

An Interactive Qualifying Project Report

submitted to the Faculty

of the

WORCESTER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

Degree of Bachelor of Science

by

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge and extend my deepest appreciation for the following people who made the completion of this Interactive Qualifying Project possible:

- Professor Helen Vassallo for her constant support and guidance throughout the project.
- The President and Founder of Ivy Child International, Rose Pavlov, and Chief Development Officer, Rob Perella for their dedication, facilitation, and investment into this project.
- Dr. Jeanine Skorinko for her time and data analysis expertise.
- Jim Monoco for his assistance with the poster development.
- Brittany Jones for her constant support throughout this project.
- Laura Hanlan for her citation expertise.
- Samantha Ridgeway and Matthew Barry for their knowledge regarding effective mindfulness practices.

ABSTRACT

The Founder and President of Ivy Child International, Rose Pavlov and author, Autumn Silke developed and implemented a customized 8-week Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) curriculum to provide techniques and strategies for an inner-city adolescent population to cope with stress. Students and teachers were given pre, mid, and post assessments to evaluate the effectiveness of the program. The results indicate a significant reduction in disciplinary action taken as well as a reduction in stress reported by both students and teachers.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	1
ABSTRACT.....	2
INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT.....	4
MATERIALS AND METHODS.....	6
RESULTS.....	8
Correlational Analyses.....	13
Qualitative Results.....	13
DISCUSSION.....	14
History of Mindfulness Concepts.....	14
Current Research.....	16
Target Populations.....	16
Current Study.....	19
Background Research.....	21
Further Analysis of Results.....	23
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY.....	25
REFERENCES.....	27
APPENDIX.....	39
Appendix I: Pre Student Assessment.....	39
Appendix II: Pre Teacher Assessment.....	43
Appendix III: Mid Student Assessment.....	46
Appendix IV: Mid Teacher Assessment.....	51
Appendix V: Mid Teacher Assessment Summary.....	55
Appendix VI: Post Student Assessment.....	57
Appendix VII: Post Teacher Assessment.....	62
Appendix VIII: Post Teacher Assessment Summary.....	66
Appendix IX: Pre Student Assessment Summary Chart.....	68
Appendix X: Mid Student Assessment Summary Chart.....	70
Appendix XI: Post Student Assessment Summary Chart.....	72
Appendix XII: Program Notes/Structure of Exercises.....	74
Appendix XIII: Curriculum.....	76

INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

Individuals experience varying degrees of acute and chronic stress throughout their lives. Stress can lead to physical, emotional, and mental fatigue. This Interactive Qualifying Project focuses on the ability of urban youth, specifically inner-city high school students, to constructively cope with stress. Stress is defined as people's "response to their environment and interactions that are perceived as straining or exceeding their adaptive capacities and threatening their well-being" (Farlex, 2012). Studies indicate that urban youth are at a high risk of witnessing violence and, as a potential result, may be susceptible to stress, specifically, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, social problems, restlessness, and anxiety (Bruce & Farrell, 2010; Youngstrom, Weist & Albus, 2003). "In a representative study showing the involvement or exposure to violence, 31% of urban sixth grade boys and 14% of girls had had someone threaten to kill them; 42% of boys and 30% of girls had seen someone shot; and nearly all had seen others beaten up, had witnessed arrests, or had heard gunfire, with frequencies ranging from 87 to 96%" (Youngstrom, Weist & Albus, 2003). Furthermore, urban youth may be exposed to abuse, neglect, poverty, large family size, low-status parental occupations, and an absence of one parent. Accordingly, these factors could lead to an increase in stress among inner-city youths (Weist, Freedman, Pastewitz, Proescher & Flaherty, 1995).

Research correlates stress to obesity, hypertension, and various diseases including cardiovascular diseases (Varvogli & Darviri, 2011). When a person perceives something as stressful the sympathetic nervous system is activated and stress hormones such as cortisol are released. High levels of cortisol and sustained stress can have an adverse effect on brain function, specifically damaging the hippocampus. The hippocampus is thought to play an important role in emotion,

memory, and learning ("The Franklin Institute," 2004). High levels of cortisol also weaken the immune system, which can lead to physical symptoms such as colds and muscle soreness (Susanne, 2011). Stress not only leads to negative physiological changes but also potential changes in emotion and behavior ("The American Institute,"). For example, stress can lead to an increase in irritability, frustration, worry, and/or lack of concentration ("Stress management health," 2011).

Given that stress can have a negative impact on physiological and emotional levels, the author, partnering with Rose Pavlov, the founder and president of Ivy Child International and a cross-cultural positive child specialist, has developed a customized eight-week Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) curriculum to provide techniques and strategies for the inner-city adolescent population to cope with stress. Mindfulness works to enhance one's attention and awareness of the present moment.

A body of literature supports the effectiveness of mindfulness based techniques specifically in reducing anxiety/ anxiety disorders (Miller, Fletcher & Kabat-Zinn, 1995), relapses and recurrences of depression (Williams, Russell & Russel, 2008), chronic pain (Kabat-Zinn, Lipworth & Burney, 1984), distress (Rosenzweig, Reibel, Greeson, Brainard & Hojat, 2009), and decreasing frequency and severity of binge eating episodes (Kristeller & Hallett, 1999), emotion regulation and expression (Robins, Keng, Ekblad & Brantley, 2012) and well-being (Reibel, Greeson, Brainard & Rosenzweig, 2001). MBSR has been found to improve sleeping patterns, attention, and self-awareness (Varvogli & Darviri, 2011).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The eight week program was officially launched January 3rd and was concluded February 28th at Spirit of Knowledge Charter School in Worcester, Massachusetts. The program ran every Monday and Thursday and each session lasted a duration of two hours. The exercises each week were structured around a different theme, which included: yoga, mindfulness eating, physical exercise, mindfulness meditation, art exercises, acceptance/perceptions, nature, and dance/rhythm and music.

Each session began and ended with journaling. The students were given guided questions and the freedom to use their journals to write whatever feelings, thoughts, or anything they experienced. The students were given a detailed lecture on stress and MBSR to begin the program. They were also told the value and application of the various exercises as each session included formal or group exercises under the given weeks theme. The students were encouraged to practice and utilize the stress reduction techniques taught in their daily activities outside the program as well.

In order for the author to gauge the effectiveness of the pilot program a pre, mid, and post assessment was administered to the 20 participants (11 Females; 9 Males) ranging 14-15 years old and to two teachers to measure the reported levels of stress. The assessment consisted of at least six questions that were universal from the pre, mid and post assessment given to both the students and teachers. The questions were modified from the Perceived Stress Scale and the Depression Anxiety Stress Scales. The author chose to use a five point scale to see more detailed changes throughout the assessment periods. In addition to the basic demographic information,

the author also asked the students questions such as “Approximately how many minutes a day did you spend outside of class time practicing mindfulness meditation and other exercises within the program?” (See Appendix I,II, and III for pre, mid, and post assessment). To identify ways to improve the program, a separate six question questionnaire (See Appendix) was given to the teachers asking questions such as “What have you found to be helpful and/or beneficial to the students from this Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction program?”

RESULTS

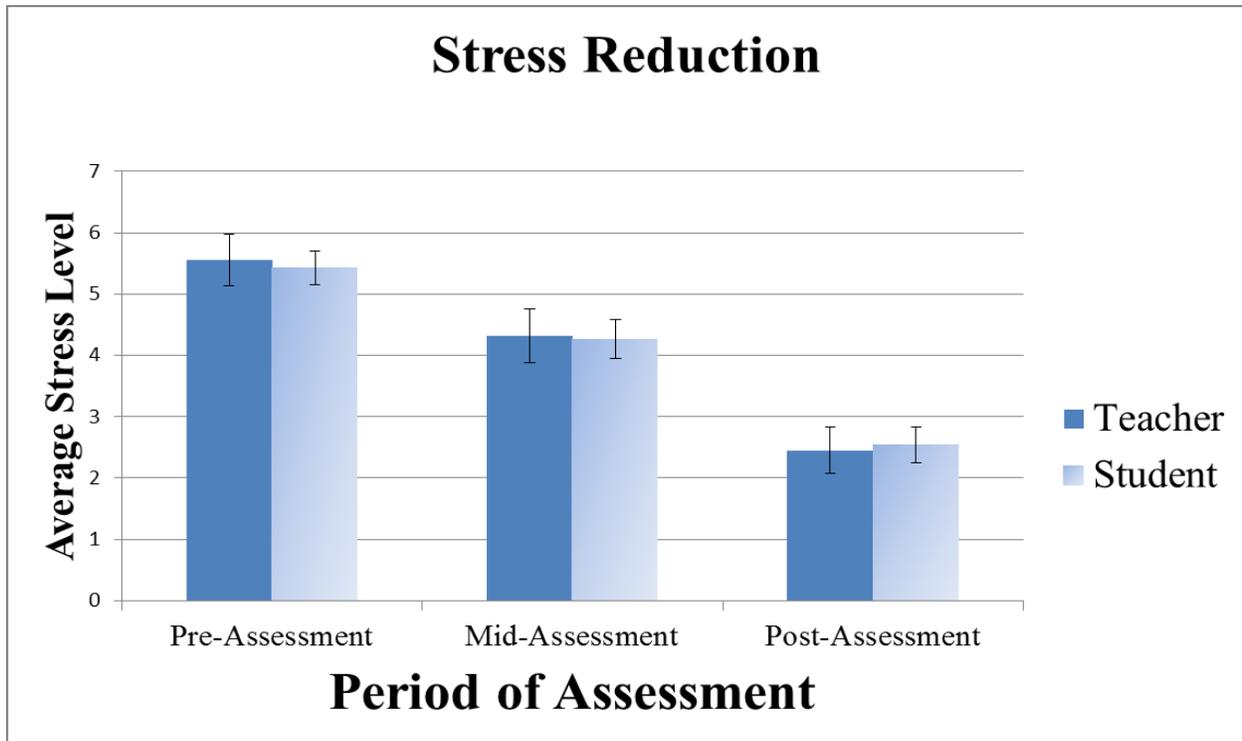


Figure 1: Reduction in level of stress reported throughout the program

The author conducted a repeated measures anova to examine whether there were reductions in stress felt by students and stress observed by teachers. There was a significant effect of time spent in the program and on stress levels, $F(1, 39) = 255.53, p < .001, \eta^2 = .87$. No significant interaction between Student's Self-Report and Teacher's Observation ($F(1, 39) = .31, p = .58, \eta^2 = .01$) was observed.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for the Pre, Mid and Post Assessment**Descriptive Statistics**

Assessments	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pre-Teacher	20	5.5500	1.85915
Mid-Teacher	20	4.3167	1.96304
Post-Teacher	20	2.4500	1.68681
Pre-Student	20	5.4317	1.19568
Mid-Student	20	4.2667	1.36626
Post-Student	20	2.5417	1.29763

As shown in Table 1, stress decreased from the pre-teacher assessment ($\mu=5.55$, $SD=1.89$) to the post-teacher assessment ($\mu=2.45$, $SD=1.68$). Similarly, the pre-student assessment ($\mu=5.43$, $SD=1.19$) to the post-teacher assessment ($\mu=2.54$, $SD=1.68$) showed a significant reduction in the reported level of stress.

