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## Integrating Mindfulness Techniques into Pediatric Speech-Language Pathology

Jennifer Llado, MS, MS, CCC-SLP

Brenda Lovette, MS, CCC-SLP

Moderated by:

Amy Natho, MS, CCC-SLP, CEU Administrator, [SpeechPathology.com](http://SpeechPathology.com)



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## Integrating Mindfulness Techniques into Pediatric Speech-Language Pathology

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Brenda Lovette, MS, CCC-SLP

continued<sup>®</sup>

## Financial Disclosures

### Jennifer Llado

- Founder of **Bright Side Therapy, LLC** which produces SLP treatment products
- Author of **Mindful Healthcare: 20 Brief Exercises to Get in the Zone with Your Patients**

### Brenda Lovette

- Founder of **Healthy Expression**, which provides coaching, nutrition education, products and holistic SLP services to clinicians and clients.

### Jennifer & Brenda

- Webinar: **Meditation & Breath Work for Clinicians**
- Received stipend for courses on speechpathology.com
- Co-Authored and receive royalties for **Relaxation & Mindfulness after Brain Injury** tip card by Lash & Associates

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7

## Learning Objectives

- Describe the positive effects of mindfulness that relate to behavior, self-regulation and cognitive performance.
- Describe potential methods for integrating mindfulness practices into traditional speech therapy sessions, in order to improve client outcomes.
- Identify and describe various mindfulness and breath work practices relevant to enhancing the treatment of pediatric speech-language deficits.

8

## Course Outline

- Mindfulness Exercise
- Intention
- Mindfulness Defined
- Making Mindfulness Kid-Friendly
- Mindfulness Literature Review
  - General Population
  - ADD/ADHD
  - Autism
  - Mindful Parenting
- Clinical Application
- Therapeutic Presence
- Resources
- Questions

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9

## Mindfulness Exercise & Intention

**“Intention creates your reality.”**

-Wayne Diers

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10

## Body Scan

**Begin at your toes.**

**Bring awareness:**

- **Notice sensations**
- **Notice thoughts**

**Continue traveling up the body.**

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11

## Intention

**Our Intention:** To provide the knowledge to empower pediatric SLPs and anyone effecting the life of a child to explore the benefits of mindfulness.

**What is yours?** Consciously decide what is important to you with regard to this course.

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12

# Mindfulness Defined

13

Paying attention in a particular way:  
on purpose, in the present moment,  
nonjudgementally.

*-Jon Kabat-Zinn*

This presentation will give you the science  
and tools to describe and utilize meditation in  
an evidence-based way.

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14

# Making Mindfulness Kid-Friendly

Silent, seated meditation for kids is totally unrealistic!

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15

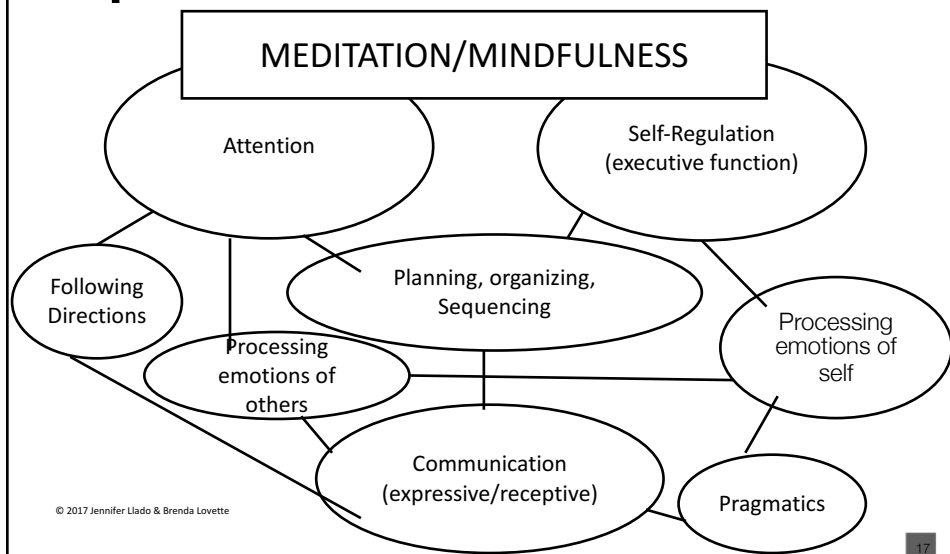
- Props
- Stories or narratives
- Metaphors
- Active engagement
- Building it into routines

