



Susan Elswick EdD LCSW

Dr. Elswick is an Associate Professor at the University of Memphis in the School of Social Work.

She is the School Social Work Certificate Coordinator for the University of Memphis.

Dr. Susan Elswick has over 16 years of clinical mental health experience that includes community mental health, case management, residential programming, school-based programming, integrated behavioral health, infant mental health, and home-based services.

One of her areas of research focuses on the use of informatics and technology in the field of social work. Dr. Elswick serves as the Co-chair for the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Annual Program Review Technology Track that focuses on harnessing technology for social good in behavioral health practice, and she is a current Faculty Affiliate on campus at University of Memphis with the Institute for Intelligent Systems (IIS). Most recently, she is a Co-PI on the U of M's \$2.58 million National Science Foundation (NSF)-funded project, which will lay the foundation for a future Learner Data Institute (LDI) at the university.



Rev. Jesse Johnson

Rev. Jesse Johnson serves as a Care Minister at Christ Church Memphis and program director of No Whispers. No Whispers motto is: 'In church, no one should have to whisper about their struggles!'

Jesse is a ministry entrepreneur and church planter with more than 20 years of experience who is a passionate about building mental health awareness and prevention in the church and community. Jesse earned his Master in Divinity from Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary and a Master in Business Administration from Eastern University.

Jesse' most recent projects include leading virtual mental health resiliency groups and coaching young adults on the autism spectrum on social skills.

Jesse enjoys kayaking, hiking, camping and generally being outdoors. Jesse lives with his daughter Genesis, in Memphis Tennessee.



Learning Objectives

Participants will learn....

- Why mindfulness and regulating activities are needed in a time of virtual school
- Ways in which to embed mindfulness activities into the Prek-12 virtual classroom
- Activities to engage learners and assist them with regulating through grounding activities and incremental breaks



What is Mindfulness?

Mindfulness is **paying attention...**

- On purpose,
- And without judgment

We can be mindful of our **senses**, and of our inner world of **thoughts** and **emotions**.

It helps us to **respond**, not **react**.

It is **simple**. But it is not often **easy**.

Have you ever...?

- said something you later regretted?
- been so nervous for a presentation or an event that you couldn't sleep the night before?
- walked into a room to get something, and then forgot what you were looking for?
- been really sad or upset but you didn't know exactly why?
- been so engrossed in a novel or a sewing project or a golf game or some other hobby that everything else fell away and that activity commanded your full focus and attention?

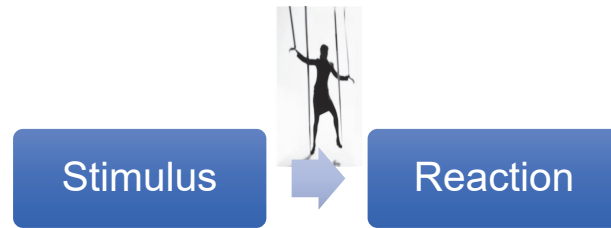


What is Mindfulness?

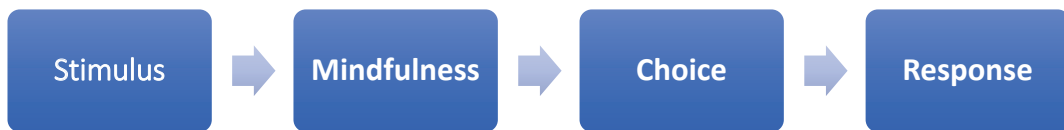
“Between stimulus and response there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom.”

Victor Frankl

Without Mindfulness:



With Mindfulness:



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The Language of Mindfulness

ATTENTION Authenticity BALANCE Breathing BIO RYTHYM Body Scan
CLARITY Compassion DISTANCING Driving Force EMOTIONAL ANOMIE
Finitude FORGIVENESS Generosity GRATITUDE Interconnectedness
LEGACY Love MEDITATION Meta-Cognition MINDSET Movement
PARADOX Presence REFLECTION Silence STRESS REDUCTION Selective
Eating WHOLENESS Zoning in (Equanimity)