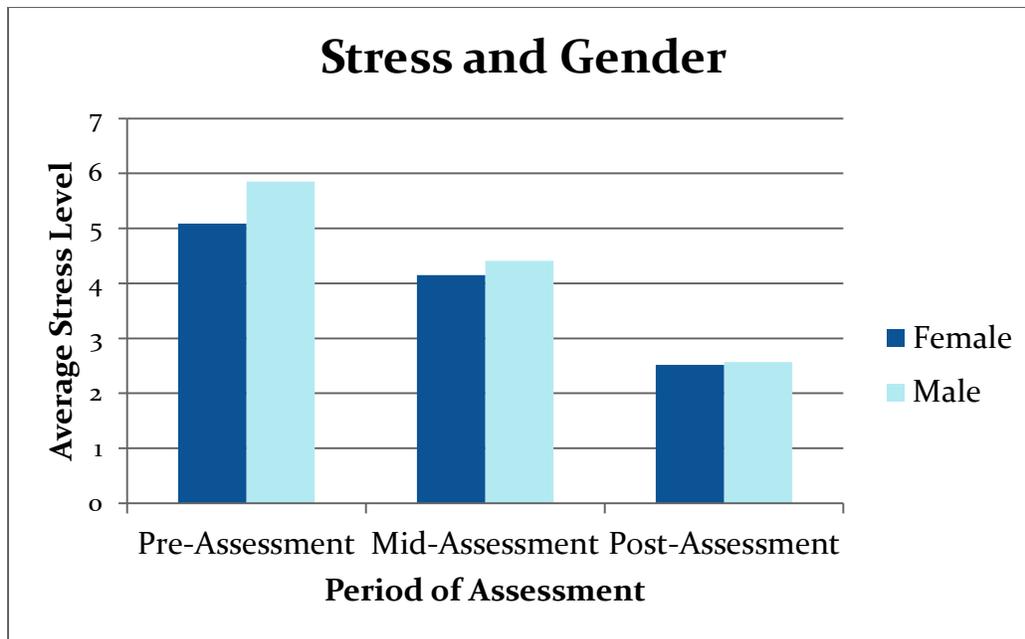


Figure 2: Stress and Gender

There was no interaction between the gender of the student and the reported stress levels throughout the assessment period, $F(1,18)=3.13$, $\mu = .09$ $\eta^2 = .15$.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for the Pre, Mid and Post Assessment by Ethnic Background**Descriptive Statistics**

	Ethnic Background	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Pre Assessment	White	5.4167	1.72938	4
	Black	5.1967	1.19943	10
	Latino	5.6000	.72265	5
	Asian	7.0000	.	1
	Total	5.4317	1.19568	20
Mid Assessment	White	5.2500	1.66389	4
	Black	3.6333	1.39177	10
	Latino	4.6000	.43461	5
	Asian	5.0000	.	1
	Total	4.2667	1.36626	20
Post Assessment	White	3.3750	2.42050	4
	Black	2.1667	1.01227	10
	Latino	2.5333	.44721	5
	Asian	3.0000	.	1
	Total	2.5417	1.29763	20

There was no interaction between the ethnic background of the student and the reported stress level throughout the assessment period, $F(3,16) = 2.01$, $p = .15$, $\eta^2 = .27$.

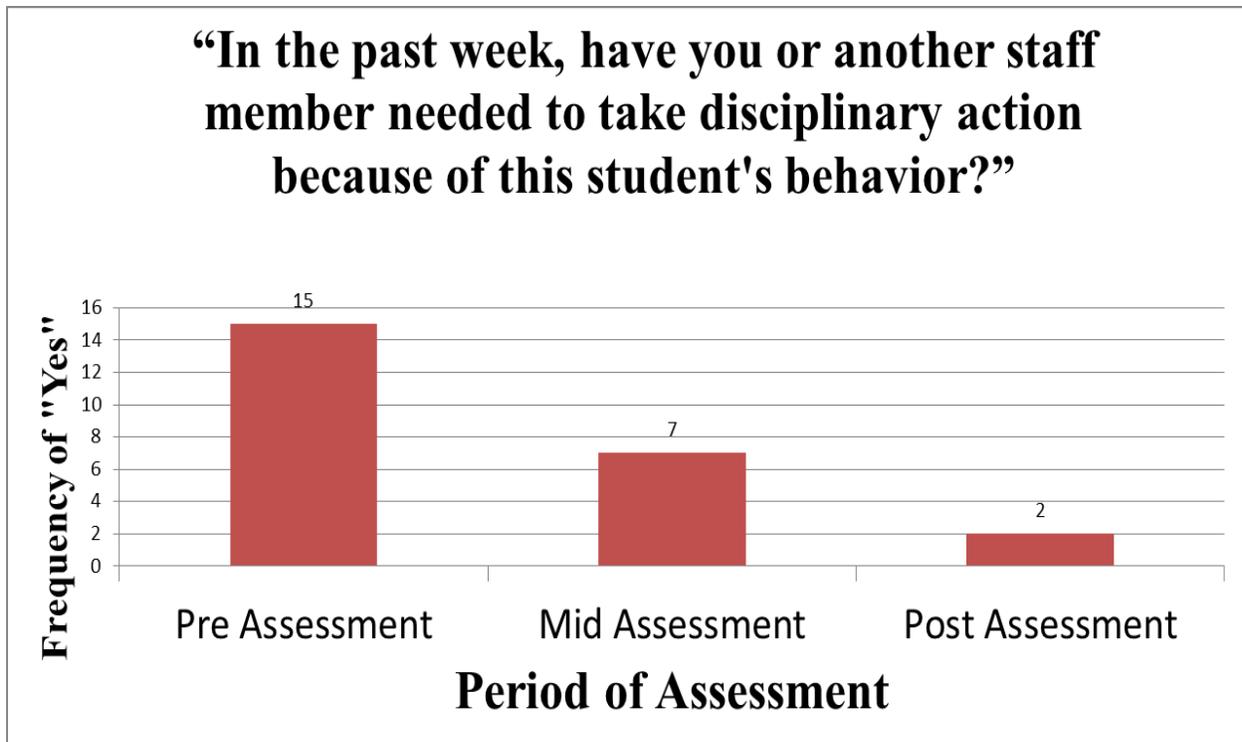


Figure 3: Decrease in disciplinary action from the pre to the post assessment

A one-way chi-square analysis examining the number of disciplinary actions given pre, mid, and post was significant, $X^2 (N=20) = 10.75, p < .001$. The number of actions initially ($N=15$) did not significantly decrease at the mid assessment ($N=7$), $X^2 = 2.91, p = .09$. The number of actions also didn't not significantly decrease from the mid ($N=7$) to post ($N=2$), $X^2 = 2.78, p = .10$. However, the number of disciplinary actions taken significantly decreased from the pre assessment ($N=15$) to the post assessment ($N=2$), $X^2 (N=20) = 9.94, p < .001$.

Correlational Analyses

The author examined the correlation between time spent outside of class practicing the mindfulness exercises, the likelihood of continuing the exercises, whether the participants reported being religious, and the perceived helpfulness of the program. There was a significant positive correlation between time spent on the exercises and the likelihood of continuing the program, $r = .63, p < .001$. There was no correlation between time spent on the exercises and helpfulness, $r = .37, p = .11$. There was a positive correlation between likelihood of continuing the program and the perceived helpfulness of the program $r = .59 p = .01$. There was no significant effect between whether the students were religious and whether they found the program helpful, $F(1,18) = .24, p = .63, \eta^2 = .01$. However, it was found that individuals who considered themselves religious were more likely to continue to program than those who do not consider themselves religious, $F(1,18) = .24, p = .15, \eta^2 = .01$

Qualitative Results

Student Feedback on what they learned from the Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction Program:

“What mindfulness is and how to live it”

“Different kinds of breathing methods”

“Anger and impulse control”

“Focus on the moment before the response”

Teacher Reactions to the Program:

“This program has helped some of the toughest and the most problematic students in this school.”

DISCUSSION

History of Mindfulness Concepts

Jon Kabat-Zinn (2006) explained that mindfulness has to do with particular qualities of awareness and attention that can be developed through meditation. Mindfulness is defined as “the awareness that emerges through paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally to the unfolding of experience moment by moment. Historically, mindfulness has been called ‘the heart’ of Buddhist meditation (Baer, 2003). The contribution of the Buddhist traditions emphasizes the simplicity and effective ways to refine and cultivate mindfulness into every aspect of one’s life” (Kabat-Zinn, 2006).

Concepts of mindfulness and/or mindfulness techniques have been used in therapeutic modalities such as Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT), retreat based programs, individual therapy sessions, (Duvall, 2008; Kristeller, Lehrer, Woolfolk & Sime, 2007) Zen meditation, buddhist traditions, (Marchand, 2012) and Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (Lau, Ridgeway, Teasdale, Williams, Soulsby, Segal, 2000). Many of the traditional mindfulness meditation practices are based in Buddhism. However, Americans, notably psychologists Jack Kornfield and Sharon Salzberg, trained in Thai Theravada tradition, founded the Insight Meditation Society in 1976 (Kristeller, Lehrer, Woolfolk & Sime, 2007). This society is a spiritual refuge rooted in Theravada Buddhism that teaches ethics, concentration and wisdom (“Insight meditation society,” 2013). Insight meditation or “vipassana practice” involves the concentration of Mindfulness meditation which is associated with breath and somatic functions (Kornfield, 1979). Thich Nhat Hanh, a vietnamese monk was famous for

using loving kindness meditation and contemplative walking meditation. According to Hanh there are four immeasurables: love (metta), compassion (karuna), joy (mudita), equanimity/freedom (upekkha). Loving kindness meditation focuses on practicing those four immeasurables on oneself and on others (Selekman, 2009). In the United States, Zen practices such as ‘just sitting’ (skinkantaza) draws on Korean traditions and influenced Kabat-Zinn’s work (Kristeller, Lehrer, Woolfolk & Sime, 2007).

In 1979, Kabat-Zinn assisted by Dr. Saki Santorelli founded an eight week Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) program at the University of Massachusetts Medical School (UMass). MBSR was the first to incorporate eastern practices such as yoga and meditation to help treat illness and chronic pain (Greco & Hayes, 2008). Kabat-Zinn (2006) wanted to use MBSR as a method for facing, exploring, and relieving suffering of both the body and mind. In addition, he wanted the MBSR program to “serve as an educational vehicle through which people could assume a degree of responsibility for their own well-being and participate more fully in their own unique movement towards greater levels of health by cultivating and refining our innate capacity for paying attention and for a deep, penetrative seeing/sensing of the interconnectedness of apparently separate aspects of experience, many of which tend to hover beneath our ordinary level of awareness regarding both inner and outer experience” (Kabat-Zinn, 2006).

MBSR is a common form of Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM) used to address a variety of psychological and physiological problems. “In continuous operation since 1979, more than 19,000 people with a range of medical and psychological conditions have completed MBSR training at the Center’s Stress Reduction Clinic. Worldwide, hundreds of thousands of people

have participated in MBSR programs. More than 12,000 health-care professionals have participated in Center for Mindfulness professional training programs. Globally, there are more than 700 sites offering programs in clinics, hospitals, and academic medical centers based on the MBSR model developed at UMass” (“Mindfulness-based stress reduction in mind-body medicine” 2012, p.1). Because mindfulness interventions are practiced globally and vary considerably in implementation and emphasis even within one tradition (Kabat-Zinn, 2006), it can be challenging to identify which aspects of the MBSR program had positive impacts on the participants.

Current Research

More recently research has been conducted by Harvard-affiliated researchers at Massachusetts General Hospital and at UMass Medical Center that illustrate the physiological changes of grey matter in regions of the brain after participating in an eight week MBSR program. In those who practiced meditation, magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) revealed a “thickening of the cerebral cortex in areas associated with attention and emotional integration” (McGreevey, McCormody & Lazar, 2011, p. 1). Furthermore, there was an increase in grey-matter density in the hippocampus, which is known to help regulate self-awareness, compassion, learning, and memory (McGreevey et al., 2011).