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16



## Impact of Mindfulness



## Mindfulness Literature Review

## Effects of Mindfulness for School Children

- **Improved cognition**

(executive function, memory, attention)

- **Improved academic performance**

(standardized tests, measures of content mastery, grades)

- **Improved behavior**

(aggression, disciplinary referrals, compliance, attendance)

- **Improved socioemotional skills**

(anxiety, stress, engagement, social skills, self-esteem, grit)

- **Improved physiological function**

(cortisol, heart rate, brain activity)

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Maynard, B., Solis, M., Miller, V. & Brendel, K. (2017) Mindfulness-based interventions for improving cognition, academic achievement, behavior and socioemotional functioning of primary and secondary school students. *Campbell Systematic Reviews* 2017:5

19

## Stress in Adolescents

- “Impact of mental health with this population is often minimized”
- 30% of adolescents surveyed reported feeling overwhelmed, depressed or sad due to stress
- Mental health problems reported in 49.5% of sample of 10,000
- 40% met criteria for more than one disorder
- In 2015, 12.5% of teens had at least 1 major depressive episode

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Johnstone, J., Roake, C., Sheikh, I., Mole, A., Nigg, J. & Oken, B. (2016). School-based mindfulness intervention for stress reduction in adolescents: Design and methodology of an open-label, parallel group, randomized controlled trial. *Contemporary Clinical Trials Communication* 4 (2016). 99-104.

20

## Mindfulness Intervention for Stress

**Participants:** 45 children ages 7-9 divided into 2 groups: a single 10 minute mindfulness practice or quiet play

**Frequency/Duration:** 1 session

**Measures:** Self-reported measures of calmness, mood and social dominance pre and post-session.

**Results:** Only children who practiced mindfulness showed a significant increase in calmness ( $p < .05$ ).

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Nadler, R. Cordy, M., Stengel, J., Segal, Z., Hayden, E. (2017). A brief mindfulness practice increases self-reported calmness in young children: a pilot study. *Mindfulness*. 8(4). 1088-1095.

21

## Mindfulness & Cognition

**Participants:** 102 children divided into 2 groups: yoga/meditation & control

**Measures:** Paced Auditory Serial Test, Word Recognition Test, Letter Digit Substitution Test

**Results:** Yoga group had higher scores in cognitive functions than age-matched peers

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Uthaman, S. & Uthaman, S. (2017). Impact of yoga and meditation on cognitive functions of students. *Journal of Social Work Education and Practice*. 2(2). 53-57.

22

## Mindfulness & Cognition

**Participants:** 60 males aged 12-15 years randomly assigned to experimental group and control

**Frequency/Duration:** 45 minutes/day for 6 days a week for 45 days

**Measures:** tests of attentional fluctuating, sentence completion and general intelligence where completed pre-, mid-yoga training and post-test

**Results:**

- Yoga group had a reduction in attention fluctuation
- Improvement in sentence completion ability and general intelligence
- Yoga group maintained performance after detraining phase of 45 days

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Bera, M., Barik, AK. & Bera, TK. (2017) Role of yoga in psychological correlates of learning ability in school children. Yoga Mimamsa. 2017; 49: 13-6

23

## Mindfulness & Attention

**Participants:** teens

**Frequency/Duration:** 20-30 minutes daily x 2 weeks

**Results:**

- Increased connectivity between the executive center in the prefrontal cortex and the circuitry for focused attention

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Patsenko, E.G. et al. (2017) Resting State (rs)-fMRI and Diffusion Tensor Imaging (DTI) Reveals Training Effects of a Meditation-Based Video Game on Left Fronto-Parietal Attentional Network in Adolescents. .

24

## Mindfulness & Attention

**Method:** Literature review of 13 randomized control trials

**Results:**

- 5 of 13 studies showed statistically significant effects in attention and/or executive functions with a medium to large effect size.

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Mak, C., Whittingham, K., Cunnington, R. & Boyd, R. (2018) Efficacy of Mindfulness-Based Interventions for Attention and Executive Functions in Children and Adolescents . Mindfulness. 9(1) 59-78.