Your greatest gift is your

BREATH

Mindfulness in Schools





What Mindfulness is NOT

- “Thinking about nothing.”
 - *It’s being aware of our thoughts.*

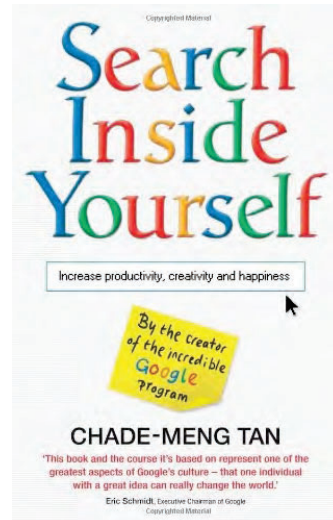


What Mindfulness is NOT

- Being happy ALL THE TIME and loving EVERY SINGLE MINUTE of life.
 - *It’s bringing non-judgmental awareness to the present moment.*

What Mindfulness is NOT

- Religious.
 - *It can be a secular practice.*
 - *It is mental training.*
 - *It is supported by clinical research.*
 - *It is integrated into many workplaces, including Google, General Mills, and the Huffington Post*



What Mindfulness is NOT

- Long periods of passive sitting and navel-gazing.
 - *It can be active!*
 - *Yoga, walking, daily routines...*



What Mindfulness is NOT

- Living only in the present. Never thinking about the past or planning for the future.
 - *It is awareness and deliberate attention – even on the act of planning...*
 - *“Is this useful?”*



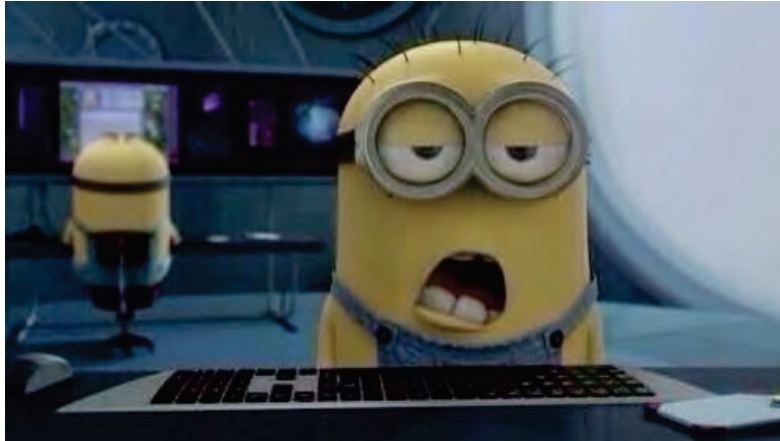
What Mindfulness is NOT

- Relaxation.
 - *It might be relaxing. It might be boring and annoying. It's being with WHAT IS.*

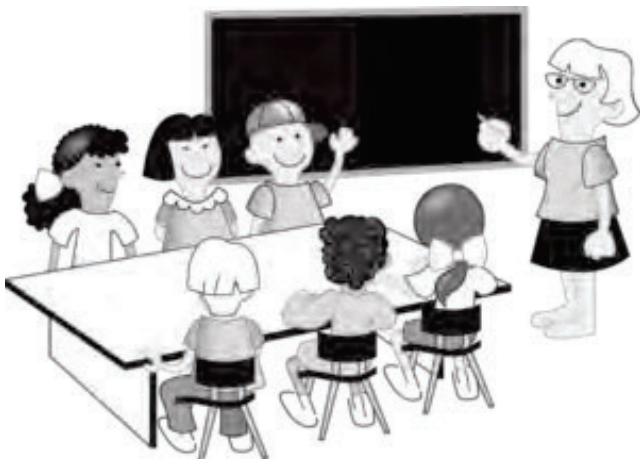


What Mindfulness is NOT

- Zoning out.
 - *It's zoning IN. It is purposeful awareness.*



What Mindfulness is NOT



- A form of classroom discipline.
 - *It is about teaching children to be with ALL aspects of their experience.*
 - *It often does create a quiet, focused classroom, but it is not intended to be used to get kids to pay attention for hours on end!*

Why is Mindfulness Needed?

It's not what you look at that matters,
it's what you see.