Target Populations

Most of the research testing the effectiveness of Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Programs has been implemented on various adult populations. Dr. Lidia Zylowska is a board-certified psychiatrist who specializes in adult psychiatry, mindfulness-based therapy, and adult Attention

Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD). In 2008, “Zylowska conducted the first study of mindfulness-training for adults and teens with ADHD,” which revealed improvements in symptoms of depression, stress, anxiety, and ADHD, by self-reporting adults and teens (Zylowska, 2012). In addition to ADHD, research has been conducted on the effects of MBSR on cancer patients. This research indicated a reduction in sleep disturbance, stress, mood disturbance, and fatigue among cancer participants who participated in the MBSR program. Participants also reported their sleep quality improved after participating in the MBSR program (Carlson & Garland, 2005). In breast and prostate cancer patients an enhanced quality of life and reduced symptoms of stress was associated with participation in the MBSR program (Carlson, Speca, Patel & Goodey, 2004).

In addition to its effects on cancer patients, MBSR has been shown to be an effective program on other populations. For example, medical and premedical students showed a reduction in self-reported measures of anxiety and distress while increasing scores in spiritual experiences and empathy levels while practicing in MBSR (Bonner, Schwartz & Shapiro, 1998). Similarly, caregivers of children with chronic stress reported a significant decrease in symptoms of stress and mood disturbances (Minor, Carlson, Mackenzie, Zernicke & Jones, 2006). School Teachers experienced a reduction in anxiety, stress, and depression in addition to making comments such as “the key ideas for me are being accepting and non-judging” after participating in an eight week course (Gold, Smith, Hopper, Herne, Tansey & Hurland, 2010).

In addition, 19 year old Korean Kim Jang-Mi, claims her Olympic gold medal in the women’s 25m air pistol was a result of her Buddhist mindfulness training. “It is said in Buddhism that

athletic activities pull you into a natural state of mindfulness. When you engage in sports with your full attention it becomes a form of meditation” (Mandel, 2012). Recently, Amishi Jha found a positive link between mindfulness training and improvements in mood and working memory for pre-deployed high-stress United States military groups to Iraq (Jha, Stanley, Kiyonaga, Wong & Gelfand, 2010; Nauert, 2013).

Although a body of literature supports the implementation and effectiveness of mindfulness and MBSR programs in the medical field and for educational professions in adult populations, less research has been done of the effects of MBSR on adolescents. One study which focused on adolescent psychiatric outpatients who participated in a Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Program showed a significant reduction in perceived anxiety, depression, interpersonal problems, somatic distress, improved self-esteem, and sleep quality through self-reporting measures (Biegel, Shapiro, Brown & Schubert, 2009). When mindfulness meditation, a practice which focuses on the non-judgmental moment awareness, was used on adolescent outpatients for substance abuse disorders, the results indicated an increase in self efficiency about substance use and sleep duration. Improvement in sleep duration was associated with a decrease in traumatic stress symptoms and better regulation of emotions and thoughts (Britton, Bootzin, Cousins, Hasler, Peck & Shapiro, 2010).

While a body of evidence supports the effectiveness of Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Programs in various adult populations, and other research indicated similar effects on adolescent psychiatric outpatients and adolescents with substance abuse disorders, little research has been conducted on adolescent students. The author and Rose Pavlov developed a customized

curriculum modeling the Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Program. We implemented the program at Spirit of Knowledge Charter School in Worcester Massachusetts, working with 20 students 14-15 years of age.

Current Study

The duration of the customized MBSR curriculum designed by the author and Rose Pavlov, was modeled by the eight week MBSR program after Kabat- Zinns. The previous literature indicates that the MBSR program consists of eight weekly 150 minute group sessions, a day-long retreat in the sixth/seventh week, and daily home practices (Kilpatrick, Suyenobu, Smith, Bueller, Goodman, Creswell, Kirsten., Emeran., Naliboff 2011; Carmody & Baer, 2008). However, to better suite the targeted urban youth population, the author modified the duration of the sessions to a twice a week, two hour long sessions and the day long retreat was eliminated. This allowed the students to get more repetitive exposure to the exercises while keeping their attention for the full session. Furthermore, the curriculum consisted of eight different themed-weeks, the hope was that the exercises compiled under those themes would enable students to connect with different components of the MBSR program as individuals deal and cope with stress differently.

Evidence based research supports the use of the exercises and themes identified as core aspects of the curriculum. For example, mindfulness practices such as sitting and walking meditation have been used to enhance the moment-to-moment mind-body experience and increase well-being (Biegel, et al., 2009; Carmody, & Baer, 2008). Adolescent outpatients showed improvement in sleep, emotional distress, and reduced substance use when they participated in mindfulness meditation (Britton et al., 2010). Furthermore, Mirams, Poliakoff, Brown & Lloyd

(2012) showed that participants were more sensitive to the somatic signal detection task when they had body-scan intervention than the control group (listened to a recorded story) and thus showed improved accurate perceptions. During guided body scans, attention and sensations is consecutively focused towards various parts of the body.

In addition, art-based interventions have been shown to effectively reduce adverse psychological and physiological outcomes (Stuckey & Nobel, 2010). Mindfulness eating can help reduce over eating as it enhances awareness to the cues of hunger (Chozen, 2009). Similarly to focusing on the present, nature meditation allows the students to be outside and focus on the sights, touch, sound, and smells of nature (Maddux & Maddux, 2012). Hilliard (2003) supported the use of music therapy in improving the quality of life for terminally ill cancer patients. Music therapy can also improve mood (Maratos, Gold, Wang, Crawford, 2008), and reduce stress (Pelletier, 2004). Physical exercise is correlated with lower symptoms of anxiety and improved sleep quality. Exercise also releases endorphins, feel-good neurotransmitters and reduces risk of stroke, heart disease, and high blood pressure (Clinic, 2012; Zelman, 2012). Practicing yoga improves attention and motor function (Telles, Singh, & Balkrishna, 2012). Overall, research illustrates the benefits of the various exercises incorporated into the curriculum to have positive effects on participants.

In addition to a body of literature compiled personal interviews were conducted to enhance the accuracy and completion of exercises within the curriculum. Samantha Ridgeway, who is certified in mantra meditation by Dr. Deepak Chopra and has been teaching mindfulness meditation for about seven years, suggested the author incorporate an exercise such as putting

glitter in a jar because it would distract the students from their own thoughts and settle their minds down before mindfulness. Other similar exercises that would be similar would include breathing, counting one to ten and then backwards, body scans, and journaling would all be effective techniques in settling the minds of the students. Ridgeway also stated that none of the participants would learn the same way. “For some of the kids journaling would work while it could upset others or they could get upset with you. You cannot put everyone in the same mold, people learn differently.” As a result the author chose to incorporate many different exercises into the curriculum.

Matthew Barry, a counselor at the Student Development Counseling Center (SDCC) at WPI also provided exercises to incorporate into the curriculum. Barry said that many students focus on what is in the future or in the past, instead of the present. “The goal of body scan is a connection with present moment, sensation, a side effect is it releases stress because the participants are focused on the now.” Body scans are systematic, relaxes participants, relieves stress. Matthew also said that muscles feel stress and body scans promote the relaxation for the whole system. Another technique the SDCC uses is called ‘leaves on a stream,’ which allows the participants to diffuse from their thoughts by mentally placing them on a leaf and watching the leaves being taken down stream.

Background Research

Hans Selye (1978), the first major researcher on stress, identified physiological processes during the fight-or-flight response. Fight-or-flight response as described by Walter Cannon, is a series of biochemical changes that prepares an individual to deal with threat or danger. The response to

acute stress, eustress, is positive and adaptive, whereas, chronic stress can promote and exacerbate pathophysiology as well as lead to changes in personal behaviors (McEwen, 2008).

McEwen (2008) noted that everyone deals with stress differently, based on his/her personal experiences. However, Smith, Segal R., and Segal, J., (2012) identified common warning signs and symptoms of stress as shown in Table 3:

Table 3: Common Warning Signs and Symptoms of Stress

Cognitive Symptoms	Emotional Symptoms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Memory problems • Inability to concentrate • Poor judgment • Seeing only the negative • Anxious or racing thoughts • Constant worrying 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moodiness • Irritability or short temper • Agitation, inability to relax • Feeling overwhelmed • Sense of loneliness and isolation • Depression or general unhappiness
Physical Symptoms	Behavioral Symptoms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aches and pains • Diarrhea or constipation • Nausea, dizziness • Chest pain, rapid heartbeat • Loss of sex drive • Frequent colds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eating more or less • Sleeping too much or too little • Isolating yourself from others • Procrastinating or neglecting responsibilities • Using alcohol, cigarettes, or drugs to relax • Nervous habits (e.g. nail biting, pacing)

When the brain perceives a situation as stressful, the sympathetic nervous system is activated causing an increase in heart rate, muscle tension, blood pressure and metabolism. The adrenal glands secrete corticoids, stress hormones, which hinders tissue repair, digestion, reproduction, and weakens the immune and inflammatory systems. Stress changes in the respiratory system can increase symptoms of asthma and could be a factor in adult diabetes (Davis, Eshelman, McKay & Fanning, 2008). Evidence also associates stress as a major predisposing factor in anxiety, depression, and other severe psychiatric disorders (Leonard, 2002).

Given that stress can have a negative effect on many systems of the body, including the immune system, it was proposed by Fang et al., that a reduction in stress, improved immune function and enhanced psychosocial well-being was associated with participants of the Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction program (Fang, Reibel, Longacre, Rosenzeig, Campbell & Douglas, 2010).

Further Analysis of Results

As shown in Figure 1 and Table 1 there was a significant reduction in stress reported by the students as well as by the teachers. Also, there was no statistical difference in the teacher's observations and the levels of stress reported by the students, indicating that, as the program progressed, teachers were observing less stress in the students and the students were reporting less stress. Literature indicates that one's expectations can influence the behavior of another, Pygmalion effect or Rosenthal effect. Evidence suggests that self-fulfilling prophecy can lead to students performing better in a classroom (Jussim & Harber, 2005). Figure 3 illustrates a significant decrease in disciplinary action. At the pre assessment 15 out of 20 students needed disciplinary action due to physical assault and threats, defiant and aggressive behavior, and

school property damage, in contrast to the post assessment only 2 out of 20 students needed disciplinary action. This is potentially due to the curriculum and the emphasis on meditation and breathing prior to responding to ones' environment. The students expressed similar concepts saying they learned "anger and impulse control." Another student indicated that he/she learned "ways to control my reactions that can be negative" from the Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction Program.

As expected, the more time a student reported spending time outside of class practicing the exercises the more likely they would be to continue those exercises once the program ends. Similarly, students who found the program helpful also said they would be more likely to continue the exercises. Contrary to expectation there was no relationship between the time the students spend on the exercises outside of class and the perception of how helpful the students found the program. Also, students who considered themselves religious were more likely to continue to the program than those who do not consider themselves religious. Mindfulness meditation exercises are founded on Buddhist traditions; perhaps the foundation and overlap between religion and various components of the program might explain this correlation.

In addition, there was no difference in the reported levels of stress based on gender (Figure 2) or ethnic background (Table 2). To better assess this correlation further studies should be collected on a larger more representative sample as the pilot program was administered on only 20 participants (4 Caucasian, 10 African American, 5 Latino, 1 Asian).

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

In support of the literature, the pilot Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction program was effective in reducing the teachers' perceived stress level as well as the students reported stress level throughout the program. The author attributes part of the program's success to the diversity of the exercises within the curriculum (See Appendix XII for further descriptions of the program structure). In addition, there was also a significant reduction in disciplinary action as shown from the pre assessment (15/20 students needed disciplinary action) to the post assessment (2/20 students needed disciplinary action).

While this program showed hopeful results the author recognized there were many limitations in launching and implementing this program. Due to the time constraints, school vacations, and unforeseeable schedule changes the full eight week sessions may have been reduced and/or modified. Other limitations included a lack of a control group which would help identify the importance and actual change from the program.

