

If you are viewing this course as a recorded course after the live webinar, you can use the scroll bar at the bottom of the player window to pause and navigate the course.

This handout is for reference only. It may not include content identical to the powerpoint. Any links included in the handout are current at the time of the live webinar, but are subject to change and may not be current at a later date.

READY, STEADY, GO: MINDFULNESS PRACTICES FOR CHILDREN

SUSAN HENDLER LEDERER, PHD, ADELPHI UNIVERSITY
SPEECHPATHOLOGY.COM
2/11/16

HI! THIS IS ME.



LEARNING OUTCOMES

After this course, participants will be able to:

- 1) Define mindfulness and its application to learning readiness
- 2) Describe at least one research article that provides empirical evidence for practice
- 3) Describe how to teach at least one mindfulness practice to children

**NOT READY,
NOT STEADY
FOR
THERAPY**

FOCUS QUESTION: WHY ARE CHILDREN NOT READY TO LEARN?

- Cognitive
- Emotional
- Social
- Sensory
- With or without a diagnosis



NOT READY TO LEARN

- Cognitive: distracted, impulsive, memory issues, disorganized, inflexible, poor language processing, tasks too difficult (problem solving)
- Social: not in a relationship
- Emotional: depressed, anxious, stressed; can't self-regulate or express; give up when frustrated (no tenacity, resilience)
- Sensory: Hyper or hyposensitive; arousal issues
- With or without disability: ADHD, ASD, SLI; bad day, immature

FOCUS: SELF-REGULATION

Processes that help us respond/regulate thoughts, emotions, behaviors based on situations; "help us engage in mindful, intentional, and thoughtful behaviors" (p.1)

Cognitive and Emotional

STEP 1: STOP! inhibit distractions, actions (e.g., blurt out answer), inappropriate emotions

STEP 2: GO! engage positively (e.g., do something even though you don't want to)

(Bodrova & Leong, 2008)

DEVELOPMENT OF SELF-REGULATION: TRANSLATING EXPERIENCES

Infant (ER): translates touch and soft voices to self-calm

Toddler (BR): translates "wait your turn" into inhibition

Preschooler: attention regulation, behavior regulation--make choices (e.g., clap at the end of a show, but not after teacher gives directions; cognitive flexibility), persist, use language of emotions

Predicts school success

Can be taught

Florez (2011)



**A PROPOSED
INTERVENTION:
MINDFULNESS**

FOCUS QUESTION: DEFINE MINDFULNESS



MINDFULNESS IS...

“the intentional, accepting and non-judgmental focus of one's attention on the emotions, thoughts and sensations occurring in the present moment”

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mindfulness_%28psychology%29

HOW DO YOU PRACTICE MINDFULNESS ALREADY?



MINDFULNESS MEDITATION EXPERIENCE & REFLECTION



https://youtu.be/mtsdz_jhB7c

**A LITTLE
NEUROSCIENCE**

A-B-CS OF MINDFULNESS

A = Focus ATTENTION (practice changes the brain; neuroplasticity---fire together, wire together)

B = BALANCE (the amygdala and prefrontal cortex)

C = COMPASSION for self and others (return to the focus without judgement)

Kaiser- Greenland

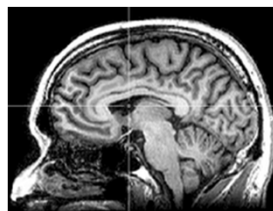
KID FRIENDLY EXPLANATION: AMYGDALA & PREFRONTAL CORTEX



ANTERIOR CINGULAR CORTEX (ACC)

Responsible for
 Self-regulation/EFS
 Purposely directing attention
 Suppressing knee jerk responses
 Switching strategies flexibly
 (Tang et al., 2015)

Meditators
 increased ACC function = Decreased effects of
 distractions = increased performance
 Study showed increases in quiz and GRE
 performances (Mrazek et al., 2013)



HIPPOCAMPUS

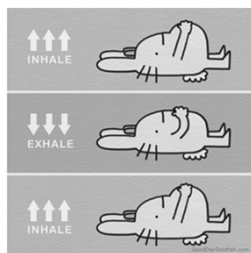
Part of the limbic system (includes amygdala)
 Associated with emotion and memory
 Covered in receptors for cortisol (stress hormone)
 In charge of resilience
 Meditation increases grey matter (Lazar et al., 2005)



NEUROCHEMISTRY OF MINDFULNESS

Decreases cortisol (stress hormone)
 High levels = Inhibits memory retrieval
 Long term exposure impairs learning
 Increases serotonin (hormone)
 "the happy hormone"
 Increases GABA (neurotransmitter)
 Well-being vs. anxiety
 Increases dopamine (neurotransmitter)
 Working memory, sleep, motivation, mood, learning, behavior, attention