HENRY DAVID THOREAU

LOVE EXPANDS

The Benefits of Mindfulness – For Teachers



Improves focus and awareness



Increases responsiveness to student needs and
enhances classroom climate



Promotes emotional balance and stress management



Supports healthy relationships – at work and at home



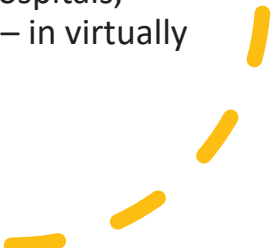
Studies show practicing mindfulness not only improves
teachers' mental well-being, but makes them more
effective in the classroom

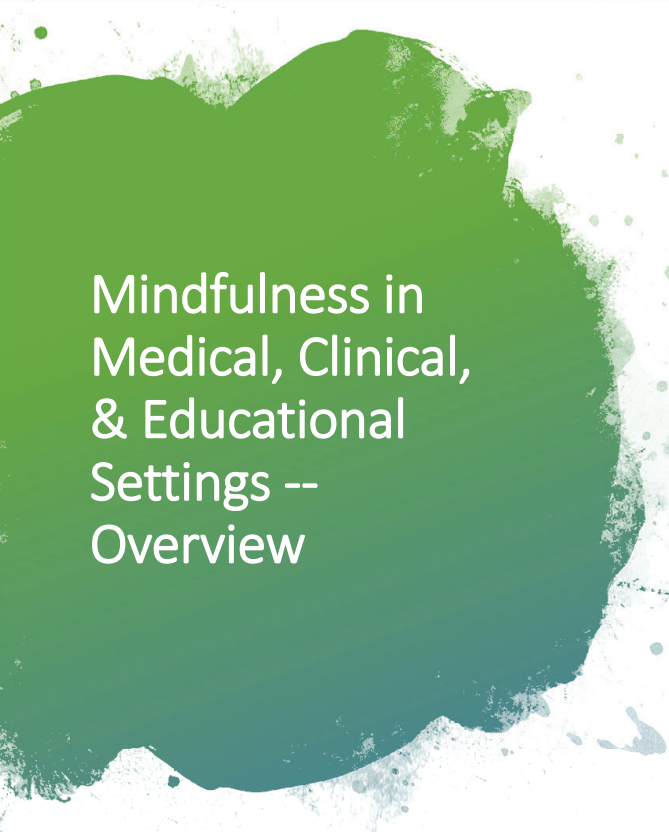
The Benefits of Mindfulness – For Students

- Improved attention, focus, and concentration
 - *Attentional stability* is key to learning!
- Reduced stress (ability to calm down when upset)
 - *Gives youth a “nervous system toolkit”*
- Increased self-awareness (ability to recognize emotions)
- Improved impulse control
- Increased empathy (for self and others)
- Can be especially helpful for ADHD students

Mindfulness in Medical, Clinical, & Educational Settings -- Overview

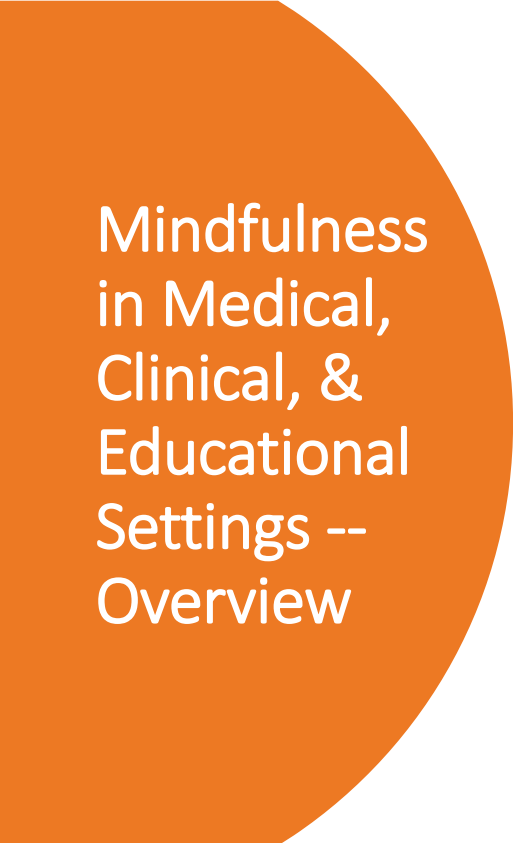
• **Jon Kabat-Zinn and the University of Massachusetts Medical Center**