25

## ADHD Classifications

- Primarily Inattentive (20-30%)
- Primarily Hyperactive (less than 15%)
- Combined (50-75%)

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Herbert, A. & Esparham, A. (2017) Mind-body Therpay for Children with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder. Children (Basel). 4(5) 31

26

## ADHD Symptoms

- Poor attention
- Disorganization
- Decreased ability to remember and follow directions
- Struggle to perform and concentrate in the classroom
- Impulsivity
- Poor executive functioning

Huguet, A., Ruiz, D.M., Haro, J.M. & Alda, J.A. (2017). A Pilot Study of the Efficacy of a Mindfulness Program for Children Newly Diagnosed with Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder: Impact on core symptoms and executive functions. *International Journal of Psychology and Psychological Therapy*, 2017, 17(3) 305-316.

27

## Amen ADD Classifications

- Classic ADD (low PFC/cerebellum)
  - Inattentive, distractible, disorganized, hyperactive, restless, impulsive
- Inattentive ADD (low PFC/cerebellum)
  - Easily distracted, disorganized, often described as spacey, daydreamers, or coach potatoes (not hyper)
- Overfocused ADD (low PFC and high ACG)
  - Trouble shifting attention, frequently get stuck in loops of negative thoughts or behavior, obsessive, excessive worrying, inflexible, frequently oppositional and argumentative, may or may not be hyperactive

Amen, D. (2013). *Healing ADD*. New York: Penguin Group

28

## Amen ADD Classifications

- Temporal Lobe ADD
  - Irritable, short fuse, dark thoughts, mood instability, struggle with learning disabilities
- Limbic ADD (low PFC and high limbic activity)
  - Chronic low-grade sadness or negativity, low energy, tends to be more isolated socially, frequent feeling of hopelessness or worthlessness
- Ring of Fire ADD (High brain activity)
  - Irritable, overly sensitive, cyclic moodiness or oppositional
- Anxious ADD (Low PFC and high BG)
  - Anxious, tense, nervous, predicts the worsts, gets anxious in timed tests, social anxiety, physical symptoms

Amen, D. (2013). Healing ADD. New York: Penguin Group

29

## Implications of ADD

- 35% of ADD students never finish high school
- 43% of untreated boys are arrested
- 50% of prison population has ADD or a learning disability
- 52% of ADD adults abuse alcohol
- 75% have interpersonal issues

30

## Mindfulness & ADHD

- Increases awareness helping us to act consciously without being drawn into thoughts, emotions, sensations
- Reducing autopilot responses

Huguet, A., Ruiz, D.M., Haro, J.M. & Alda, J.A. (2017). A Pilot Study of the Efficacy of a Mindfulness Program for Children Newly Diagnosed with Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder: Impact on core symptoms and executive functions. *International Journal of Psychology and Psychological Therapy*, 2017, 17(3) 305-316.

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31

## Mindfulness & ADHD

**Participants:** 5 children aged 7-12 years newly diagnosed with ADHD

**Frequency/Duration:** one 75-minute session per week x 8 weeks with daily homework

**Measures:** self-reporting tools for psychopathology and ADHD clinical symptoms and testing for executive functions (Stroop Test, Continuous Performance Test-3, Coding, Digit Span, Arithmetic subtests of Wechsler for Children)

Huguet, A., Ruiz, D.M., Haro, J.M. & Alda, J.A. (2017). A Pilot Study of the Efficacy of a Mindfulness Program for Children Newly Diagnosed with Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder: Impact on core symptoms and executive functions. *International Journal of Psychology and Psychological Therapy*, 2017, 17(3) 305-316.

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32



## Mindfulness & ADHD

### Results:

- 90% of participants liked participating in the program
- Reduction in scores were observed for all core ADHD symptoms
- Significant reduction of total ADHD symptoms
- Statistically significant differences in hyperactivity/impulsivity on parent-rated assessment
- Statistically significant improvements in scores for anxiety symptoms
- Significant improvements found for cognitive flexibility, automatic response inhibition, attentional capacity and processing speed

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Huguet, A., Ruiz, D.M., Haro, J.M. & Alda, J.A. (2017). A Pilot Study of the Efficacy of a Mindfulness Program for Children Newly Diagnosed with Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder: Impact on core symptoms and executive functions. *International Journal of Psychology and Psychological Therapy*, 2017, 17(3) 305-316.

