Mindfulness-Based Interventions in Adolescents

St. George’s School
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Guided Exercise

“3 Bells”

Put your hand up when last sound disappears
There is NOTHING NEW
Ecclesiastes 1:9
“Open Mind” “Beginner’s Mind” Non-Judgment Self-compassion

Mindfulness
Time – August 4, 2003

TIME
THE SCIENCE OF MEDITATION
“Before I was married, I had 6 theories about raising children; now I have 6 children and no theories” John Wilmot (1847-1880) Earl of Rochester

Outline
What you will get out of this in 50 minutes

• Didactic and Experiential
• What is Mindfulness? A Primer including Research
• Mindfulness with Youth
  – Depressive Symptoms +/- Pain
  – Stress & Anxiety
  – ADHD
  – Other
• Mindfulness for Teachers
• Discussion
Atlantic Monthly Aug 31, 2015
“When Mindfulness meets the classroom”

What is Mindfulness?
What is Mindfulness?

Secular definition

“Mindfulness is the awareness that emerges through paying attention, on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally, to things as they are”


Being fully present in the here and now
Increased Awareness and Attention
Observing whatever is happening without judgment

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)

- Centuries: Eastern meditation traditions
- 1979: Stress Reduction Clinic, University of Massachusetts Medical School
- 8-week Program
- 2009: Over 240 hospitals and clinics
Mindfulness Myths

Having a “blank” or “empty” mind
Noticing how the mind works

Seeking “bliss”
Dualism vs non-dualism

“Escaping pain”
Instead → embracing and allowing pain

Relaxation exercises
While mindful exercises may be relaxing, this is not the primary goal. Instead, mindfulness aims to establish a greater sense of intentional attention and awareness.

Mindfulness is NOT a Religion

Present in ALL Wisdom Traditions
Mindfulness Core Skills
What we teach in the MBSR / MBCT Course
Online MBSR (free) - PalouseMindfulness.com

1. Body Scan (30 minutes)
2. 3 Minute SOBER Breathing Space (or STOP)
3. 3 Minute SOBER Coping Space
4. Sitting Meditation (30 – 40 minutes)
5. Movement / Walking Meditation
6. Increased Awareness of Everything (Informal Mindfulness)

Informal Mindfulness Practices

• Stepping out of “Automatic Pilot” mode
• Becoming more aware / paying more attention in all moments of daily life
• Walking, Eating, Running, **Driving**
• Listening and speaking – increased engagement in interpersonal interactions
How can Mindfulness be Helpful?

- Helps us to become present (vs Automatic Pilot) including interpersonal relationships
- Change ruminative cognitive patterns
- “Responding” vs. “reacting”
- Cope with stress better (^ Resilience & Grounding)
- Changes our relationship with stress, pain
- Emerging: Neuroplasticity
- **Develops Self-Regulation including Attention

Dukkha
Pali Suffering

Suffering = Pain x Resistance

Often Pain is immutable but suffering may be reduced if we reduce our Resistance
Pain can be physical and/or psychological

Acceptance of the what is…not what we wish it was or it should be
Distinct from Resignation

Evidence for Mindfulness

• 1967 Herbert Benson TM
• 1979 Jon Kabat-Zinn MBSR
• 1988 Jeffrey Schwartz OCD
• 2003 Richard Davidson Left Shift and improved Immunity
• 2005 Sara Lazar Cortical Thickening
• 2005 Lydia Zylowska – Adult ADHD
• 2011 S van der Ord: Children with ADHD
• Dean Ornish – Reversal of Cardiac Plaque, reduction in Prostate Ca
• Teasdale/Segal – MBCT & Prevention of Depressive Relapse
• Relationships, ADHD, Aggression
• Elissa Eppel - longer Telomeres 2011
• Holzel 2011 – increased grey matter in L Hippocampus (cf decrease with MJ)
• NEED more RCT’s (MacKay 2016)
MBSR: Brain Function
Greater left-sided activation (EEG)

[Image of bar chart showing comparison between groups]

Davidson R. Psychosomatic Medicine. 2003;65:564

MBSR: Immune Function
Influenza titer response to vaccine

[Image of bar chart showing comparison between groups]