- Late 1970s – **Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)**
 - Mindfulness training had a positive impact on **chronic pain, stress, and overall well-being, memory, immune response, self-control, attention, recovery from addiction, and emotional resilience**
 - MBSR is now offered at over 700 hospitals, clinics, and universities worldwide – in virtually every major US metro area!
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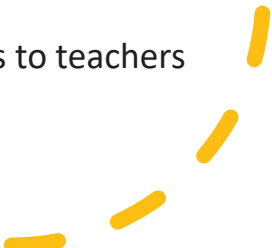


Mindfulness in Medical, Clinical, & Educational Settings -- Overview

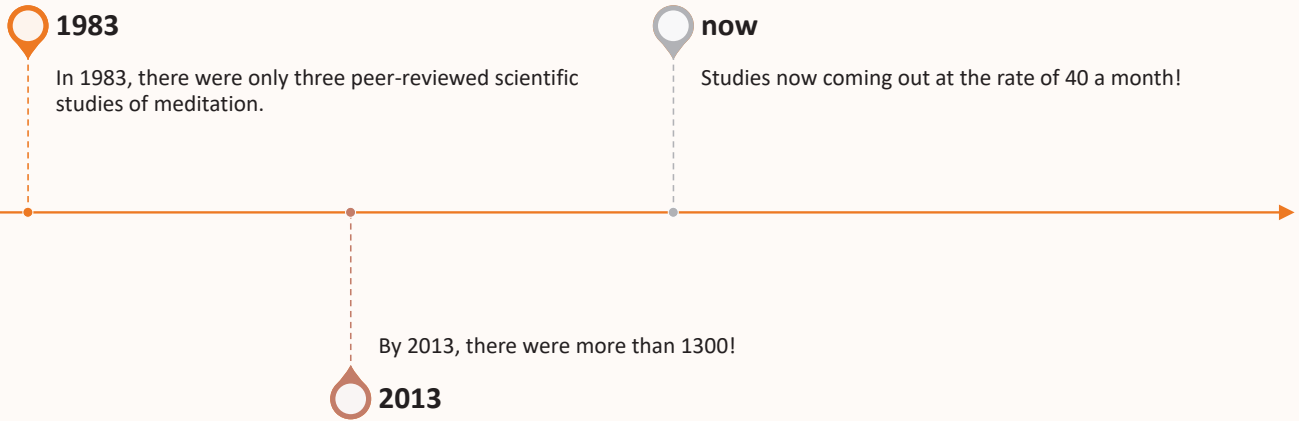
- **Mental Health:** Clinical and therapeutic settings
 - **Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT)** -- 1990s
 - To treat depression, and depression relapse
 - Now used on a national level in UK health care policy
 - Set the stage for use with child and adolescent populations
 - **Reduces symptoms of anxiety, depression, and increases self-esteem and sleep quality** (studies on ages 14-18)



Mindfulness in Medical, Clinical, & Educational Settings -- Overview

- **Educational Settings**
 - Sporadic school-based programming by educators with a background in MBSR – late 1980s
 - Social-emotional learning (SEL) programs often include material on attentional control and self-regulation
 - Currently in the process of validating results of mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs) with children
 - Early 2000s – teaching mindfulness to teachers as a self-care and wellness tool
- 

Current State of Research



Mindfulness in Education: Research

- UCLA study found **improved executive function** in 2nd and 3rd graders
- Mindful Schools study (in collaboration with UC Davis, 2011-2012)
 - Study of 829 K-5 students (90% F/RL)
 - Statistically significant improvements in **attention, self-care and participation, and showing care for others**

Personal Practice



Personal Practice

- A daily practice can consist of intentional moments for:
 - Mindful **breathing**
 - Mindful **listening**
 - **Body Scan** practice
 - **Mindful moments** throughout the day (where is my attention?)
 - While washing dishes, driving to work, eating breakfast, etc.
- Free audio guide downloads available from the **UCSD Center for Mindfulness**:
<http://health.ucsd.edu/specialties/mindfulness/programs/mbsr/Pages/audio.aspx>

