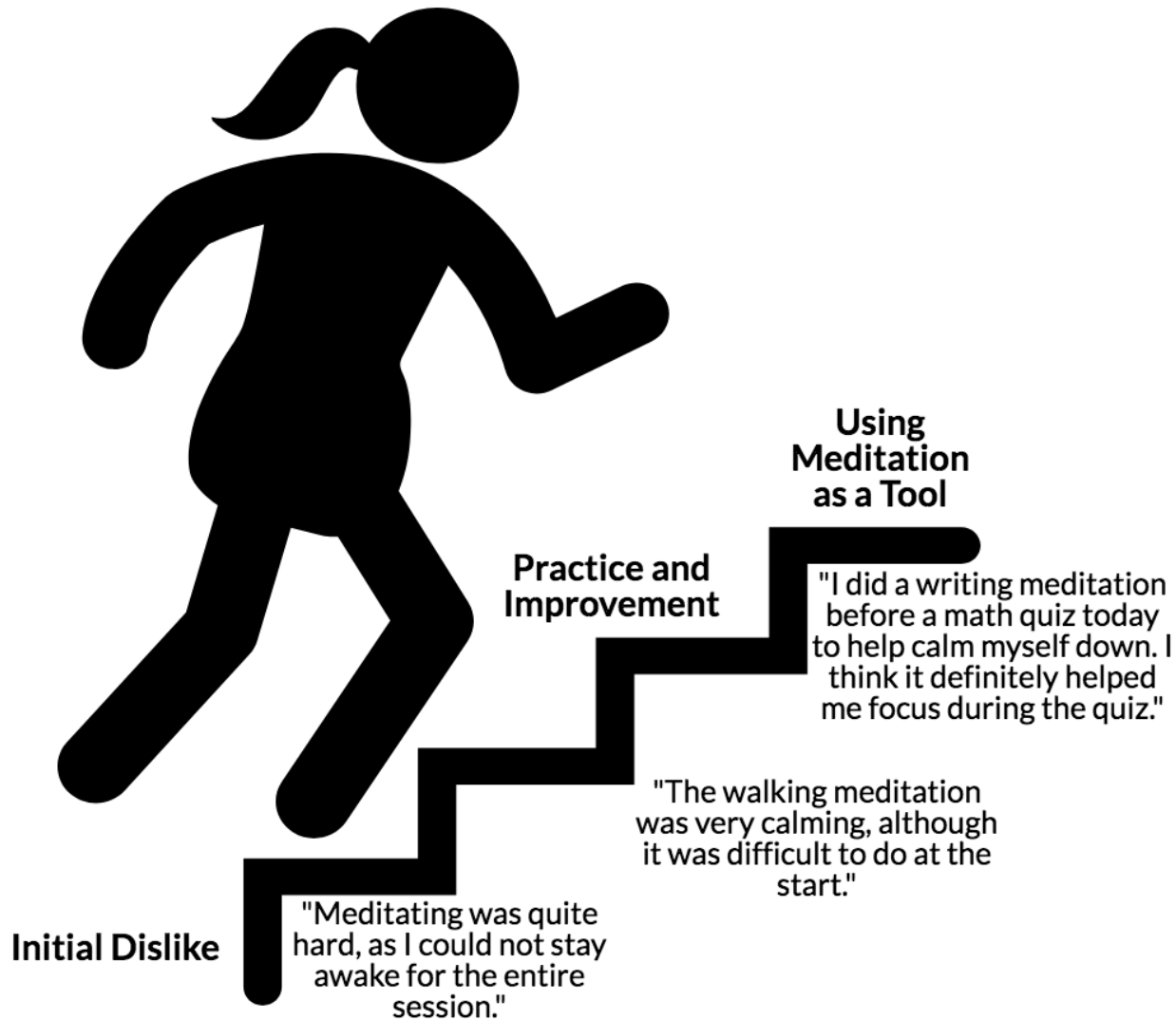


Mellon Grant Data: Sleep

Hours of Sleep by Semester Section



The Meditation Ladder



Proud Class Reflection

“Utilizing the skills I learned in class to benefit my overall wellbeing. Meditation and increased cardiovascular exercise benefitted me tremendously, especially with coping with new levels of stress associated with college. I have learned which stress relieving skills work best for me and have learned more about my self in the process. “