33

## Mindfulness & ADHD

- Recognizing the present moment
- Meditation Bell
- Walking meditation
- Breathing meditation
- Mindful listening
- Body scan
- Sensory awareness exercises
- Mindful eating
- Exploring unpleasant and pleasant events
- Working with thoughts and emotions
- Integrating mindfulness into daily life
- Awareness exercise

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Huguet, A., Ruiz, D.M., Haro, J.M. & Alda, J.A. (2017). A Pilot Study of the Efficacy of a Mindfulness Program for Children Newly Diagnosed with Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder: Impact on core symptoms and executive functions. *International Journal of Psychology and Psychological Therapy*, 2017, 17(3) 305-316.

34

## Autism Spectrum Disorders

- Prevalence
  - 2.25% in 2014
  - 2.41% in 2015
  - 2.76% in 2016
- 3.63% in boys
- 1.25% in girls
- 1.82% in Hispanic children
- 2.76% in non Hispanic white children
- 2.24% in non Hispanic black children

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Xu, G., Strathearn, L. & Liu, B. (2018). Prevalence of Autism Spectrum Disorder Among US Children and Adolescents, 2014-2016. JAMA. 2018; 319(1): 81-82.

35

## Yoga Training for Autism

**Participants:** 29 children aged 7-15 years randomly assigned to either yoga or control group

**Frequency/Duration:** 8 weeks (24 sessions) of yoga

**Measures:** Parents completed Autism Treatment Evaluation Checklist (ATEC) at baseline and the end of the intervention

**Results:**

- Decreased severity of disease in children with autism
- Significant effect on cognitive and awareness sub-scores of ATEC
- Significant effect on sociability sub-scores of ATEC
- Significant effect on health and physical sub-scores of ATEC
- No significant effect on speech and language sub-scores of ATEC

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Sotoodeh MS, Arabameri E, Panahibakhsh M., Kheiroddin, F., Mirdoozandeh H. & Ghanizadeh, A. (2017). Effectiveness of Yoga Training Program on the Severity of Autism. Complementary Therapies in Clinical Practice. August 2017 (28) 47-53.

36

## Yoga Training for Autism

**Participants:** 5 males with ASD (8-13 years old)

**Frequency/Duration:** 1 yoga session, twice a week for 4 weeks

**Measures:** Modified Facial Mood Scale & ASD Social Skills Assessment (TSSA)

**Results:**

- Significant improvement from pre- to post test in overall TSSA
- Significant improvement on initiation and initiating interaction, and affective understanding and perspective taking subscales
- MFMS scores increased from 80% to 100%
- Thematic analysis of narratives note enhanced mood and emotional expression, increased empathy towards others, and improved teamwork skills

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37

## Gratitude

**Think about 3 things you are truly grateful for...**

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38

## ASD & Mom's Gratitude

**Participants:** mothers of children with ASD were divided into 2 groups and instructed to write gratitude letters (either a general gratitude letter or a letter to their child).

**Method:** thematic analysis of narratives were conducted using ATLAS computer software

**Results:**

- The most prominent theme is social support in the general group
- Child-specific group was primarily grateful for their child making progress
- Inspiration was the overlapping theme expressed by both groups

Timmons, L., Ekas, N. & Johnson, P. (2017). Thankful thinking: A thematic analysis of gratitude letters by mothers of children with autism spectrum disorder. *Research in Autism Spectrum Disorder*, 34(February 2017), 19-27.

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39

## Mindful Parenting

- Be deliberately and fully present in the here and now with your child in a non-judgmental way
- Take care of yourself as this is the basis for parenting
- Accept difficulties of your child
- Answer rather than react to difficult behavior of your child
- Practice meditation exercises for yourself
- Practice meditation exercises with your child

Van der Oord, S & Bogels, S. & Peijnenburg, D. (2011). The effectiveness of mindfulness training for children with ADHD and Mindful Parenting for their Parents. *Journal of Child & Family Study* (2012) 21: 139-147.