Davidson R. Psychosomatic Medicine. 2003;65:564
MBSR: Brain Structure

Increased grey matter in left hippocampus

Depression: MBCT vs. SSRI

- Depressive Relapse
- RCT, n = 160
  - Meds
  - MBCT
  - Placebo

Segal ZV. Arch Gen Psychiatry. 2010(67):1256
Therapeutic MBI’s
The research so far
(MacKay 2016) (Atlantic Monthly)

• MBSR, MBCT, MBRP, ACT, MARS, etc
• Most useful for non-clinical populations
• Some clinical groups benefit:
  – Stress and Anxiety
  – Pain Syndromes
  – Depressive Relapse

• …we see what we want to see (Researcher Bias)
• More RCT’s and evidence base
• Some Contraindications: Psychosis, Trauma,

Guided Exercise

Calligraphy by Thich Nhat Hanh
Mindfulness for Youth
An Emerging Field

Adolescent Brain Development

Geidd J. [Link](http://www.dana.org/printerfriendly.aspx?id=19620)
Mindfulness and Adolescent Development

**Self-Regulation**

- Promote development of Self-Regulation including emotional (Mood and Anxiety), behavioral, & cognitive/attention (ADHD) regulation?
- Promote development of resilience pathways?
- Promote self compassion and kindness to others
- Promote empathy
- Reduce health risk behaviors?
- Provide lifelong skills?

Mindfulness with Children & Adolescents: Clinical Trials

- Preliminary evidence for benefits:
  - Increased attention (ADHD) / memory
  - Blood pressure, Sleep
  - Mood: Anxiety, Depression, PTSD
  - Positive Affect
  - Substance abuse
  - Family Functioning
- Research still in early stages

Harnett PH. Child and Adolesc Mental Health. (Published online 14 January 2012)
Greenberg. Child Dev Persp. 2011. ePub
Adapting Mindfulness Teaching for Youth

- Cognitive Development: Concrete language
- Attention: Shorter Practices
- Examples: Relevant
- Social environment: Teen-friendly, Food, Flexibility

BC Children’s Hospital: MARS-A
Collaboration between Psychiatry and Pediatrics

- “Mindful Awareness and Resilience Skills for Adolescents”
- Adapted from MBSR, MBCT, MBSR-T
- Adolescents age 15-19 yo with symptoms of significant distress (depression, anxiety, +/- chronic illness, chronic pain)
- 8-week group mindfulness training
- Weekly sessions + half-day (weekend)
- Skills training course: not “therapy”
MARS–A Pilot Group #1

MARS-A: Topics

- Psychoeducation: Stress, Depression, Health
- Formal Mindfulness Practice
- Informal Mindfulness Practice
- Mindfulness practices to handle distress:
  - Pain (Emotional and Physical)
  - Thoughts
  - Emotions
- “Suffering = Pain x Resistance”
- Developing a daily practice
Mindful Stretch

Results of MARS-A so far (N= 84)  
Before, After, 6 months

CES-DC  (Center for Epidemiological Studies – Depression Scale for Children)
Kesler 10  (Distress)
→ significant improvement

Significant improvement in
Quality of Life PANAS  (Positive and Improvement Negative Affect Scale)
& Life Satisfaction Scale
MARS-ADHD for Parents of Children with ADHD (Locke, Murray, Mah)

- Skill-Based Parenting Groups improve outcomes for Children with ADHD
- Parenting Black Belt
- Research Question?
  - Will adding a Mindfulness component prior to such group training improve outcomes even more?
  - Parenting 2nd degree Black Belt?

- MARS- Parents of Children with ADHD
  Results so far  N = 96
- Marked decrease in Reactivity *
- Improved Executive Functioning (using BRIEF)

- Mindfulness (using MAAS) was the same between both groups

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Mindfulness for Teachers
“How to best take care of yourself”

Mindfulness in Education

- Cognitive & attention
- Social skills
- Emotional recognition & regulation
- Teachers: Self-efficacy, Classroom Management

You become the mindfulness in the classroom

- MindUP (Grade 4-7), SMART (Vancouver) perspective
taking, empathy, kindness, complex problem solving skills
- Mindful Schools
- Atlantic Monthly August 31, 2015

Meklejohn J et al. Mindfulness. Integrating mindfulness training into K-12 education: Fostering the resilience of teachers and students. (Pub online 14 March 2012)
“How to best take care of yourself”
...you will be better able to care for others

- SLEEP is #1
- Nutrition (Plant based, whole foods)
- Exercise (Walking is exercise)
- Fun and Recreation
- Social connection (with engaged, mindful communication)
- Mindfulness (Formal and Informal)
- Get a Family Doctor

3 Minute SOBER Coping Space

**Stressful Event**

- Stop
- Observe
- Breathe
- Expand
- Respond

Better than React

Stop

Stressful Event

Stop

Body sensations.