Mindful Teaching

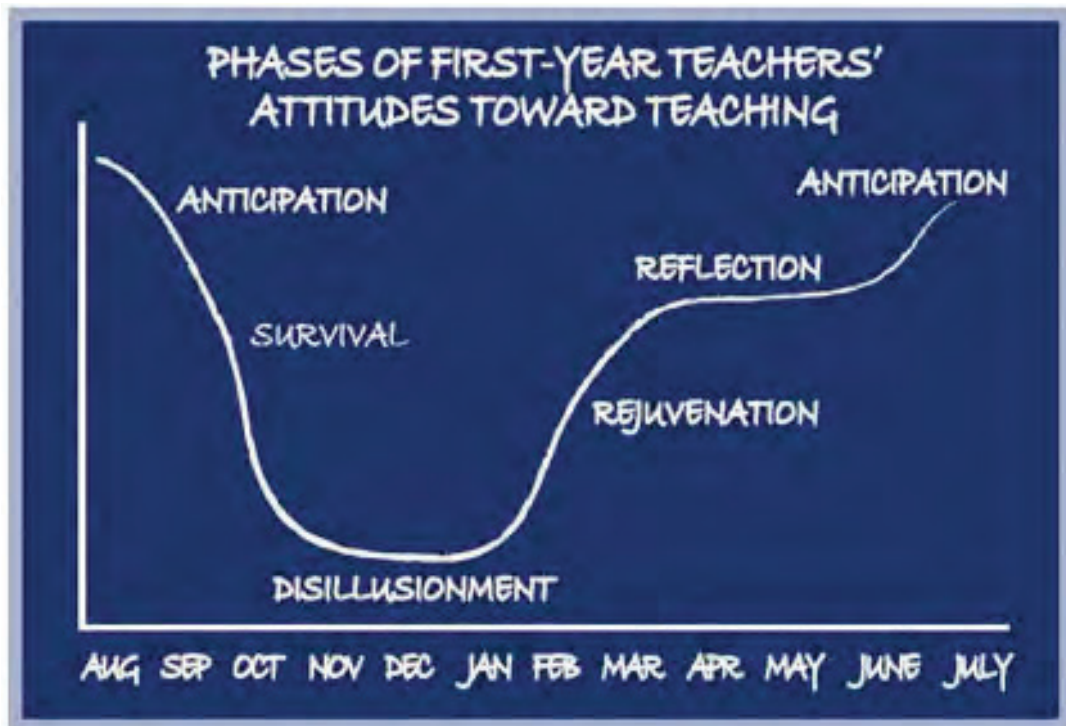
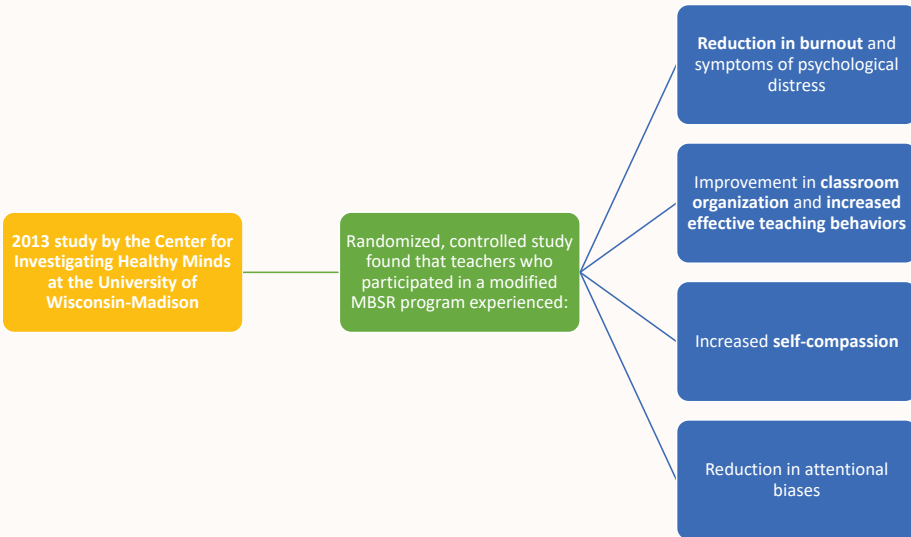


