

The Bio Bus Project

A Mobile Laboratory To Maximize the Reach of Meditation Research

What if it were possible to alter the course of aging through mindfulness and meditation?

Telomeres—the DNA “caps” at the ends of our chromosomes that protect the rest of our DNA during cellular division—generally shorten over our lifespan, making them a useful index of aging. This shortening is accelerated by psychological stress and negative lifestyle factors.

Recent UC Davis mindfulness research suggests that three weeks of meditation in a residential retreat setting may lengthen telomeres—approximating the reversal of about four years of natural aging on average.

This inspirational finding could have transformative implications for how we understand aging and mindfulness. However, as with any promising early research, this finding needs to be replicated under a variety of circumstances, with data from hundreds of participants each time, to firmly establish that meditation programs can lead to longer telomeres.

Meditation retreats are typically limited by physical space and teaching capacity to approximately 15-80 people, which can make it challenging to conduct this sort of field work at the necessary scale. A mobile laboratory would alleviate many of these constraints.

With the support of philanthropic partners, the **UC Davis Bio Bus** will allow researchers to travel to multiple retreat centers to coordinate larger-scale studies across a variety of contexts. It will also make it easier to conduct follow-ups to assess how long these effects last after a retreat. Together, we can bring this groundbreaking research to participants nationwide—scaling up its impact and broadening the audience who will benefit from this work.



UC Davis researcher Quinn Conklin processes telomere samples.

Greater Together

Philanthropic support plays a vital role in expanding the scope of mindfulness and meditation research at UC Davis. We invite you to partner with us through a gift to support the **Bio Bus** project—a community-based research initiative with the potential for national and global impact.

CURRENT-USE GIFTS OF ANY AMOUNT ARE WELCOME

GOAL: \$1.5 MILLION