Mindful Parenting

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WELCOME TO MINDFUL PARENTING

• How many people are parents of Elementary Students- K-5?
• Parents of Middle School Students?
• Parents of High School Students?
• Parents of College Students?
• Teachers?
• Administrators?
• How many people know what mindfulness is?
• How many people practice mindfulness?
What Lead Me to Mindfulness...

• My story...
• 2014 Re- Joined Weight Watchers
• Reflected on the example I wanted to be for my own kids
What is Mindfulness?

“Paying attention, on purpose in the present moment, non-judgmentally

-Jon Kabat-Zinn

Paying attention to anything in our immediate experience through our sense doors.

Hearing, seeing, feeling, touching, tasting. Also, paying attention to our 'inner world'
30 Years of Research Suggest.

- Decreased depression, anxiety, stress
- Improved sleep (reduced insomnia)
- Increased physical and mental ease and well-being
- Improved ability to self-regulate
- Improved focus
Benefits of Mindfulness Practice

• Supports immune function
• Cognitive development
• Attention skills
• Emotional regulation
• Promotes Happiness
• Increases Empathy
• Inner Resilience
• Non-judgmental awareness
What Mindfulness is NOT...

- Mindfulness is not a religion, nor does it promote any kind of religion.
- Mindfulness is not the absence of thought.
- Mindfulness is not about being complacent.
When we experience stress (whether it’s a missing homework assignment or a life/death situation), the amygdala gets large. When this happens, the body goes into fight, fright, or freeze mode. With mindful breathing, the amygdala shrinks and the prefrontal cortex (executive functions) can do their job.

Anderson Cooper - Mindfulness
How Mindfulness Can Help Us and Our Kids...

Just Breathe
The shocking stats of what our kids are facing...

- 1/3 to 1/2 of US adolescents have engaged in some type of self-injury.
- Cutting and burning are the most common types of non-suicidal self-injury.
- 70% of teens engaging in self-injury behavior have made at least one suicide attempt. 55% had made multiple suicide attempts.
- **Reasons for Teen Cutting and Self-injury**
  - 55% of self-injurers said, “I wanted to get my mind off my problems”.
  - 45% said, “It helped me to release tension or stress and relax”.


YOU CAN’T STOP THE WAVES BUT YOU CAN LEARN TO SURF
MINDFUL PARENTING

• What's your Parenting Style Questionnaire

• If you could have dinner with anyone, who would it be?
We learn that to parent mindfully, we need to be mindful ourselves. There is no way around it. The process of understanding what mindfulness is, begins with first hand experience.

*You can't pour from an empty cup." (WW- Me Time)

- Mindful Listening- Bell
CALM.COM

Download the app on your Android or Apple device
• Consider the wrapped chocolate
  Does the wrapper make a sound? What color is it? What does it say? Where did it come from?
• Open the chocolate slowly
• Do you feel a sense of anticipation or an urge to immediately put the chocolate in your mouth? What physical sensations do you have? What emotions are you feeling? Just note them...
• Look at the chocolate
• Consider its texture, color, weight...
• Smell the chocolate- does the smell trigger any other senses?
• Where do you feel your sense of smell?
• Place the chocolate in your mouth, but DO NOT EAT!!
• How does it feel as it melts?
• Where in your mouth can you taste it?
  • What is the consistency?
• What is happening with your mouth, teeth, tongue, lips as it melts?
  • Move the chocolate around your mouth.
    • Does the area of taste change?
    • Does the taste itself change?
  • What is happening to the chocolate?
    • How do you feel?
• Swallow the chocolate, focusing on the sensation.
  • Is there a lingering taste?
• How do you feel physically and emotionally?
• Take a little while to consider the experience...
Group Discussion

How was this different from your general chocolate-eating experiences?


Were you more aware of your emotions during the exercise?

Would this change your future experience of eating chocolate?
How Can You Make Family Dinner More Mindful?

- Commit to sitting down, at the table, with your family as often as you can.
- Go around the table and ask each member what the "High" and "Low" of their day was. Just listen, don't judge.
- Ask each family member to say one thing they like about another family member.
- No devices at the table, and that includes Mom and Dad!
- EAT MINDFULLY and discuss what it is like to do so with your family.
- [www.skinnytaste.com](http://www.skinnytaste.com), planning ahead
Most recent neuroscience research tells us that the brain doesn’t really do tasks simultaneously, as we thought (hoped) it might. In fact, we just switch tasks quickly. Each time we move from hearing music to writing a text or talking to someone, there is a stop/start process that goes on in the brain. Are you fully present when interacting with your children?

- Are you a slave to the dings, pops, and chimes of your device?
- Do you check Facebook when your child is talking to you?
- Do you text and drive? Do you quickly check emails, texts, FaceBook posts while driving, while at a stop light? Our kids are watching and we are setting the example for what they will do when they are drivers.

The Myth of Multitasking
Kids can only be as calm as we are.

Mirror-neurons- if we are 'reacting' or stressed, so are they. Mostly because they are worried about why we are reacting. Example from "Teach, Breathe, Learn"

Separate the stimulus (bad grade, phone call from principal, left their Agenda at school AGAIN) with a breath then you are in control of the response. Doing so makes it so you can observe your emotion and create a response, not a reaction. Ask your child what do they need from you at this moment-advice, an ear, etc?

Instrument example

Let's try this breathing exercise to help illustrate how being mindful can facilitate in this parenting situation.

Close your eyes, take 3 deep breaths.

On the next inhale, bring your awareness to the space between the inhale and the exhale.

Notice how it lengthens the breath. Focus on how the breath turns from an inhale to an exhale. It’s a strategy that helps to respond instead of react.

Sleepy’s Story.
PERSON 1: I CAN’T CONTROL MYSELF RIGHT NOW. I’M TRYING MY BEST.
PERSON 2: IT’S UNDERSTANDBLY SO, BUDDY.
PERSON 1: I’M EMOTIONAL.
PERSON 2: I HEAR YA.
PERSON 1: I’M AN EMOTIONAL WRECK.
PERSON 2: WELL, IT’S ONLY GOING TO GET WORSE. JUST CONTINUE TO BREATHE. THAT’S ALL YOU CAN DO, BUDDY. IT’S ONLY GONNA GET WORSE.
PERSON 1: I’M IN A GLASS CASE OF EMOTION RIGHT NOW.
PERSON 2: WAIT UNTIL THE 9TH WITH THIS THREE-RUN LEAD.
CELEBRITIES WHO PRACTICE MINDFULNESS

Oprah!  Kobe Bryant

The NY KNICKS  Derek Jeter  Jerry Seinfeld
To Learn More, Check Out these Mindfulness Links/Apps/Books

- Smiling Mind
- Calm App
- Happify
- Headspace
- MindfulSchools
Mrs. Anderson's Class

When we practice mindfulness ourselves, it impacts the children in our lives in amazing ways!

Don't just look, observe.
Don't just swallow, taste.
Don't just sleep, dream.
Don't just think, feel.
Don't just exist, live.
After attending this evening’s workshop, jot down what you can do to be a more mindful parent.