

Mindfulness



Mind Full, or Mindful?

Mindfulness is purposeful, non-judgmental attention to oneself. It is being present in the moment. It is taking the time to check in with oneself, pause, breathe and focus internally. Mindfulness will not eliminate life's worries or pressures, but it can help us respond to them in a calmer manner that benefits our heart, head and body. Mindfulness helps us recognize and step away from habitual, often unconscious, negative reactions to everyday events.

To achieve a degree of mindfulness one should practise regularly but it does not have to take up a lot of time.



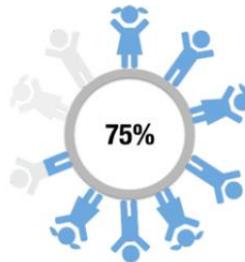
Benefits of Mindfulness

A growing body of research indicates that mindfulness can help children with emotional regulation, learning and physical health (Weare, 2012).

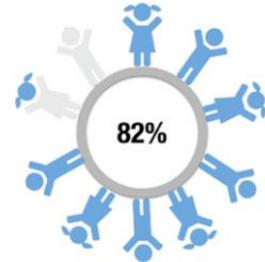
- 250 primary aged children participated in daily mindfulness practice for 4 weeks as part of the Mindfulness in Schools Project (2015). It was found that:



90% of children improved their pro-social behavior



75% improved planning and organizational skills



82% of children became more optimistic

- There is a significant positive impact on children's level of resilience and confidence (Huppert & Johnson, 2010).
- It enhances focus in children, including those with ADHD (Zhang et al., 2016).
- It reduces attention problems in class (Crescentini, Capurso, Furlan, & Fabbro, 2016).
- It mitigates the effects of bullying (Zhou et al., 2016).
- It decreases anxiety and increases academic performance in children (Beauchemin, Hutchins & Patterson 2008).

History of Mindfulness

It has its origins in contemplative practices that go back thousands of years.

Virtually every spiritual tradition has practices for mindful contemplation and silence, and direct awareness of experience, such as prayer and meditation.

Mindfulness also had roots in Philosophy.



Emotions Diary

Daily emotional check-ins have been shown to help children and adults track their feelings, which can help them to effectively regulate their emotions.



Zones of Regulation

The Zones of Regulation is a framework to foster self-regulation and emotional control in the classroom. It provides strategies to help children become more aware of their emotions, improves their control and their ability to problem solve conflicts.

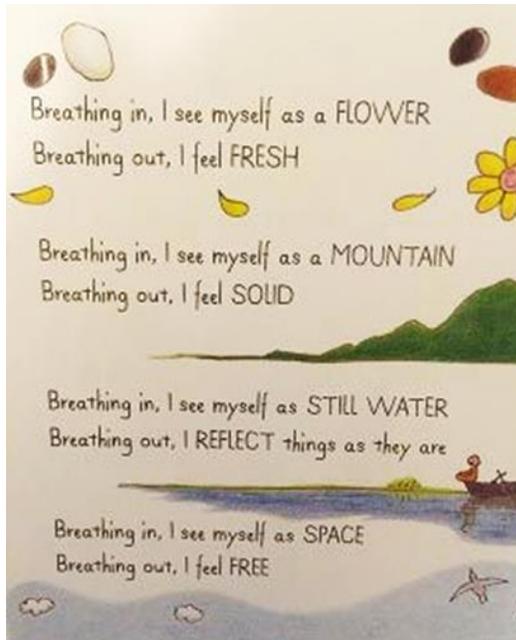
LIFE IS 10% WHAT HAPPENS TO US AND 90% HOW WE REACT TO IT.

The ZONES of Regulation®

BLUE ZONE	GREEN ZONE	YELLOW ZONE	RED ZONE
			
Sad Sick Tired Bored Moving Slowly	Happy Calm Feeling Okay Focused Ready to Learn	Frustrated Worried Silly/Wiggly Excited Loss of Some Control	Mad/Angry Terrified Yelling/Hitting Elated Out of Control

Breathing Exercises

Breathing exercises provide a powerful practice for enhancing health and wellbeing. They can energize, reduce stress and anxiety, and calm the mind and body.



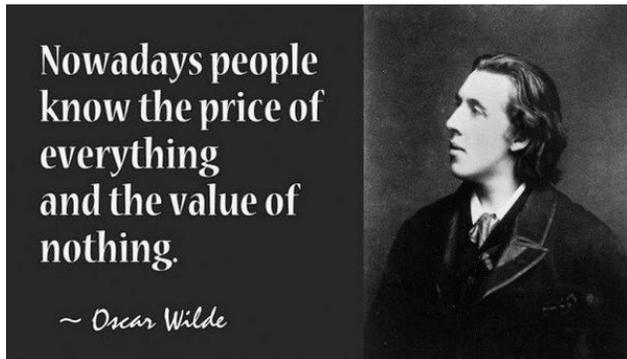
Acts of Kindness

Kindness begets kindness, improves scores of happiness and instills a sense of life-satisfaction in children and adults (Post, 2007).

Encouraging children to notice and reflect on all the kind acts they experience each day, and those they have done for others improves happiness.



Importance of Thankfulness



"Be thankful for what you have; you'll end up having more. If you concentrate on what you don't have, you will never, ever have enough." Oprah Winfrey

Daily practice of thankfulness increases happiness, empathy and resilience in a crisis (Emmons, 2014; Fredrickson, 2013).

What are you thankful for in this moment?

Daily Intention



Start each day with an **Intention**.

Focus on how we are feeling in the moment, and decide how we intend to feel throughout the day.

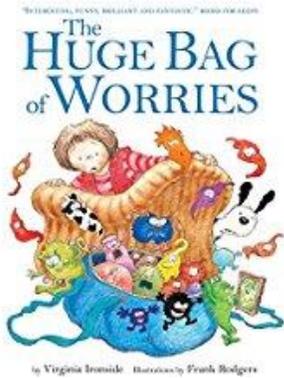
Deep breathe in and out: "I will feel calm and positive today."

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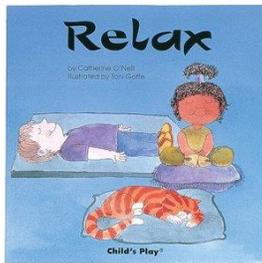
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Murray (2012) found that Daily Intentions when practised every day for as little as 2 weeks significantly improved emotional regulation in 62 8 - 10 year old boys.

Useful Resources



The Huge Bag of Worries – Virginia Ironside



Relax – Catherine O'Neil

<https://www.headspace.com/kids>

<http://annakaharris.com/mindfulness-for-children/>

Relaxing music:

Grieg – Morning from Peer Gynt

Rodrigo – Slow movement of the Guitar Concerto

Mozart – Slow movement of the Piano Concerto No 21

Energising music:

Bach – Cello Suite No 1 in G 3rd movement Courante

Bach – Brandenburg Concerto No 3

R.E.M. – Shiny Happy People