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40

## Mindful Parenting Exercises

- Raisin exercise
- Breathing meditation
- Body awareness exercise
- Body scan
- Yoga
- Distraction awareness
- Awareness of automatic responding
- Breathing space
- Repetition learned skills
- Breathing space in difficult situations
- Meditation bell
- Looking meditation

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Van der Oord, S & Bogels, S. & Peijnenburg, D. (2011). The effectiveness of mindfulness training for children with ADHD and Mindful Parenting for their Parents. *Journal of Child & Family Study* (2012) 21: 139-147.

41

Study	Population	Participants	Method	Results of Mindful Parenting
Van der Oord, S. et al. (2011)	ADHD	22 families	8-weeks of one 90-minute mindfulness training sessions for children and parallel MBSR for parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significant increase in mindful awareness</li> <li>• Significant reduction in parental stress and over reactivity</li> <li>• No significant effects in teacher rating</li> </ul>
Behbahani, M et al. (2018)	ADHD	60 mothers	8 weeks of one 90-minute session/week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduction in parental stress, negative parent-child interactions and child behaviors at post-test and follow-up</li> <li>• Significant improvement in ADHD symptoms</li> </ul>
Singh, N. et al. (2006)	ASD	3 parents	12-week course for mothers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decreased child's aggression, noncompliance, and self-injury</li> <li>• Increased mothers' satisfaction with parenting skills</li> </ul>
Singh, N. et al. (2007)	DD	4 parents	12-week training for parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decreased aggressive behavior in children</li> <li>• Increased social skills</li> <li>• Increased satisfaction with parenting</li> <li>• Decreased parental stress</li> </ul>
Neece, C. (2013)	DD	46 parents	MBSR training for parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significantly less stress and depression in parents</li> <li>• Greater life satisfaction</li> <li>• Children experienced fewer behavior problems (specifically in area of attention)</li> </ul>
Rayan, A. (2017)	ASD	104 parents	5-week training for parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mindful group had better outcomes on measures of psychological well-being and mindfulness</li> <li>• Significant improvement in stress, anxiety, depression scores with medium to large effect size</li> </ul>
Ridderinkhof, A. (2017)	ASD	45 families	9-week Mymind parent program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child's social communication problems decreased</li> <li>• Child's emotional/behavioral function improved</li> <li>• Improved parenting, emotional functioning and increased mindful awareness for parents.</li> </ul>

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## Clinical Application

43

## Bell Meditation

- Use a singing bowl, mindfulness bell or tuning fork
- Have the children listen to the bell and raise their hand when they can no longer hear it

44

## The Raisin

- Give everyone a raisin
- Guide the child through a description of the raisin using their 5 senses:
  - Sight
  - Smell
  - Touch
  - Hearing
  - Taste

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Van der Oord, S & Bogels, S. & Peijnenburg, D. (2011). The effectiveness of mindfulness training for children with ADHD and Mindful Parenting for their Parents. *Journal of Child & Family Study* (2012) 21: 139-147.

45

## The Raisin

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46

## Yoga

- Use animal and nature metaphors for different postures (tree, frog, camel, cat, cow)
- Focus on the way the poses feel in your body.
- Breathe during each posture
- Link the breath with the movement

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Van der Oord, S & Bogels, S. & Peijnenburg, D. (2011). The effectiveness of mindfulness training for children with ADHD and Mindful Parenting for their Parents. *Journal of Child & Family Study* (2012) 21: 139-147.

47

## Walking Meditation

- Begin standing tall with a still body
- Put one foot out in front and feel your weight in the heel, rolling through the bottom of your foot
- Feel your weight shifting into opposite foot as you take the next step
- Notice your breath
- Continue taking steps this way, either using a timer or reaching a certain destination

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Van der Oord, S & Bogels, S. & Peijnenburg, D. (2011). The effectiveness of mindfulness training for children with ADHD and Mindful Parenting for their Parents. *Journal of Child & Family Study* (2012) 21: 139-147.