Teaching Mindfully

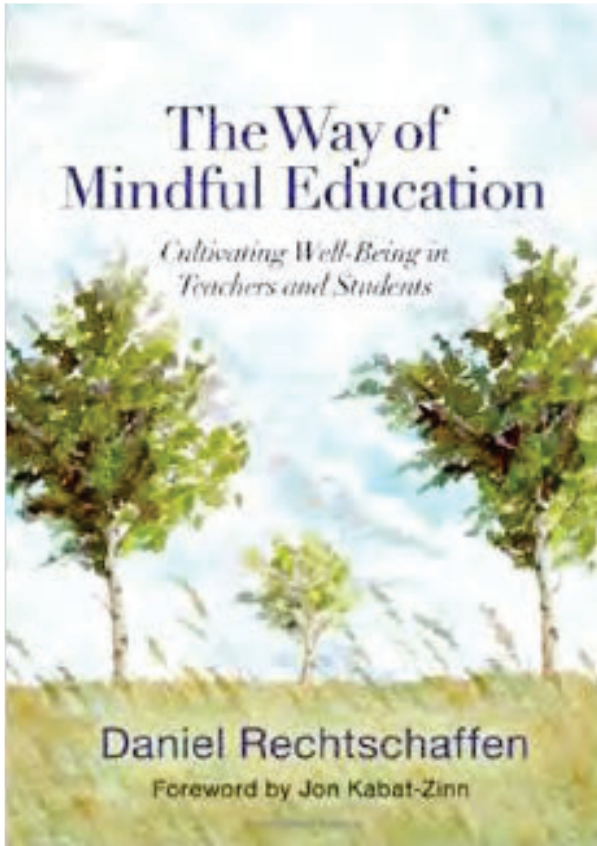
“The foundation for teaching mindfully is always our own mindfulness practice.”

Daniel Rechtschaffen

Mindfulness for Teachers: Research



Ellen Moir, Director of the Santa Cruz Consortium New Teacher Project and Director of Student Teaching at UC Santa Cruz



The Qualities of a Mindful Teacher

- Compassion
- Understanding
- Boundaries
- Attention
- Intention
- Authenticity

Mindful Teaching

Mindful teaching involves several components:

- **Personal practice**
- **Embodied teaching** – an attuned presence
 - Awareness and responsiveness
- **Relational mindfulness**

It draws from **neuroscience, biology, positive psychology, and mindfulness**



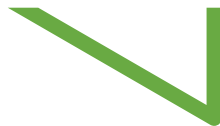


Mindful Teaching

What is the condition of a teacher's nervous system when in the classroom?

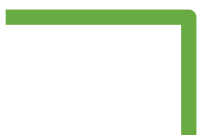
Are they **present, attuned, and empathic**?

Or are they burnt out, fatigued, anxious, or in some kind of stress response?



Mindfulness and Teaching: Embodied Teaching

- **Voice** quality (prosody)
- **Posture**
- **Facial Expression** – congruence
- **Cycles of activation and deactivation**
- **Energy**
- **Presence and authenticity** – Relationships
- **Equanimity**



Teaching Mindfulness



Teaching Mindfulness

- **Various models:**

- **Outside organizations/providers** can teach lessons to K-12 classes (generally 16 lessons taught over 8 or 16 weeks)
 - Ex: M2 Foundation (St. Paul)
- **Individual teachers implement curriculum** in their classrooms, after receiving training
 - Ex: Mindful Schools, .b, MindUp
- **Integrate mindfulness into school routines and transitions**
 - Requires teachers and staff with mindfulness background



Teaching Mindfulness: The Two Most Important Things!



Teaching mindfulness is always grounded in **personal practice** (authenticity)



The mindfulness instructor makes the lessons their own (this will come out of the first one!)

