

Mindfulness

As a protective factor

Brienne Meaghers-Hays, LMHP

About the Presenter

- Began using Mindfulness at the age of 7
- Utilized Imagery and Mindfulness techniques to recovery from injury
- Studied with Jerry Braza, Ph.D. while at Western Oregon University
- Attended Dialectical Behavior Therapy trainings
- Utilizes Mindfulness techniques in many practice settings focusing on those with impulse control and unmanaged distress tolerance.

What is Mindfulness?

- “Mindfulness is the practice of becoming fully aware of each moment and one’s experience of that moment.” Dr. Braza
- a mental state achieved by focusing one's awareness on the present moment, while calmly acknowledging and accepting one's feelings, thoughts, and bodily sensations, used as a therapeutic technique. – Oxford Dictionaries
- Mindfulness is slowing down your mind, letting go of the chaos around you and focusing on the here and now, just this moment. Paying attention on purpose and non-judgmentally.

Is Mindfulness a Religion?

- Mindfulness is rooted in Buddhism and has been practiced for thousands of years in Buddhist Cultures.
- Mindfulness practice can be found in most of the world religions and is often referred to as “Meditation.”
- Mindfulness is no more a religion than prayer is.
- Mindfulness techniques are used all around us!
 - Lamaze, Sports Psychology, Test Anxiety, preparing for a Business meeting or presentation, Musicians, Doctors, and even dog trainers use Mindfulness!

Mindfulness as Explained by Children



Current Mindfulness Practice with Kids

- Safe Seat
- Time Out
- Deep Breaths
- Kids are very good about focusing on one thing in the moment.
 - Coloring, Learning a new skill, Observing things around themselves, etc.

Why is Mindfulness needed in Adolescents?

- Adolescence is a time of major cognitive advances and gains in physical strength and vitality, but this period of development is also distinguished by the onset of many physical, behavioral, and mental health problems that are preventable and may persist into adulthood, interfering with educational achievement and work productivity in long-lasting ways. — Broderick and Jennings
- The Human Brain is not fully developed until age 25!
- Our demands on teens looks much higher today they have been in the past
 - Do more, think more, try more, multi-task more! Stop complaining and do it!

What are the Challenges Adolescents face?

- disengagement from school, alienation from parents,
- body image self-consciousness, susceptibility to peer influence,
- pressure to engage in sexual activity and romantic relationships,
- participation in antisocial or risky behaviors,
- and heavy exposure to media that may mold behavioral expectations at odds with the values of their families and communities.
- High levels of school-related stress associated with homework, tests, expectations for achievement, and interactions with teachers.

Brain Changes in Adolescents

- increased limbic reactivity (sensitivity to threat), exaggerated startle reflex (a measure of fear processing), and stronger interference effects from emotional stimuli on task completion during adolescence.
- changes in the frontal and parietal cortices, the site of executive functions—higher-order cognitive and socioemotional processes
- fine tuning the areas that play a role in judgment, impulse control, planning, and emotion regulation
- Experience dependent learning is needed to sculpt the brain

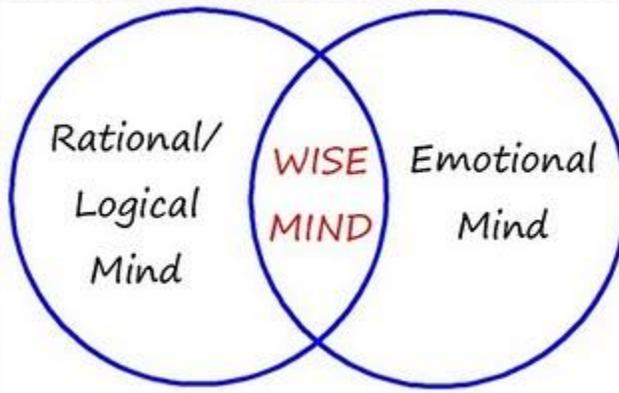
Teens Explain Mindfulness



How will Mindfulness Help?

- If we can assist in slowing down the youthful mind, they are less likely to be reactive to their emotional mind, decrease impulsivity, demonstrate better problem solving, and are able to engage their wisemind which allows for better relationships and healthier lives in general.
- Research demonstrates that impulsivity and stress increases substance use in young adults. Mindfulness moderates the relationship between impulsivity, emotional stress, and substance use.

Wisemind?



How do we achieve Wisemind? (How do we achieve Mindfulness?)