48



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## Glitter Jar

- Fill a jar with water and glitter
- Invite the child to shake the jar and watch as the glitter swirls and settles
- Imagine the glitter is your thoughts settling down just like the glitter

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49

continued

## Glitter Jar

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50

continued

## The Star



- The star is always with you
- Imagine the stars light on your toes and move up the body like a body scan
- Use a flashlight with younger children to make the exercise more concrete
  
- APPLICATION FOR FLUENCY: Freezing the body during moments of stuttering or clear speech to examine where there is tension (“Has your star light found places of tension or relaxation?”)

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Greenland, S.K (2010). The Mindful Child: How to help you kid manage stress and become happier, kinder, and more compassionate. Simon & Schuster.

51

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## The Star

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52

## Breathing Buddies / The Jewel

- Have the child choose a stuffed animal
- Place the stuffed animal on the child's belly
- Have the child move the stuffed animal up and down with the breath

Addresses **attention** and **self-regulation**

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Greenland, S.K (2010). The Mindful Child: How to help you kid manage stress and become happier, kinder, and more compassionate. Simon & Schuster.

53

## Breathing Buddies

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54

## Bubbles

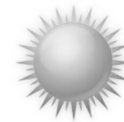
- Begin by blowing bubbles and watch what happens:
  - Do they float, pop immediately or get stuck together?
  - Are some bubbles bigger, smaller, slower, faster?
- We can watch our thoughts like the bubbles.

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Arnel van Hee, L.J. (2015) Mindfulness and Acceptance Based Treatments for Children Who Stutter: A clinical guide.

55

## The Weather Report



- The weather outside is like the weather inside (“Sometimes you feel sunny and sometimes you feel cloudy.”)
- What is your weather like when you talk?
- Look at your weather with curiosity.
- The weather outside changes just like your weather inside.
- “You are not a rain storm, that’s just the kind of weather you are experiencing.”

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Snel, E. (2013). Sitting Like a Frog: Mindfulness exercise for kids and their parents. Boston: Shambala Publications

56

## The Thought Parade



- Imagine your thoughts as participates on the parade
- Imagine you are sitting in a chair and watching from the sidewalk
  - Notice how some thoughts are noisy and colorful
  - Some may be quiet and like to hang back
  - Some thoughts are fast and some are slow
  - Other thoughts go around and around in the parade
  - You may notice you are following some thoughts. When you notice this imagine walking back to your chair to watch the thoughts go by again.

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Arnel van Hee, L.J. (2015) Mindfulness and Acceptance Based Treatments for Children Who Stutter: A clinical guide.

57

## Automatic Negative Thoughts

1. Write down your ANTs when you feel sad, stressed, anxious or out of control.
2. Label them.
3. Talk back to the thoughts.
4. Don't believe them.

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58

## Categories of ANTs

1. Fortune telling
2. Mind reading
3. Blame
4. Guilt
5. Labeling
6. Thinking with feeling
7. Focusing on negative
8. Always thinking
9. All or none

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59

## Targeted Therapy Goals

	Bell	Raisin	Yoga	Glitter	Star	Buddy	Bubble	Weather	Parade	ANT
Attention	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Executive Function	X	X	X	X		X	X			X
Expressive Language	X	X					X	X	X	X
Receptive Language		X	X	X		X				
Fluency					X					X

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60

## Documentation

- Discuss the specific speech-language-cognitive goal addressed by the mindfulness technique
- Describe the clients status pre and post identify the degree of functional impact
- Communicate about education provided with clients and the families

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61

## Therapeutic Presence

- What are you thinking when you are treating?
- What is your surface intention for the session vs. deeper intention
- Regular meditation practice or simply mindful attention to your thinking can ground your practice.

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62

## Resources

63

### VIDEOS

- Belly Breathe with Elmo
- Breathing Buddies (Daniel Goleman)

### BOOKS

- Mindful Monkey, Happy Panda
- Peaceful Piggy Meditates
- Moody Cow Meditates
- Mindful Kids
- The Conscious Parent

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64



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## WEBSITES

- [www.breatheforchange.com](http://www.breatheforchange.com)

## PROPS

- Meddy Teddy
- Anteater

## REFERRALS

- Yoga classes
- Meditation Groups

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65

continued

## Questions & Comments...

**Brenda:** [mail@brendalovette.com](mailto:mail@brendalovette.com)

**Jen:** [jen@brightsidetherapy.com](mailto:jen@brightsidetherapy.com)

**Holistic SLP Mastermind Group**

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66

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