Teaching Mindfulness

- Mindfulness is an **invitation**. Allow students to opt out.
- Mindfulness is not classroom management, and should not be used as a punishment.
 - It's not about *making the classroom calm and quiet*, though that may happen...
- Teachers should be aware of practices that may be difficult for students with a history of **trauma**, and know of available resources



Teaching Mindfulness: Share the purpose with kids

- Mindfulness is teaching a **set of life skills** – an *“owner’s manual for the brain”*
 - A set of **experiments**; a maintenance manual
 - How mindfulness can help them (**attention, self-regulation**)
- We’re checking in with our internal and external experience – becoming **aware** of the activity of the mind, and how we **interact** with the environment.
- We’re learning how to meet our everyday experiences.
- We’re learning how to “be with” an experience, **how to respond instead of reacting**



Teaching Mindfulness

- **Direct instruction** of lessons (15+ minute modules), plus mindful moments integrated through the day or week
- Where does mindfulness fit as a foundational support of what we already do? (SEL programs, anti-bullying programs, conflict-resolution skills, etc.)
- Classroom **routines**:
 - Moment of mindfulness (start, middle, end of period)
 - “Notice how you’re feeling right now.”
 - “Where is your attention right now?”
 - Movement exercises



Mindfulness Meditation vs. Guided Imagery

Mindfulness meditation

is a way of constantly bringing attention to our internal experience; the way the inside of the body feels; and/or noticing thoughts, impressions, sensations, emotions, perceptions and feelings, as fleeting as they may be, as they register on our mind.

Guided imagery

requires less discipline and practice. In essence, you hit the Play button and focus on the voice, the music and the evocative language and images, and it carries you. May help in developing imagination.

Tips to Getting Started



- 1.) **Manage Expectations.** Let kids be kids.
- 2.) **Attempt to eliminate distractions.**
- 3.) **Keep practices short and lighthearted.**
- 4.) **Work on building routines**
- 5.) **Make it an experiment or adventure**
- 6.) **Explain the benefits**
- 7.) **Model it yourself**

To Learn More...

Mindful Schools: <http://mindfulschools.org>

The Greater Good Science Center at UC-Berkeley:
<http://greatergood.berkeley.edu/>

Here is a fun blog on uses of both mindfulness and guided imagery in the classroom. <https://www.edutopia.org/blog/integrating-mindfulness-in-classroom-curriculum-giselle-shardlow>

Guardian Teacher Network Resources:
<http://www.theguardian.com/teacher-network>
<http://mindfulnessinschools.org/>

The Center for Mindfulness at the University of Massachusetts:
<http://www.umassmed.edu/cfm/index.aspx>

Mindful Magazine: <http://mindful.org>

The Mindsight Institute (UCLA): <http://www.drdansiegel.com>

To Learn More...

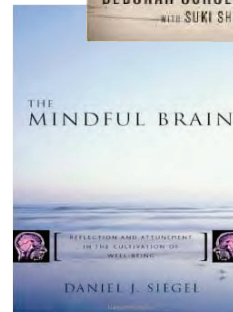
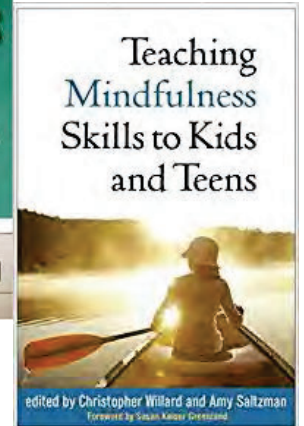
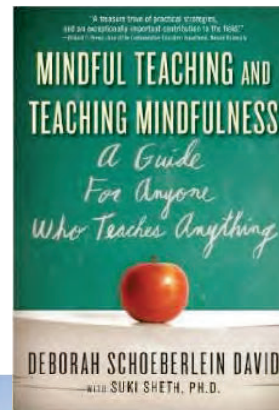
Mindful Teaching and Teaching Mindfulness
by Deborah Schoeberlein David and Suki Sheth

Teaching Mindfulness Skills to Kids and Teens
by Christopher Willard and Amy Saltzman

The Way of Mindful Education by Daniel Rechtschaffen

The Mindful Brain by Dan Siegel

Ultimate Mindfulness Activity Book by Christian Bergstrom



Contact Information

- Susan Elswick- selswick@memphis.edu
- Jesse Johnson- jessej@christchurchmemphis.org