Emotions

Thoughts

Ruminative cycle

Observe

Attention to sensations of

Breath at specific focal pt

Breathe

Expand

Body Scan

Emotions OK

Respond

Continue with your day
STOP
short version of 3 Minute Breathing Space 
b Briefly step into “being mode”

• S Stop
• T Take 3 Mindful Breaths
• O Observe
• P Proceed

• Whenever you “hear a bell” – eg walking by mirror/window, door closing, phone rings, riding elevator, car honking etc)

Mindful Driving
Mindful Eating
One meal per week:
Have everyone try putting utensils down until you have swallowed what is in your mouth

Engaged Mindfulness

- Mindful Communication
  - Make eye contact
  - Intentionally listen
  - Be present and aware

- Enhances relationships with everyone – kids, partners, others
Mindfulness Skills
More realistic for busy teachers?

- STOP (Stop, Take 3 Mindful Breaths, Observe, Proceed)
- SOBER Coping Space → For
- Belly Breathing → Acute
- Walking → Distress
- 20 Mindful Breaths with morning coffee
- Stretch Breaks / Yoga
- “Listening” meditation → Put all of you present awareness on sounds
- Engaged Mindfulness
- Mindful Eating
- Mindful Driving

Mindfulness APPS

HeadSpace
Whil
Insight Timer
Mindshift

Stop, Breathe, Think

Mindshift Small steps. Big changes.
Mindfulness Resources

Books: (Banyan Books – they have everything)
“Wherever you go, there you are” Jon Kabat-Zinn
“The Mindful Brain” Daniel Siegel
“The Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction Workbook”


Retreats: “Westcoast Dharma” Vancouver
“Spirit Rock Meditation Centre” San Francisco
Annual Teacher’s Retreat

MBSR BC Dr. Adrianne Ross

Free websites eg UCLA http://marc.ucla.edu/
Online MBSR (free) - PalouseMindfulness.com
Kelty Resource Center www.keltymentalhealth.ca
MARS Dropbox

MARS dropbox with audio and text of Mindfulness meditations.htm

It’s not what you planned
but this is your life
You’re still here
Listen
Something new is coming.

-Jack Kornfield
Questions & Discussion

Guided Exercise

Calligraphy by Thich Nhat Hanh
Mindful Stretch

LOCATION: Mental Health Building, 3rd floor, Room P3-302
HOURS: Monday-Friday, 9:30am-5pm
PHONE: 604-875-2084
TOLL FREE: 1-800-665-1822
EMAIL: keltycentre@bcmhs.bc.ca
WEBSITE: www.keltymentalhealth.ca

Welcome to drop in, email or phone us
Walking Meditation

- Go outside, go slowly, count 50 steps
- Focus on all of the muscles involved in each step, the lifting of the legs and planting of the feet
- Be careful, try and put all of your attention on this activity → return and take a break

Mindful Movement
Yoga by Richard Hittleman
CBT (Change Based) Peter McLean and Jack Rachman
Versus MBCT (Acceptance Based)

• “The Mindful Way Through Depression”
  – Williams, Segal, Teasdale, Kabat-Zinn
• Bringing present moment awareness to thoughts just as they are without judgment or attempt to change the thought(s)
• “Stepping back” and observing the thoughts and noticing what else is happening too – body sensations?, emotions?
  → helps create a wider field of awareness and possibility of “wiser response”
• Response likely to involve CBT intervention (or not)

Power Nap

• Set Timer (phone, watch) for 2 – 10 minutes MAX!
• Sit with head supported against wall or you may lie down
• Close eyes → “think Black” (Forehead, between eyes) and yawn if you like
• Relax  -  there is no need to try and sleep
• When alarm sounds → GET UP !!