Further studies should extend the implementation and facilitation at Spirit of Knowledge Charter School and assess any changes that occur throughout the program. In addition, the study should be enlarged and conducted with a larger more representative sample. A comparative analysis of the program should also be conducted at various grade levels including high school and college to determine if there was a relationship between age and effectiveness of the program.

The Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction program showed promising results in reducing and alleviating stress among its participants. Now, this program is currently being implemented at an affiliated University of Massachusetts facility in Millbury, Massachusetts for adolescent woman. The hope of this program is that it will continue to reach the youth and help reduce the stress exhibited and felt within Worcester and its surrounding areas.

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APPENDIX

Appendix I: Pre Student Assessment

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Program

Pre Student Assessment

December, 2012– February, 2013

Student Code: _____

Date: _____

Directions: Please place an X in the most appropriate box, check only one box

1. In the past week, how often have you felt out of control with a specific situation?

0 times 1-2 times 3-4 times 5-6 times 7 or more times

2. In the past week, how often have you felt anxious or stressed?

0 times 1-2 times 3-4 times 5-6 times 7 or more times

3. In the past week, how often have you been angry?

0 times 1-2 times 3-4 times 5-6 times 7 or more times

4. In the past week, how often have you felt frustrated or overwhelmed?

0 times 1-2 times 3-4 times 5-6 times 7 or more times

5. In the past week, how often have you had difficulty concentrating?

0 times 1-2 times 3-4 times 5-6 times 7 or more times

6. In the past week, how often have you found it difficult to relax?

0 times 1-2 times 3-4 times 5-6 times 7 or more times

Student Code: _____

Date: _____

7. What do you hope to gain and/or learn from this mindfulness-based stress reduction program?

8. Do you think this mindfulness-based stress reduction program can help you reduce or alleviate stress?

Yes No Maybe

9. What is your current age?

13 years old 14 years old 15 years old 16 years old Other: _____

10. What is your gender?

Male Female

Sources used for the development of the Questionnaire:

Bryant, R. A., Moulds, M. L., & Guthrie, R. M. (2000). Acute stress disorder scale: A self-report measure of acute stress disorder. *Psychological Assessment, 12*(1), 61-68. Retrieved from

http://psych.on.ca/files/nonmembers/AcuteStressDisorderScale_DRN_March_5_2010.pdf

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Appendix II: Pre Teacher Assessment

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Program

Pre Teacher Assessment

December, 2012– February, 2013

Student Code: _____

Date: _____

Directions: Please place an X in the most appropriate box, check only one box

1. In the past week, how often has the student seemed out of control with a specific situation?

 0 times 1-2 times 3-4 times 5-6 times 7 or more times

2. In the past week, has the student appeared anxious or stressed?

 0 times 1-2 times 3-4 times 5-6 times 7 or more times

3. In the past week, has the student appeared angry?

0 times 1-2 times 3-4 times 5-6 times 7 or more times

4. In the past week, has the student appeared frustrated or overwhelmed?

0 times 1-2 times 3-4 times 5-6 times 7 or more times

5. In the past week, has the student appeared to have difficulty concentrating?

0 times 1-2 times 3-4 times 5-6 times 7 or more times

6. In the past week, has the student's behavior been disruptive or distracting to the rest of the class?

0 times 1-2 times 3-4 times 5-6 times 7 or more times

7. In the past week, have you or another staff member needed to take disciplinary action because of this student's behavior?

Yes No

8. Any Additional comments:

Sources used for the development of the Questionnaire:

Bryant, R. A., Moulds, M. L., & Guthrie, R. M. (2000). Acute stress disorder scale: A self-report measure of acute stress disorder. *Psychological Assessment, 12*(1), 61-68. Retrieved from

http://psych.on.ca/files/nonmembers/AcuteStressDisorderScale_DRN_March_5_2010.pdf

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Depression anxiety stress scales (dass): Psychology foundation of australia. (2011, November

16). Retrieved from <http://www2.psy.unsw.edu.au/DASS/>

Appendix III: Mid Student Assessment

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Program

Mid Student Assessment

December, 2012– February, 2013

Student Code: _____

Date: _____

Directions: Please place an X in the most appropriate box, check only one box

1. In the past week, how often have you felt out of control with a specific situation?

 0 times 1-2 times 3-4 times 5-6 times 7 or more times

2. In the past week, how often have you felt anxious or stressed?

 0 times 1-2 times 3-4 times 5-6 times 7 or more times

3. In the past week, how often have you been angry?

0 times 1-2 times 3-4 times 5-6 times 7 or more times

4. In the past week, how often have you felt frustrated or overwhelmed?

0 times 1-2 times 3-4 times 5-6 times 7 or more times

5. In the past week, how often have you had difficulty concentrating?

0 times 1-2 times 3-4 times 5-6 times 7 or more times

6. In the past week, how often have you found it difficult to relax?

0 times 1-2 times 3-4 times 5-6 times 7 or more times

Student Code: _____

Date: _____

7. What have you learned from this Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction program?

8. What activities or exercises have you enjoyed the most?

9. What could we do to improve this Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction program?

10. How many minutes have you spent outside of class time practicing mindfulness meditation and other exercises within the program?

11. How likely are you to continue using these exercises once the program ends?

Definitely Will Probably Will Maybe Probably not Not at all

12. How helpful have you found this program in reducing your stress?

Very Helpful Helpful Partially Helpful Not Particularly Helpful Not Helpful at all

13. Do you think this Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction program can help you reduce or alleviate stress?

Yes No Maybe

Sources used for the development of the Questionnaire:

Bryant, R. A., Moulds, M. L., & Guthrie, R. M. (2000). Acute stress disorder scale: A self-report measure of acute stress disorder. *Psychological Assessment, 12*(1), 61-68. Retrieved from

http://psych.on.ca/files/nonmembers/AcuteStressDisorderScale_DRN_March_5_2010.pdf

Cohen, S. (1994). *Perceived stress scale*. Retrieved from

http://www.ncsu.edu/assessment/resources/perceived_stress_scale.pdf

Depression anxiety stress scales (dass): Psychology foundation of australia. (2011, November

16). Retrieved from <http://www2.psy.unsw.edu.au/DASS/>

Appendix IV: Mid Teacher Assessment

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Program

Mid Teacher Assessment

December, 2012– February, 2013

Student Code: _____

Date: _____

Directions: Please place an X in the most appropriate box, check only one box

1. In the past week, how often has the student seemed out of control with a specific situation?

 0 times 1-2 times 3-4 times 5-6 times 7 or more times

2. In the past week, has the student appeared anxious or stressed?

 0 times 1-2 times 3-4 times 5-6 times 7 or more times

3. In the past week, has the student appeared angry?

0 times 1-2 times 3-4 times 5-6 times 7 or more times

4. In the past week, has the student appeared frustrated or overwhelmed?

0 times 1-2 times 3-4 times 5-6 times 7 or more times

5. In the past week, has the student appeared to have difficulty concentrating?

0 times 1-2 times 3-4 times 5-6 times 7 or more times

6. In the past week, has the student's behavior been disruptive or distracting to the rest of the class?

0 times 1-2 times 3-4 times 5-6 times 7 or more times

7. In the past week, have you or another staff member needed to take disciplinary action because of this student's behavior?

Yes No

8. If you answered 'Yes' to question 7 please explain the situation and intensity of the disciplinary action.

9. Please describe any changes you have noticed in the student as a result of their participation in the program.

10. Any Additional Comments:

Sources used for the development of the Questionnaire:

Bryant, R. A., Moulds, M. L., & Guthrie, R. M. (2000). Acute stress disorder scale: A self-report measure of acute stress disorder. *Psychological Assessment*, 12(1), 61-68. Retrieved from

http://psych.on.ca/files/nonmembers/AcuteStressDisorderScale_DRN_March_5_2010.pdf

Cohen, S. (1994). *Perceived stress scale*. Retrieved from

http://www.ncsu.edu/assessment/resources/perceived_stress_scale.pdf

Depression anxiety stress scales (dass): Psychology foundation of australia. (2011, November

16). Retrieved from <http://www2.psy.unsw.edu.au/DASS/>

Appendix V: Mid Teacher Assessment Summary

Stress Reduction Program

Mid Teacher Assessment Summary

December, 2012– February, 2013

Date: _____

1. What have you found to be helpful and/or beneficial to the students from this Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction program?

2. What could be done to improve this Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction program?

3. Overall, have you noticed an improvement in the students behavior as a result of this program?

Please explain:

4. Would you recommend this program?

Yes

No

5. Please explain why you chose your answer in question 4:

6. Please provide any additional comments or feedback regarding the program:

Appendix VI: Post Student Assessment

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Program

Post Student Assessment

December, 2012– February, 2013

Student Code: _____

Date: _____

Directions: Please place an X in the most appropriate box, check only one box

1. In the past week, how often have you felt out of control with a specific situation?

 0 times 1-2 times 3-4 times 5-6 times 7 or more times

2. In the past week, how often have you felt anxious or stressed?

 0 times 1-2 times 3-4 times 5-6 times 7 or more times

3. In the past week, how often have you been angry?

0 times 1-2 times 3-4 times 5-6 times 7 or more times

4. In the past week, how often have you felt frustrated or overwhelmed?

0 times 1-2 times 3-4 times 5-6 times 7 or more times

5. In the past week, how often have you had difficulty concentrating?

0 times 1-2 times 3-4 times 5-6 times 7 or more times

6. In the past week, how often have you found it difficult to relax?

0 times 1-2 times 3-4 times 5-6 times 7 or more times

Student Code: _____

Date: _____

7. What have you learned from this Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction program?

8. What activities or exercises did you enjoyed the most?

9. What could we have done to improve this Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction program?

10. Approximately how many minutes a day did you spend outside of class time practicing mindfulness meditation and other exercises within the program?

0 Minutes 5 Minutes 10 Minutes 15 Minutes 20 + Minutes

11. How likely are you to continue using these exercises once the program ends?

Definitely Will Probably Will Maybe Probably not Not at all

12. How helpful have you found this program in reducing your stress?

Very Helpful Helpful Partially Helpful Not Particularly Helpful Not Helpful at all

13. Do you think this Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction program helped you reduce or alleviate stress?

Yes No Maybe

14. Please explain why you chose your answer to question 13:

15. What is your ethnicity?

16. Do you consider yourself a religious person?

Yes No

17. Any additional comments:

Sources used for the development of the Questionnaire:

Bryant, R. A., Moulds, M. L., & Guthrie, R. M. (2000). Acute stress disorder scale: A self-report measure of acute stress disorder. *Psychological Assessment, 12*(1), 61-68. Retrieved from http://psych.on.ca/files/nonmembers/AcuteStressDisorderScale_DRN_March_5_2010.pdf

Cohen, S. (1994). *Perceived stress scale*. Retrieved from http://www.ncsu.edu/assessment/resources/perceived_stress_scale.pdf

Depression anxiety stress scales (dass): Psychology foundation of australia. (2011, November 16). Retrieved from <http://www2.psy.unsw.edu.au/DASS/>

Appendix VII: Post Teacher Assessment

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Program

Post Teacher Assessment

December, 2012– February, 2013

Student Code: _____

Date: _____

Directions: Please place an X in the most appropriate box, check only one box

1. In the past week, how often has the student seemed out of control with a specific situation?

 0 times 1-2 times 3-4 times 5-6 times 7 or more times

2. In the past week, has the student appeared anxious or stressed?

 0 times 1-2 times 3-4 times 5-6 times 7 or more times

3. In the past week, has the student appeared angry?

0 times 1-2 times 3-4 times 5-6 times 7 or more times

4. In the past week, has the student appeared frustrated or overwhelmed?

0 times 1-2 times 3-4 times 5-6 times 7 or more times

5. In the past week, has the student appeared to have difficulty concentrating?

0 times 1-2 times 3-4 times 5-6 times 7 or more times

6. In the past week, has the student's behavior been disruptive or distracting to the rest of the class?

0 times 1-2 times 3-4 times 5-6 times 7 or more times

7. In the past week, have you or another staff member needed to take disciplinary action because of this student's behavior?