DEEP BREATHING PHYSIOLOGY



•Decreases sympathetic "fight or flight" stress reactions; increases parasympathetic calm (relaxation response) = emotional balance

MINDFULNESS PROGRAMS

MINDFULNESS AS AN INTERVENTION: 1979

Mindfulness in medicine
Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR; John Kabat-Zinn, 1979)
8 weeks of mindfulness meditations and gentle yoga
Free online: Palousemindfulness.com
Steven's story
Mindfulness in psychiatry
Mindfulness in schools (MindUp)
Mindfulness in business (GOOGLE "Search inside yourself")
Mindfulness in prisons
Mindful parenting

A LITTLE RESEARCH

[HTTP://GREATERGOOD.BERKELEY.EDU/ARTICLE/ITEM/MINDFULNESS_IN_EDUCATION_RESEARCH_HIGHLIGHTS](http://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/mindfulness_in_education_research_highlights)

RESEARCH: MINDFULNESS FOR CAREGIVERS & TEACHERS

- Bazzano et al. (2015). Mindfulness based stress reduction (MBSR) for parents and caregivers of individuals with developmental disabilities. *J. of Child and Family Studies*, 24, 298-308.
- Flook, L., Goldberg, S. B., Pinger, L., Bonus, K., & Davidson, R. J. (2013). Mindfulness for teachers: A pilot study to assess effects on stress, burnout, and teaching efficacy. *Mind, Brain, and Education*, 7(3), 182-195.

RESEARCH: MINDFULNESS IN EDUCATION

- PS: Razza, R. A., Bergen-Cico, D., & Raymond, K. (2013). Enhancing preschoolers' self-regulation via mindful yoga. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 1062-1024.
- Elem: Flook, L., Smalley, S. L., Kitil, M. J., Galla, B. M., Kaiser-Greenland, S., Locke, J., . . . Kasari, C. (2010). Effects of mindful awareness practices on executive functions in elementary school children. *Journal of Applied School Psychology*, 26(1), 70-95.
- MS: Bergen-Cico, Razza, & Timmims (2015). Fostering self-regulation through curriculum infusion of mindful yoga: A pilot study. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, online.

RESEARCH: MINDFULNESS FOR KIDS WITH ADHD

- Jensen, P., & Kenny, D. (2004). The effects of yoga on the attention and behavior of boys with Attention-Deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). *Journal of Attention Disorders*, 7, 205-216.
- Haffner, et al. (2006). The effectiveness of body-oriented methods of therapy in the treatment of attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD): results of a controlled pilot study. *Z Kinder Jugendpsychiatr Psychother.*, 34(1), 37-47.

SOME INTERESTING FINDINGS

Most RCTs/between group (highest level of evidence)
 Mindfulness practices increased attention, inhibition (delayed gratification), organization; decreased stress and impulsivity
 Mindfulness practices + meds for ADHD
 Kids with greatest self-regulation problems showed most improvement (Flook et al., 2010)
 Practice can be infused into curriculum (Bergen-Cico into ELA lessons)
 Julia's story

A LOT OF PRACTICAL STRATEGIES

LET'S DO IT

Practices for us
 Practices for all of us

BRINGING MINDFULNESS
 INTO MY DAY IS EASY. ALL I
 HAVE TO DO IS WATCH MYSELF
 BREATHE IN & BREATHE OUT
 TO BE PRESENT IN WHAT
 I DO - TO TASTE & SAVOUR
 WHEN I EAT - TO SEE WHAT
 I LOOK AT & TO HEAR THE
 NOISES THAT SURROUND
 ME. ALL I NEED TO DO
 IS LET GO. TO RELEASE
 EVERYTHING THAT IS NOT ME SO
 I AM @ 1 WITH THE MOMENT
 ©mindfulproductivity.net

MINDFULNESS PRACTICES FOR US

Learn about it
 Develop a personal practice
 Model mindfulness with kids
 Teach kids about mindfulness overtly
 Teach kids strategies/practice them together
 Reflect

MODEL IT

Take a whole child perspective (not just about speech-language goals)
 Before a session
 Mindful transition into the session (intention, breathe, turn off phone!)
 Within a session
 Deep listening
 Deep looking
 Slow down your voice and agenda
 Keep focused on the session (vs. multitask; next session)
 Provide mindful transitions (we do visual agendas...add breathing or bell or mindful movement)