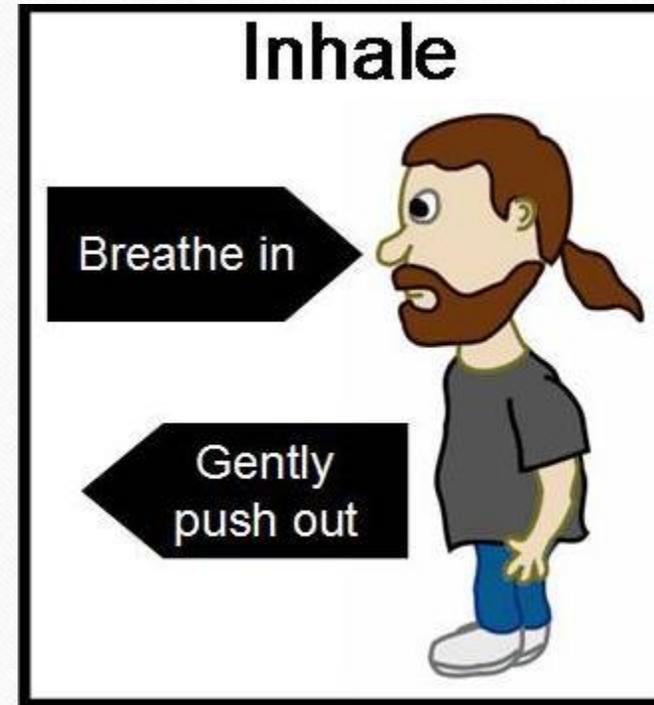
- What skills: Observe, Describe, and Participate
- How skills: Non-judgmentally, One Mindfully, and Effectively



Mindfulness Exercises

Just Breathe!

- ✓ Breathe in through your nose to the count of four.
- ✓ Hold the breath for four.
- ✓ Breathe out through your mouth for four.
 - ✓ Repeat!



In this Moment

Close your eyes

What do you hear?

What do you smell?

What do you taste?

What do you feel?



Smile Exercise

Sit with both feet on the ground, arms to your side, and eyes closed.

Slowly begin to smile. Feel your cheeks expand. Feel your lips stretch over your teeth.

Notice the way your face stretches.

If your mind begins to wander, bring your focus back to your smile.



Play Dough Mindfulness

Remove the play dough from the container.

Look at the play dough you have in your hand.
Just notice the urge to squeeze it.

Describe the temperature of the play dough.

Describe the color.

Describe the shape as you turn it in your hand.

Smell it, Don't judge it.

Press one finger into the dough, what is left
behind?

Repeat!



Eat Mindfully

Take a piece of chocolate from the package.

Place the chocolate in your mouth, don't bite it, just let it melt.

Be mindful of the taste, texture, and observe the urge to bite it.



Just Listen!

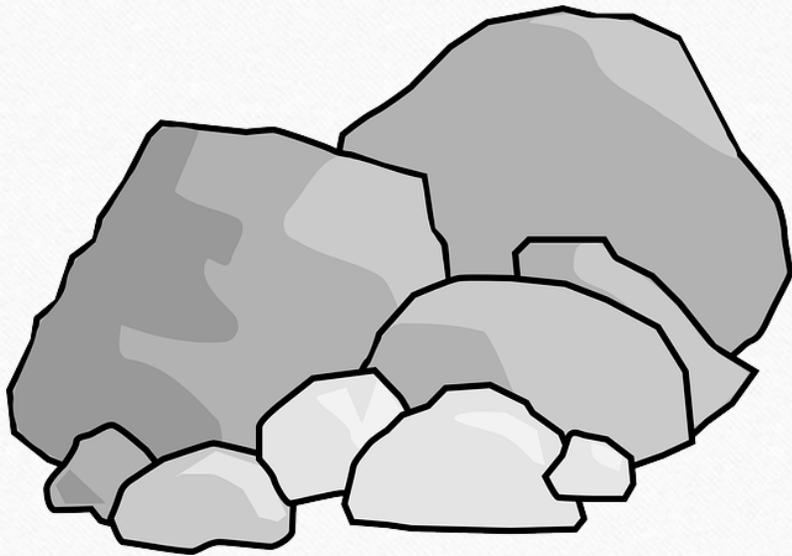
Listen to this music for three minutes.
Listen to each sound, to the change in tone.
Listen to the change in pitch and volume.

Just listen!

How does the music make you feel?
What emotions is the music bringing out in
you?
Focus on each note and each sensation they
bring.



Rocks and Ribbons



Rocks and Ribbons

- Represent textile and self soothing mindfulness
- Feel the texture as you run the ribbon through your fingers. Describe the sensation as you rub the ribbon on your face. Describe what you see, feel, smell, hear, and taste.
- Feel the weight of the rock in your hand. Feel the texture in your fingers. Describe it, put words on the experience.

Mindful Bell

Sit in a comfortable position with your eyes closed.

With each gong of the bell breath in and out in a calm and gentle manner.

Noticing with each breath out you feel more relaxed, more calm, more alert like a guard at the palace gates.



Brienne Meaghers-Hays, LMHP

Lighthousecounseling.Brienne@gmail.com

Resources and References

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- <http://www.mbaproject.org/research/>
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- <https://youtu.be/kk7IBwuhXWM>
- <http://www.mindful.org/news/kindergarteners-talk-about-mindfulness-in-just-breathe-short->
- [www.dbtcentermi.org/uploads/**Mindfulness_Exercises.doc**](http://www.dbtcentermi.org/uploads/Mindfulness_Exercises.doc)
- DBT Skills Training Manual, 1st Edition by Marsha Linehan, Ph.D.
- Moment by Moment: The Art and Practice of Mindfulness by Jerry Braza, Ph.D.
- The Mindful Teen: Powerful Skills to Help You Handle Stress One Moment at a Time by Dzung X. Vo, M.D.