Yes No

8. If you answered 'Yes' to question 7 please explain the situation and intensity of the disciplinary action.

9. Please describe any changes you have noticed in the student as a result of their participation in the program.

10. Any Additional Comments:

Sources used for the development of the Questionnaire:

Bryant, R. A., Moulds, M. L., & Guthrie, R. M. (2000). Acute stress disorder scale: A self-report measure of acute stress disorder. *Psychological Assessment*, 12(1), 61-68. Retrieved from

http://psych.on.ca/files/nonmembers/AcuteStressDisorderScale_DRN_March_5_2010.pdf

Cohen, S. (1994). *Perceived stress scale*. Retrieved from

http://www.ncsu.edu/assessment/resources/perceived_stress_scale.pdf

Depression anxiety stress scales (dass): Psychology foundation of australia. (2011, November

16). Retrieved from <http://www2.psy.unsw.edu.au/DASS/>

Appendix VIII: Post Teacher Assessment Summary

Stress Reduction Program

Post Teacher Assessment Summary

December, 2012– February, 2013

Date: _____

1. What have you found to be helpful and/or beneficial to the students from this Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction program?

2. What could be done to improve this Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction program?

3. Overall, have you noticed an improvement in the students behavior as a result of this program?

Please explain:

4. Would you recommend this program?

Yes

No

5. Please explain why you chose your answer in question 4:

6. Please provide any additional comments or feedback regarding the program:

Appendix IX: Pre Student Assessment Summary Chart

Pre-Student Assessment

	1PS. In the past week, how often have you felt out of control with a specific situation?	2PS. In the past week, how often have you felt anxious or stressed?	3PS. In the past week, how often have you been angry?	4PS. In the past week, how often have you felt frustrated or overwhelmed?	5PS. In the past week, how often have you had difficulty concentrating?	6PS. In the past week, how often have you found it difficult to relax?	7PS. What do you hope to gain and/or learn from this mindfulness-based stress reduction program?
001A	5	5	5	5	5	5	Not have to do regular school stuff
002A	7	7	7	7	7	7	Ways to relax
003A	5	5	3	7	5	7	How to find peaceful place
004A	5	5	3	5	5	5	Break from class
005A	3	3	3	3	3	5	Have Ivy Child Back at our school
006B	5	5	5	3	5	5	Not have to deal with our teachers for a period
007A	7	7	5	5	7	5	Ivy Child time
008B	5	7	7	7	7	7	Another way to deal with stress
009A	7	7	7	5	7	5	To have my own space when I need it
010A	5	5	5	5	5	5	Find a stress free zone in the school
011B	7	7	7	7	7	7	Trying to listen
012B	3	5	3	7	7	7	Think before I act
013B	7	7	7	7	7	7	Break from school
014B	5	7	7	5	7	7	Time with Ivy Child
015A	3	5	5	7	7	7	How to pause and think
016B	0	3	1	5	7	5	A break from class

017B	5	7	5	7		5	Maybe how to calm down
018A	3	5	3	3	3	3	Stress reduction
019A	1	5	3	5	7	5	Better cope with problems
020A	5	7	5	7	7	7	Coping skills

Appendix X: Mid Student Assessment Summary Chart

Mid-Student Assessment

	1PS. In the past week, how often have you felt out of control with a specific situation?	2PS. In the past week, how often have you felt anxious or stressed?	3PS. In the past week, how often have you been angry?	4PS. In the past week, how often have you felt frustrated or overwhelmed?	5PS. In the past week, how often have you had difficulty concentrating?	6PS. In the past week, how often have you found it difficult to relax?	7PS. What have you learned from this Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction program?
001A	3	5	5	5	5	5	Different Kinds of Breathing methods
002A	7	7	7	7	7	7	Socially endorsed ways to cope with stress
003A	3	5	3	5	5	7	Be more aware
004A	7	7	5	5	5	5	Ways to deal with stress that I'm not doing now
005A	1	3	3	3	5	3	Take a breath
006B	5	5	5	5	5	5	Break from life
007A	5	5	3	5	5	3	Focus on each moment
008B	5	7	5	5	5	5	Paying attention to breath
009A	5	5	5	5	5	5	BREATHE
010A	3	3	3	3	3	3	Mindful Eating
011B	5	5	5	5	5	5	Exercising the mind-it's not easy
012B	3	3	3	5	5	5	Controlling my anger
013B	5	5	5	5	5	5	Before you react, breath first
014B	3	5	3	5	5	5	Try to find a place of peace inside of me instead of always around me.
015A	3	5	5	5	5	5	Ways to control my

							reactions that can be negative
016B	0	1	0	1	3	3	Use myself as my anchor to regulate stress
017B	5	5	5	5	5	3	How to relax better
018A	1	3	1	1	1	1	How to be less stressed
019A	1	3	3	3	5	3	What mindfulness is and how to live it
020A	3	5	3	5	5	5	How to take a breath before responding to things

Appendix XI: Post Student Assessment Summary Chart

Post-Student Assessment

	1PS. In the past week, how often have you felt out of control with a specific situation?	2PS. In the past week, how often have you felt anxious or stressed?	3PS. In the past week, how often have you been angry?	4PS. In the past week, how often have you felt frustrated or overwhelmed?	5PS. In the past week, how often have you had difficulty concentrating?	6PS. In the past week, how often have you found it difficult to relax?	7PS. What have you learned from this Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction program?
001A	1	3	3	3	3	3	Rely on my best friend that is always with me and will not fail me like people have, my breath.
002A	7	7	5	7	7	7	Appropriate ways to deal with stress
003A	1	3	1	3	3	3	New perspectives to increase my awareness
004A	3	3	3	3	3	3	Positive ways to cope with stress.
005A	0	1	1	1	1	1	Focus on each moment and BREATHE.
006B	3	3	3	3	3	3	It is ok to take a time in or out.
007A	3	3	3	3	3	3	Increasing focus on the moment, the present
008B	3	3	3	3	3	3	How to pay attention even when it is loud
009A	3	3	3	3	3	3	Breathe, breathe, breathe
010A	1	3	1	3	3	1	Mindfulness
011B	3	3	3	3	3	3	Brain exercise has its pluses.
012B	1	3	1	3	3	3	Anger and impulse

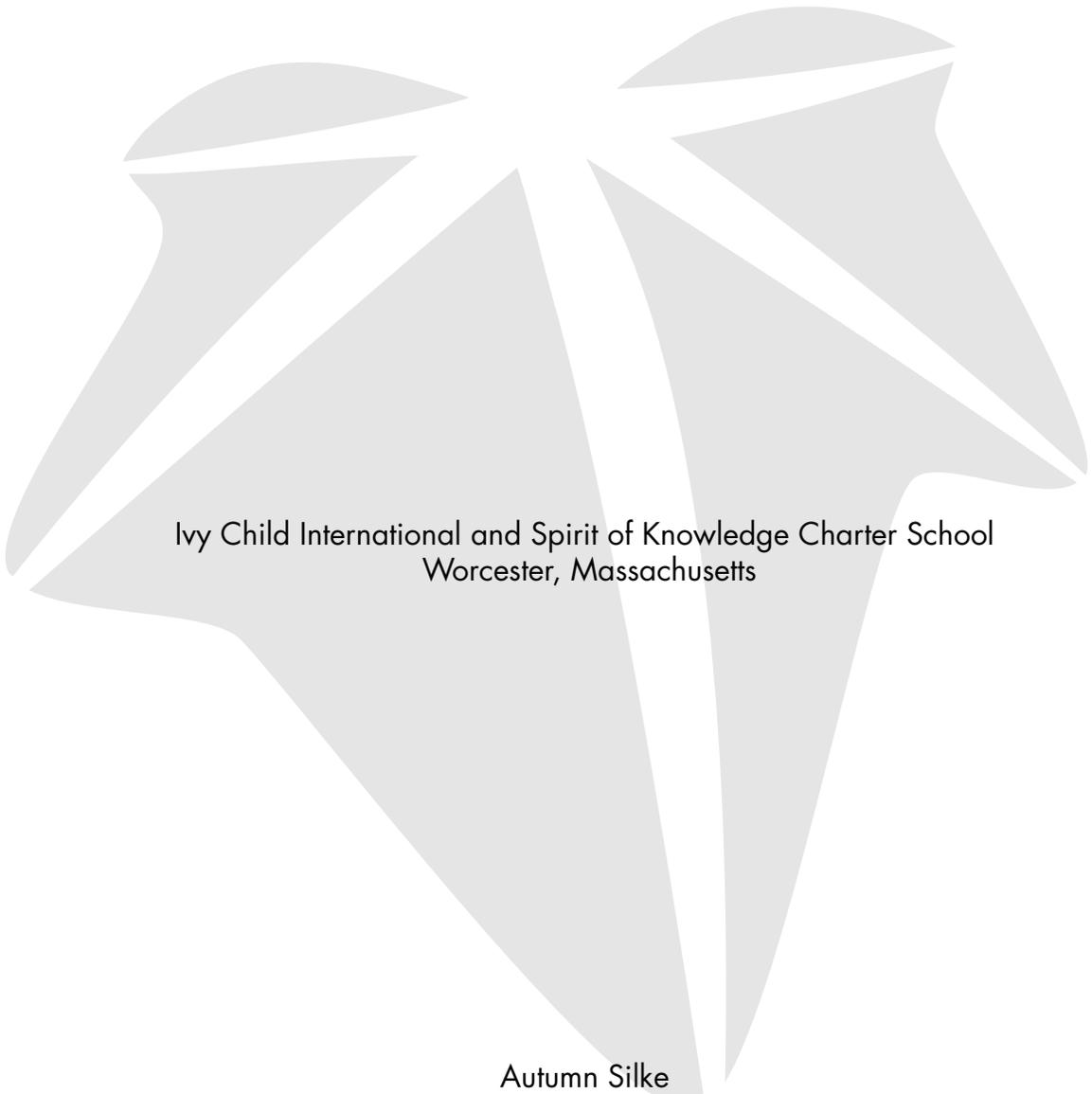
							control
013B	3	3	3	3	3	3	Impulse control
014B	1	3	1	3	3	1	My peaceful place, all by myself.
015A	3	3	3	3	3	3	I am a fault finder by nature.
016B	0	1	1	1	1	1	I am in control of me.
017B	3	3	3	3	3	3	Focus and relax
018A	0	1	0	1	1	0	Stress reduction
019A	1	1	1	1	1	1	LIVE mindfully!
020A	1	3	3	3	3	3	Focus on the moment before the response