TEACH AND PRACTICE MINDFULNESS TOGETHER

Mindful breathing
 Mindful movement
 Mindful looking
 Mindful listening

GENERAL TIPS

- Teach children about their brains, their minds (monkey) and what mindfulness can do (*Mindful Monkey, Happy Panda*)
- Teach teens what's in it for them (research on improved test scores, increased concentration, decreased anxiety/stress)
- Kids don't have to do it perfectly; let go of expectations; just planting seeds; "begin again" = self-compassion
- Different styles for different kids (apps)
- Set the environment (dim lights, soft music, clear the clutter)
- Routines: Use at beginning and in transitions between activities (mindful minutes); heads down = child's resting pose; be consistent
- Keep it simple...use words like "noticing"
- Walk mindfully to therapy ("notice" feet on the ground)
- Practice together ("practice" vs. "master")
- Reflect

MINDFUL BREATHING

We do breathing in therapy already (added benefits= improve self-regulation)

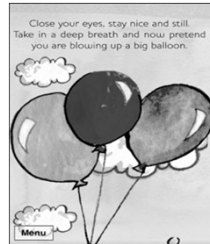
Inhale/exhale through the nose (calming)

Inhale nose/exhale mouth (energizing)

Equanimous = balancing

Longer exhale = calming

Breath retention (I4-H7-E8) or body scan tense/release



MINDFUL BREATHING ACTIVITIES

Inhale/exhale nose:

"Take 5" (hoberman's sphere; use hands; hands on belly; prop on belly)

Inhale nose/exhale mouth

bubbles, pinwheels (calm; watch); balloon (energize)

lion's breath (energize)

Breath with sound/occlude ears

bumble bee

Inhale/exhale mouth

cool/hot



LET'S PRACTICE WITH ELMO!



https://youtu.be/_mZbzDOpyIA

MINDFUL MOVEMENT



MINDFUL MOVEMENT ACTIVITIES

Yoga

cat/cow chair stretch

sun (stand or sit)

balance poses (challenge)

NOTE: synchronize breath/movement

NOTE: alt energy/calm with extension/flexion

NOTE: rhythmical

Mindful walking (to your session)



MINDFUL LOOKING

"Sometimes, if you stand on the bottom rail of a bridge and lean over to watch the river slipping slowly away beneath you, you will suddenly know everything there is to be known."



MINDFUL LOOKING ACTIVITIES

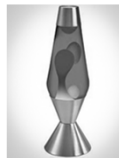
Glitter jar or snow globe
mind busy, mind settles

Lava lamp or fish tank

Color mandala

Finger labyrinth

Choose books about seeing (*The Eye Book*) or
practice seeing (*I Spy* or *Wacky Wednesday*)



LET'S PRACTICE TOGETHER



Ingredients:

mason jar or water bottle

glitter glue

glitter

water

food coloring

Recipes online

<https://youtu.be/FS4SbYDezyA>

MINDFUL LISTENING

Say, Pooh, why aren't you busy?" I said.

"Because it's a nice day," said Pooh.

"Yes, but—"

"Why ruin it?" he said.

"But you could be doing something Important," I said.

"I am," said Pooh.

"Oh? Doing what?"

"Listening," he said.

"Listening to what?"

"To the birds. And that squirrel over there."

"What are they saying?" I asked.

"That it's a nice day," said Pooh.

"But you know that already," I said.

"Yes, but it's always good to hear that somebody else thinks

so, too," he replied...



MINDFUL LISTENING ACTIVITIES

Bell or Rainstick (make your own)

Raise hand when you hear or no longer hear...and then listen to breath

Talk about sounds you hear (outside, inside room, in your own body)

Choose books about listening, with sound effects, or sound vocabulary

Polar Bear, The Ear Book, We're Going on a Bear Hunt

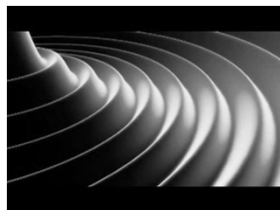
Read responsively or echo read

(more stuff we already do!)



LET'S PRACTICE TOGETHER

<https://youtu.be/wGFog-OuFDM>



REFLECTIONS

REFLECT



Piglet: Pooh?
Pooh: Yes, Piglet?
Piglet: I've been thinking...
Pooh: That is a very good habit to get into, Piglet.

MINDFUL SCHOOLS



<https://youtu.be/MMK481p5wWM>

YOUR REFLECTIONS/ACTION PLAN

Which practice(s) resonated for you?

How can you add more mindfulness to your favorite activity?

Which practices do you think will resonate for your kids?

What one thing will you do differently tomorrow?

LET'S CONTINUE THE CONVERSATION!

lederer@adelphi.edu