Appendix XII: Program Notes/Structure of Exercises

Themes:	Exercises:
Introduction:	<p>Pre-assessment (Teacher* & Student), Introduction, Goals, Purpose, Trainwreck, Stress Lecture & Coping Strategies,</p> <p><i>Reactions: Students exhibited reluctance and negativity about this program as a potential solution to stress. They shared notable life events from home and school as a deterrent for coping/dealing with ongoing stress factors.</i></p>
Meditation	<p><i>Breathing-What an array of breathing rhythms were explored and created today. The students developed individual patterns of breath synchronized with the walking meditation. Taking a step on inhale and lowering the leg on exhale. While difficult at first, once mastered reported to provide a significant alleviation of anxiety and stress by those that suffered most from it.</i></p> <p><i>Body scans –Many participants have trauma histories and breaking up the body scan assisted with this process. Scanning the leg with a partner then discussing and then from knee to hip and then discussing-worked best with this group.</i></p> <p><i>Relaxation Response-We drew an image of a person’s front/back and named her Tessy. Identified all the different facets of stress in our bodies. This was especially helpful with ELL students who appreciated visual aids.</i></p> <p><i>Progressive Relaxation-Sharing scenarios that impacts daily life and identifying ways to relax. Interpersonal relationships, traffic jam etc. were explored.</i></p> <p><i>Living Yoga- Ujjayi Pranayama or Ocean Breath-The participants enjoyed exploring and introduction to yoga and joining the breath with movement. I shared the tools used with paraplegic patients in movement of the arms as well.</i></p> <p><i>Trataka- Yoga Gazing- Trataka Candle Gazing- What yielded a tremendous challenge in focus and extended time to focus, progressed to pauses between responding to peers. The progression was a delight!</i></p> <p><i>Walking Meditation-Discussed this as an option and synchronized breath with movement</i></p> <p><i>Pendulum Swing-Mood Comparison of Ups and downs. Students gave examples</i></p> <p><i>Mantra Meditation-Shared testimonials and brain research/benefits.</i></p> <p><i>Heart Breath-Compassion/research</i></p>
Mindfulness Eating	<p>Introduction/Principles</p> <p><i>Mindfulness Eating-Hershey Kiss-We did kisses and raisins. They loved this and now was food every session.</i></p> <p><i>Elisha’s Story</i></p>

Physical Exercise	<p>Walking</p> <p>Lunges</p> <p>Plank-<i>Introduced different exercises and movements to alleviate tension</i></p> <p>Jumping Jacks-<i>Shared research on benefits of exercise and as effective as some pharmaceutical meds</i></p>
Yoga	<p>Nature Poses</p> <p>Animals Poses-<i>Students discussed how they rarely pause to appreciate their environment and the universe. At first, discussed did not see a value in this overtime the seed of gratitude began to grow.</i></p>
Art Exercises	<p>Draw or Paint your Feelings-<i>Some students loved the visual expression and added color to our emotions. This was a beautiful exercise.</i></p> <p>Self- Confidence Building Exercise</p> <p>Paint a Mountain and a Valley</p> <p>Balloon</p> <p>Kinesthetics Painting</p> <p>Scribble Chase</p> <p>Collage</p> <p>Quote Inspiration/Writing</p> <p><i>These were offered as options. Students chose the exercise that resonated with them and each had something unique to share/learn.</i></p>
Perceptions/ Acceptance?	<p>Positive Priming Environment-Ongoing process. <i>Homework and evolved over time.</i></p> <p>Loving Kindness Meditation-Time to love? <i>This seemed absurd to participants at first but began exhibiting greater levels of kindness toward each other.</i></p> <p>Gratitude Journaling-<i>They developed a keen ability to outlet their emotions over time each session improved.</i></p> <p>Mindful Communication Practice-<i>Students discussed how their reactions impact those around them. Stimulus and response</i></p> <p>Stress & Mind Traps (Negative Self Talk, Catastrophizing, Blaming, Perfect, Discounting Positive, mind reading)-<i>Human and universal realities and challenges were discussed. Self study of are we a fault finder vs. a benefit finder were assessed over time. Many found they were natural fault finders now looking to shift focus on the benefits.</i></p>
	Nature Meditation Walk

Coping Techniques and Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction Strategies
Combined in a Customized Curriculum to Help Inner- City High School Students
Pilot Program



Ivy Child International and Spirit of Knowledge Charter School
Worcester, Massachusetts

Autumn Silke
Advisors
Rose Pavlov & Helen Vassallo

December 1, 2012



Ivy Child International Mindfulness-based Stress Reduction (MBSR) Curriculum: Yoga, Meditation, and other stress reduction techniques

Curriculum Format:

Format of Curriculum Include each week: theme, exercises, purpose/objective, materials needed

n=20 participants

Meeting: Twice Weekly 120 minutes each

Curriculum incorporates both:

Formal Exercises: Classroom

Informal Exercises: Homework (Routine based)

Themed weeks provide direction and focus

*Describe the benefits of each exercise prior to completion (ex: body-mind connection=yoga)

*Begin and end each session with 5 minutes of PERSONAL JOURNALING:

Why journaling (before & after): Gives students a constructive outlet as a way to express themselves, confidential (lock up journals), allows students to see the progression of thoughts throughout the curriculum, identify personally effective techniques to incorporate into their daily life to reduce stress. Journaling before important because the students transfer stress/thoughts out on paper and can focus on the exercises. Journaling after is important and can discuss the affect the various exercises had on them.

Journal: time, exercise, thoughts/feelings/ senses, what did you learn (ask them questions to guide journal entry)

(<http://mbsrworkbook.com/mbsr-workbook-practice-logs.pdf> -questions used for journaling)



Ivy Child International

Mindfulness-based Stress Reduction (MBSR) Curriculum:

Yoga, Meditation, and other stress reduction techniques

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Table of Contents:

Week One Theme: BREATHING, BODY SCANS, MEDIATION

Day 1:

Introduction:

1. Introduction
2. Understanding MBSR
3. Purpose
4. Confidentiality & Journaling
5. Rules/Guidelines
6. Respect

Activity 1:

The purpose of this program is to use Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction strategies and other techniques to reduce or alleviate stress that arises for inner-city youth.

1. What type of guidelines or rules should we follow in order to help accomplish this objective?
2. How do we create a safe, relaxing, and non-judgmental environment?
3. How should we treat each other (both in and out of this session)?
4. How do we NOT treat each other?

(Condense the guidelines into a final. Once guidelines are agreed upon the facilitator will type up and share, requiring every participant to sign the guidelines.)

Icebreaker (Trainwreck):

1. Have all the students stand in a circle and find a place holder (can be a shoe, paper, etc.) to place marking their spot.
2. Have one student is in the middle of the circle. That student says his or her name and something about themselves.
3. Then every student who has that same fact moves to another place in the circle which is indicated by the place holder. The last person without a place is in the middle and that person says his or her name and the process repeats.
4. There can only be one person per place holder.



Lesson on Stress:

What is stress?

"Stress is mental, emotional, or physical strain or tension" ("stress," 2012).

(eustress) Good Stress (acute or short term stress) and (distress) Bad Stress (chronic or long term stress):

Good stress- the stress response also called fight or flight response-helps individuals rise to the challenge, perform better under pressure, or escape dangerous situations

Examples: preparing for an exam, slamming on the brakes to avoid an accident, shooting a basketball to win the game

Bad Stress-

Stress can also have negative effects on many areas of the body if it lasts for a long time.

Nervous System: When a person perceives something as stressful the sympathetic nervous system is activated and stress hormones, such as cortisol, are released. Stress hormones cause heart to beat faster, increases your blood pressure, and can weaken the immune system which can lead to physical symptoms such as colds, and muscle soreness (Susanne, 2011).

Musculoskeletal System:

When your stress your muscles tense up. "The contraction of muscles for extended periods can trigger tension headaches or migraines" ("The American Institute,").

Respiratory System:

Stress can make it harder to breathe, potentially can induce panic attacks.

Reproduction system:

In men, chronic stress can impair sperm production and cause impotence

In women, stress can cause an irregular menstrual cycle

Skin:

Increase in acne

This program is intended to help teach you techniques and coping strategies to better handle and reduce your stress.

How does stress affect your emotional and physical well-being?

You may become irritable, worry, withdrawal, hard to focus, overwhelmed, cranky, tired, not eating

("The American Institute,").

The events that cause stress are called stressors.

What are current stressors in your life?

Take 5 minutes and in your journal: you can either list your stressors or draw a circle and proportionalize your stressors in comparison with one another.

So for example, school is very stressful so that takes up 40% of my pie, whereas, trying something new is only slightly stressful so 5% of my pie is taken up by that stressor



Time for open discussion

Sit in a circle and allow the students to discuss their stressors

(Examples: deadlines, negative thoughts, physiological stress: growth in adolescence (lack of exercise, eating right, sleep, injuries.)

Coping Strategies:

Coping strategies refer to an individual's conscious effort to reduce, tolerate, or master stressful situations (Taylor, 1998).

1. Problem-solving strategies- are used to get rid of stressful situations by actively doing something

2. Emotion-focused coping strategies- focus on regulating one's emotions as a result of a stressful event

"Research indicates that people use both types of strategies to combat most stressful events" (Taylor, 1998).

There's also active and avoidant coping strategies

Active coping strategies- help change the nature of the stressor or how one perceived it

Open discussion: What are examples of active coping strategies

Ex: Positive Self Talk (encourage yourself) to speak more in public. The more you can change your mentality and think "it's not that bad, I can do it."

Avoidant coping strategies-are used to avoid the stressful event ex: become withdrawn, alcohol use

Open Discussion: What are examples of avoidant coping strategies

Traditionally active coping strategies are a better way to deal with stress as avoidant coping strategies can lead to depression or drinking problems (Holahan, Holahan, Moos, Cronkite & Randall, 2004).

Now,

Take 5 minutes and write in your journals what relieves your individual stress, what coping strategies have you implemented in your life?

Time for open discussion

Sit in a circle and allow the students to discuss their coping strategies

-positive self-talk, meditation, exercise, counseling, support group, journaling, work on changing how you perceive a situation (Scott, 2012).



References:

Holahan, C. J., Holahan, C. K., Moos, R. H., Cronkite, R. C., & Randall, P. K. (2004). Journal of consulting and clinical psychology. Unipolar Depression, Life Context Vulnerabilities, and Drinking to Cope, 72(2), 269-275. Retrieved from http://www.chce.research.va.gov/docs/pdfs/pi_publications/Cronkite/06_Holahan_Moos_Holahan_Cronkite_Randall_2004.pdf

Scott, E. (2012, September 29). Why do stressors affect people differently? here is what makes the effects of stress unique. Retrieved from http://stress.about.com/od/stressbasics/a/stress_effects.htm

stress. (n.d.). Collins English Dictionary - Complete & Unabridged 10th Edition. Retrieved November 27, 2012, from Dictionary.com website: <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/stress>

Taylor, S. (1998, July). Research network on ses & health: Coping strategies . Retrieved from <http://www.macses.ucsf.edu/research/psychosocial/coping.php>

More Research on Coping strategies: (proof implement change in perceptions/ positive self talk)

Cohen, J. A., Mannarino, A. P., Berliner, L., & Deblinger, E. (2000). Trauma-focused cognitive behavioral therapy for children and adolescents an empirical update. Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 15(11), 1202-1223. Retrieved from <http://jiv.sagepub.com/content/15/11/1202.full.pdf.html>

In text:

(Cohen, Mannarino, Berliner & Deblinger, 2000)

Exercise 1:

Relaxation Response- Lie on back, knees, up

Focus on Breath-focus thoughts, sounds, past conversations-inhale and exhale-release tension

Teach them abdominal breathing (increases oxygen perfusion and decreases perceived anxiety)

Homework: What are things you can do where you can be mindful?

1. Shower-focus on soap, water, smells,
2. Waking up-see objects in room



Week Two Theme: YOGA

- Physical body postures/stances
- Purpose

Week Three Theme: ART

- Nature's connection to Art
- Images that allow us to Imagine

Week Four Theme: MINDFULNESS CONCENTRATION/EATING

- Themes: Doesn't meet the Eye* / Interconnections
- Apple-describe in concretely (or use orange-peel represent our human mask)
 - Then talk about non-apple elements
 - Apple trees, sun, rain, nutrients, someone picked it
 - Slice apple –smell

Compare apple with a person (how much more makes up you?)

Goal: Gain appreciation for the small things and decrease isolation while enhancing one's ability to see interconnections.

(Look into: "according to Nhat Hanh, this insight is a source of compassion.")

Week Five Theme: PHYSICAL EXERCISE

- Music & Movement/Dance
- World Music
- Influence on Mood

Week Six Theme: NATURE

- Explore nature and the connections, sounds, sights, colors
 - Take them to the park?

Robert B. Wall, Tai Chi and mindfulness-based stress reduction in a Boston Public Middle School, *Journal of Pediatric Health Care*, Volume 19, Issue 4, July–August 2005, Pages 230-237, ISSN 0891-5245, 10.1016/j.pedhc.2005.02.006.

(<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0891524505001094>)

Week Seven Theme: DANCE, RHYTHM,

- Dancing: incorporating music and dance
- Lyric writing

Week Eight Theme: PRECEPTIONS

- What do we perceive as threatening (environment, people, conversations etc.)?
- The Power of A Fist: Same structure-open or close
 - Intention, destruction, compassion (holding hand out)



Last day:

- Recall all exercises
- Discuss favorites

Research:

Connection between mind and body

Mindfulness is proven to reduce anxiety, increase well-being, etc.

-Mindfulness helps you become more aware of stress /how it affects you (stuck in traffic, one does not notice an increase heart rate, for example gripping wheel, however when you release grip and one will calm down.)

effects on medication-thicker frontal cortex and insula

More Exercises:

Positive priming environment:

Space where you create and craft things that bring out positive emotions.

Pictures, verses, people, drawings, icons, etc.

Broaden and Build theory-broaden your positive assets and build on them.

Themes:	Exercises:
Introduction:	Pre-assessment (Teacher* & Student), Introduction, Goals, Purpose, Trainwreck, Stress Lecture & Coping Strategies,
Meditation	Breathing Body scans (or in yoga?) Relaxation Response Progressive Relaxation Living Yoga- Ujjayi Pranayama or Ocean Breath (Yoga?) Trataka- Yoga Gazing- Trataka Candle Gazing Walking Meditation Pendulum Swing? Mantra Meditation Heart Breath? Mindful Breathing Gathas



Mindfulness Eating	Introduction/Principles Mindfulness Eating-Hershey Kiss? Elisha's Story
Physical Exercise	Walking Lunges Plank Jumping Jacks
Yoga	Nature Poses Animals Poses
Art Exercises	Draw or Paint your Feelings Self- Confidence Building Exercise Paint a Mountain and a Valley Balloon Kinesthetics Painting Scribble Chase Collage Quote Inspiration/Writing
Perceptions/Acceptance?	Positive Priming Environment? Loving Kindness Meditation? Gratitude Journaling? Mindful Communication Practice? Affirmation Meditation? Four Immeasurables? Compassion Meditation? Stress & Mind Traps (Negative Self Talk, Catastrophizing, Blaming, Perfect, Discounting Positive, mind reading)
Nature?	Nature Meditation Walk Leaves on a stream
Dance/ Music/ Rhythm	
Humor	



- * Trauma Narrative- on going
- * Humor- on-going or one week
- * Mind Jar (begin everyday=visualize stress emotions leaving-calm student down)
- * Dance day
- * Repetition is going to be important- quantity vs. quality
- * Journaling Exercises/Questions
- * Homework (re-name, homework doesn't sound fun)
- * Theatre Exercise/Performance
(ex: balloon release)

1. Awareness and Baseline
2. Living in Our Heads
3. Gathering the Scattered Mind
4. Recognizing Aversion
5. Allowing & Letting Be
6. Thoughts are not Facts
7. Self-Care
8. Maintaining & Extending New Learning

Introduction:

Stress impacts all of our lives. The level of stress and our individual responses vary. Part of this program will help you identify and reduce your individual triggers of stress. In a non-judgmental environment we will ponder and discuss sources of stress. With mindfulness, we train awareness to the triggers and responses while teaching you exercises to reduce stress and increase self-control.

Mindfulness meditation brings attention to the present moment. You can apply mindfulness to anything whether implicit and explicit stimuli. Your thoughts, emotions, feelings, and observations such as how the body feels or watching our actions are things inside of us.

We will discuss breathing techniques; simple practices that will help you control and notice your breathing. As you feel your anger escalating, and want to yell and say something you may regret, these techniques and others that we will discuss as the program progresses will help you control yourself, find value in things that are often taken for granted, and provide a constructive outlet for you.

Have you ever felt out of control? Mindfulness meditation allows you to develop a greater self-awareness and help you control and maintain your emotions and thoughts. It helps you recognize and release.



It is important to note however that these exercises will not work unless you are willing to give them a chance. If you are open to this new experience, non-judgmental, and curious, it can be beneficial to you even after this program ends. We will help you by providing the techniques to use and develop it to fit your needs (Zylowska, 2010).

Mindfulness Meditation:

Reduce anxiety and panic symptoms

<http://hpq.sagepub.com/content/4/3/357.full.pdf+html>

Relaxation Response: (cognitive models and spiritual maps)

Focusing on the breath teaches the student to use one thing (like breath) to let all other things be set aside for a period of time. The results could evoke relaxation, reduced blood pressure levels, and decrease sympathetic nervous system activity (<http://books.google.com/books?id=d-JVQP2dhGY8C&pg=PA27&lp->

[g=PA27&dq=Benson+et+al.,+1978;+Benson,+Rosner,+Marzetta,+%26+Klemchuk,+1974;+Jacobs,+Benson,+%26+Friedman,+1996&source=bl&ots=vNSBRgFZd1&sig=4RM_CgNojSljekepAkztSPAB7gs&hl=en&sa=X&ei=2Wq1UKrKA7Sk0gHY84DgCA&ved=0CC4Q6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=Benson%20et%20al.%2C%201978%3B%20Benson%2C%20Rosner%2C%20Marzetta%2C%20%26%20Klemchuk%2C%201974%3B%20Jacobs%2C%20Benson%2C%20%26%20Friedman%2C%201996&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=d-JVQP2dhGY8C&pg=PA27&lp-g=PA27&dq=Benson+et+al.,+1978;+Benson,+Rosner,+Marzetta,+%26+Klemchuk,+1974;+Jacobs,+Benson,+%26+Friedman,+1996&source=bl&ots=vNSBRgFZd1&sig=4RM_CgNojSljekepAkztSPAB7gs&hl=en&sa=X&ei=2Wq1UKrKA7Sk0gHY84DgCA&ved=0CC4Q6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=Benson%20et%20al.%2C%201978%3B%20Benson%2C%20Rosner%2C%20Marzetta%2C%20%26%20Klemchuk%2C%201974%3B%20Jacobs%2C%20Benson%2C%20%26%20Friedman%2C%201996&f=false))— I don't know how to cite this book**

To augment concentration, the students can practice abdominal breathing. Abdominal breathing increases oxygen perfusion and decreases perceived anxiety (Wall, 2005). "There is a hypnogogic quality to guided meditation that derives from following one's breath and the guide's voice. The instructions, when paced right, should match the hypnogogic state."

1. Lie on your back with knees up, feet on floor,
2. Begin by focusing on the breath.
3. Within a few seconds, notice thoughts, ideas, past and future conversations, or music intruding and eroding their concentration on their breath.
4. Place palms on either side of the navel and, when exhaling, to press downward, and when inhaling, to breathe into and expand the lower abdomen like a balloon, pushing the hands outward.

Reference:

Wall, R. B. (2005). Tai chi and mindfulness-based stress reduction in a Boston public middle school. *Journal of Pediatric Health Care*, 19(4), 230-237. Retrieved from <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0891524505001094>

in text citation: (Wall, 2005)



2. Imagine the sun up above you. With your imagination, pick a beam of sunlight and direct it to move down to your body. Feel the warm glow as the sun's energy helps growth and healing. Take special note to direct this energy to any particular part of the body, which feels uncomfortable or ill at ease. (Pause) Now select an area of your life that you would like to see grow. Isolate that area, and see it as a seed. (Pause) Direct the sunbeam towards this seed with the knowledge that the sun's energy can help its growth and expansion. Let the sun surround and fill the seed with warmth and light. (Pause) After a few moments, let the image go. Take a deep breath, and let it go. Repeat breathing 3 times. Open your eyes and stretch.

<http://cas.umkc.edu/casww/relaxatn.htm>

Living Yoga- Ujjayi Pranayama or Ocean Breath (5-15 minutes):

Breathing techniques are an essential part of yoga and meditation as focuses the mind and body on present moment awareness of the sound and feeling of the breath. Ujjayi Pranayama is sometimes referred to as Ocean Breath as the participant produces a sound and rhythm similar to the waves in the ocean. The soothing sound produced can create an inner calmness and relaxation.

1. To begin this exercise sits in a comfortable seated position in a quiet location.
2. Sit in an "easy pose." Cross your legs and place your hands in a full lotus position. Rest your hands on your knees, palms upward, relax your body, allow your mouth to open slightly
3. Begin by breathing naturally; turn your attention to your breath
4. Inhale and exhale deeply. Feel the air as it passes through your windpipes
5. Now focus your attention on your throat, (RESTRICT THROAT WHICH CAUSES ABDOMEN TO CONTRACT GENTLY ON EXHALATION AND HELPS EMPTY LUNGS) inhale naturally and make a "aaahhh" sound as you exhale using the same muscles you would use to whisper. Imagine your breath fogging up a window
6. Notice the muscles in the throat and the vibrations to create the sound (Develop more?)
7. Once you feel comfortable with your exhalation begin making the "aaahhh" sound as you breath in. Take the next few minutes to inhale and exhale audible with your mouth open. You should notice your breath making the sound like ocean waves.
8. Continue this same pattern with your mouth closed focus on the breath through your nose and continue to hear the sound of the ocean.
9. Your breath should be quietly audible
10. Let your inhalations fill your lungs completely, completely release the air as you exhale

Reference:

Higgins, M. (2010, February 02). The empowerment weekly: Living yoga - ujjayi pranayama (ocean breath). Retrieved from <http://www.empowermentweekly.com/2010/02/living-yoga-ujjayi-pranayama-ocean.html>

In-text: (Higgins, 2010)



How to practice ujjayi breath in yoga read more at: <http://yoga.isport.com/yoga-guides/how-to-practice-ujjayi-breath-in-yoga>. (2012). Retrieved from <http://yoga.isport.com/yoga-guides/how-to-practice-ujjayi-breath-in-yoga>

In-Text: ("How to practice," 2012)

Trataka (Yoga Gazing, Trataka Candle Gazing):

Unlike other exercises that focus more on breath and mind relaxation, Trataka focuses on your sense of sight. This technique allows you to focus all your attention, specifically your vision, on a motionless object. Studies have shown that Trataka or yoga gazing helps to improve ones' attention and concentration (Gangadhar & Geetha, 2012).

1. To begin this exercise sit in a comfortable seated position in a quiet location.
2. Sit in an "easy pose." Cross your legs and place your hands in a full lotus position. Rest your hands on your knees, palms upward , relax your body, allow your mouth to open slightly
3. Close your eyes and focus all your attention on your body and relaxing
4. Make the goal not to move for the duration of this exercise
5. Open your eyes and directly gaze at the flame
6. Try not to move or blink, become totally absorbed in the flame
7. As thoughts enter your mind, take note of them, then remind yourself you are practicing trataka.
8. Next, imagine the flame entering your body through your eyes. Close your eyes and imagine the same flame

Reference:

9. Healthful page: 6 meditation techniques for health and wellbeing. (2012). Retrieved from <http://healthfulpage.com/6-meditation-techniques-health-wellbeing>
10. In-text: ("Healthful page: 6," 2012)
11. Trataka. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://swys.net/pdf/trataka.pdf>
12. In-text: ("Trataka,")



(JYOTI TRATAKA (in three stages))

Step I: Effortless Gazing or Focusing at flame

- Let us start Stage-I of Jyoti Trataka i.e., "Effortless gazing or Focusing".
- Gently open your eyes with a few blinks and look at the floor.

Do not look at the flame directly.

- Slowly shift your vision to the base of the candle stand, then move to top of the stand, then to the candle and then slowly look at flame of the candle. Now, start gazing at the whole flame without any effort. Do not blink your eyes. There may be a few irritating sensations, but use your will power to gaze in a relaxed way. If tears appear, allow them to flow freely. This is a sign of good practice. Let the tears wash away the impurities from the eyes. Learn to ignore the irritation and watering from the eyes.

- Gaze at the flame for about 30 seconds.
- Slowly close your eyes, rub your palms against each other for a few seconds, form a cup of your palms and cover your eyeballs.
- Give pressure and release palming,
- After completing five rounds, gently drop your hands down.
- Feel the cool sensation around the eyeballs. Relax for a few seconds. Do not open your eyes immediately.

Step II: Intensive focusing at the tip of the wick of the flame

- Pass on to Stage-II of Jyoti Trataka i.e., "Intensive focusing" (Dharana).
- Gently open your eyes with a few blinks and look at the floor.

Do not look at the flame directly.

- Slowly shift your vision to the base of the candle stand and then move to top of the stand, then to the candle and then slowly look at the flame of the candle. Now, start gazing at the whole flame without any effort.

- Slowly gaze at the tip of the wick of candle, the small black cord. Focus your attention at one point. This is a practice of focusing and concentration. Keep on gazing, use your will power.
- Let the tears come out and try not to blink your eyes. By practice the gaze becomes steady, making the mind one pointed.
- Gaze at the flame for about 30 seconds.
- Slowly close your eyes rub your palms against each other for a few seconds then form a cup of your palms and cover your eyeballs.
- Give constant pressure palming. Press constantly around the eyeballs with your palms and inhale deeply and exhale completely; continue four more rounds; count mentally. Do not touch the eyeballs with your palms directly. Relax your eye muscles completely.
- After completing five rounds, gently drop your hands down.
- Feel the cool sensation around the eyeballs. Relax for a few seconds. Do not open your eyes immediately.



Note for Stage-I & II

- Continuously gaze at the flame, no blinking or winking, smooth and effortless gazing.
- Use your will power and ignore watering or irritation in the eyes.

Step III: De-focusing

- Let us proceed to Stage-III of Jyoti Trataka i.e., "De-focusing".
- Gently open your eyes with a few blinks and look at the floor.

Do not look at the flame directly.

· Slowly shift your vision to the base of the candle stand then move to the top of the stand, then to the candle and then slowly look at the flame of the candle. First fix your attention at the flame, and then gradually widen your vision. Slowly de-focus your attention from the flame and have a de-focused gaze on the flame. With expansive awareness, collect all the details of the flame such as color of the flame, shape of the flame, and aura around the flame. Then observe the aura expanding more and more and see the small light particles around the flame. Recognize the subtle change of achieved by de-focusing.

- After one minute of de-focusing, gaze or focus on the flame.

Slowly close your eyes and retain the image in your mind:

Visualize the flame between your eyebrows and collect all the details with your eyes closed.

When the image disappears go for palming.

Step IV: Silence

Feel the silence and relax for a while. After sufficient relaxation, gently drop your hands down. Sit quiet for some time and feel the deep comforting effect of the practice.

Reference:

Gangadhar, V., & Geetha, B. (2012, May). Effect of trataka on attention & concentration.

Retrieved from <http://www.researchgate.net/publication>

In text: (Gangadhar & Geetha, 2012)

WALKING MEDITATION:

Walking meditation is similar to sitting meditation, except instead of focusing on your breath this time you get to focus on movement, more specifically on your feet.

1. Stand up straight, head up, feet shoulder width apart. Be comfortable and balanced.
2. Notice the shift in balance as you take each step. Notice how your body balances automatically.
3. Now, shift your attention to the soles of your feet as they touch the ground.
4. Feel as your foot shifts inside your shoe to balance your body. Notice which part of your foot pushes off the ground and which is the last to rise in the air.
5. When you notice your mind beginning to wander, make note of the thoughts and transition back to the movement of your body and specifically the sensations in your feet as it takes each step.



References:

"mindfulness activities in slo-o-ow motion". (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.meditation-techniques-for-happiness.com/mindfulness-activities.html>

Intext: ("mindfulness activities in,")

Zylowska, L. (2010, July 1). Interview by D.V. Nuys [Audio Tape Recording]. An interview with lidia zylowska, m.d., on mindfulness and adhd. ADHD: Attention Deficit Hypoeractivity Disorder, MentalHelp.net., Retrieved from http://www.mentalhelp.net/poc/view_doc.php?type=doc&id=37191

In-text: (Zylowska, 2010)

Loving Kindness Meditation:

Loving Kindness Meditation allows participants to think about positive aspects of their life and appreciate qualities and characteristics of themselves and those they love. This is a practice where you wish yourself and the people in your life that you care about good wishes, good health, happiness etc. You can write to them or think about them in your head. Focus on them and the happiness you feel when you're with them.

1. To begin this exercise sit in a comfortable seated position in a quiet location.
2. Think about someone you care about. It can be a parent, a friend, sibling, teacher, anyone you love.
3. Focus all your attention on them. "Let your mind be invaded by the feeling of altruistic love (wishing well-being) or of compassion (wishing freedom from suffering) toward this person."
4. Now that you are filled with happiness and appreciate for who they are it's time to do the same to you.
5. Take a few minutes to think about what makes you unique. What talents and skills are unique to you? What are you thankful for?

(INCLUDE STEPS 4 AND 5 OR CREATE A NEW EXERCISE?)

(Research supporting compassion meditation (as defined in the research it actually supports love-kindness meditation): <http://www.plosone.org/article/info%3Adoi%2F10.1371%2Fjournal.pone.0001897>)

Zylowska, L. (2010, July 1). Interview by D.V. Nuys [Audio Tape Recording]. An interview with lidia zylowska, m.d., on mindfulness and adhd. ADHD: Attention Deficit Hypoeractivity Disorder, MentalHelp.net., Retrieved from http://www.mentalhelp.net/poc/view_doc.php?type=doc&id=37191



GRATITUDE JOURNAL:

LIST 5 THINGS YOUR GRATEFUL FOR:

Open your notebooks and write down five things you are thankful for. It can be anything and there is no right or wrong answer.

Mindful Communication Practice:

(Give them a prompt or something to talk about?, then they will share what the other person said)

This exercise focuses on interactions and communication with another person. The focus is to non-judgmental listen to another person. Up to this point we've practiced mindfulness in ourselves now we are going to extend mindfulness towards your interactions with other people. No matter their size, shape, or age, you can use this practice every time you talk or interact with someone. "Mindfulness Communication is extending mindfulness out, meaning that your focus is now on the other people. You are in the moment with them, they are present with you and you are present with them" (Zylovska, 2010).

1. Everyone picks a partner; once you've picked your partner I want you to face him or her.
2. One at a time tell each other about an experience (MORE DETAILS?)
3. Keep in mind there is no judgment, clear your mind and prepare yourself to listen or speak clearly.
4. Listen to them as though you needed to tell someone else everything your partner just said.
5. As the listener focus your attention on your partner and what they are conveying.
 - a. Focus on their words, what are they saying?
 - i. Do they have an assent? Are they angry, hurt, or happy?,
 - b. Notice their body language, can you tell their engagement level? Their emotional state?
 - c. Is their breathing steady?
 - d. Why are they conveying this information to you?
 - e. What is their purpose or main point?

Zylovska, L. (2010, July 1). Interview by D.V. Nuys [Audio Tape Recording]. An interview with lidia zylovska, m.d., on mindfulness and adhd. ADHD: Attention Deficit Hypoeractivity Disorder, MentalHelp.net., Retrieved from http://www.mentalhelp.net/poc/view_doc.php?type=-doc&id=37191



PENDULUM SWING:

Susan: I think helping kids find a physically comfortable posture from which to practice meditation is very important. Encouraging kids to lie down while practicing breath awareness is quite useful but also is an activity that I use called the Pendulum Swing (or tic-toc with younger children.) The aim of this activity is to help those who find it hard to be still (either sitting or lying down) to meditate in a group. Here's how it goes:

Objectives

- To build body awareness.
- To make it easier and more pleasant for those who find it difficult to be still to meditate with a group of people.
- To help settle body and mind before meditating.
- To develop concentration skills by attending to the sensation of movement.

Leading the Activity

Preparation

Make sure students have enough space to sway from side-to-side without touching each other.

Introduction

- o Starting from either a seated or standing position encourage children to take one or more breaths and notice the sensations associated with breathing.
- o Explain that we will swing our bodies from side to side slowly, starting to the right (keeping our sit-bones firmly on the cushion) and then slowly swinging back to the left.
- o Remind students that the object of attention (or focus) is the visceral sensation of swinging from side-to-side and when they notice that their minds have wandered, just bring it back to the sensation of movement.
- o The goal is to help children find and establish a repetitive, rhythmic swing that works for them. Irregular movements with respect to pacing or pattern are not as likely to promote a felt-sense of calm, center, and concentration. Because the swing must viscerally resonate with the person swinging to be effective, the pace and duration may vary from child to child. What is calming for one child may or may not be calming for another, in fact what is calming for one child may agitate or frustrate another. Just as there is no right or wrong way to practice mindfulness in general, so long as children respect each other (and don't intentionally knock into other people or things) there is no right or wrong way to practice the pendulum.

Instruction

- o If you are familiar with the classical instructions for walking meditation it is helpful to use them as a reference point for the this activity. In the classical instruction there are three parts to walking: lifting the foot, moving it and placing it down (or stepping).
- o There are three similar occurrences in the pendulum - moving, shifting, and center.



- a. Starting in a centered position first sway (or move) to one side keeping your sit bones on the cushion.
 - b. When you reach the point where you cannot sway any further without lifting your sit bone, shift weight and sway back again toward the center. Shifting is similar to lifting in slow and silent walking. You're moving again as you sway back toward center.
 - c. When you reach the center of the cushion pause for a moment – that moment is similar to placing (or stepping) in slow and silent walking.
 - d. The sway begins again to the opposite side (moving);
 - e. The moment that you reach the end of the sway to one side and shift weight before beginning to sway back toward center is similar to lifting; and
 - f. The moment you notice the feeling of being centered again on the cushion is similar to placing
-
- o The instruction goes like this: move to one side; shift weight; move back toward center; pause for a moment to feel centered sitting on the cushion. Then, move to the opposite side; shift weight; move back again toward center; pause for a moment to feel centered sitting on the cushion. Repeat. At first there is a slight pause at each change, but gradually the practice becomes more fluid.
 - o Once students are familiar with the eight pieces of the exercise (moving/ shifting/moving/center - then in the other direction - moving/shifting/moving/center), and the movement becomes more fluid, encourage students to sway from side to side without pausing in the middle of the movement to notice the feeling of being centered on the cushion.
 - o With young children it is helpful to use a stringed instrument to accentuate each change, strumming as a prompt signal it's time to shift weight and move in the opposite direction.

Quoted from:

Greenland, S. K. (2010, June 16). Interview by E Goldstein [Personal Interview]. Mindfulness meditation and children: An interview with susan kaiser greenland Huffpost Healthy Living, Retrieved from http://www.huffingtonpost.com/elisha-goldstein-phd/mindfulness-meditation-an_b_611400.html

FOUR IMMEASUREABLES (loving kindness, compassion, joy and equanimity)

The pebbles can be used to reflect on many different practices, it is up to you. So, for instance, with the Four Immeasurables, the children would take a first stone and write loving kindness on it. They would breathe mindfully and take a few minutes to reflect on what loving kindness is and how they can practice it in their daily life. They would then put it to one side, take a second pebble and reflect on the qualities of compassion, and so on.

<http://mindfulkids.wordpress.com/2009/01/30/pebble-meditation/>

Mantra Meditation:



Mantra Meditation focuses on a word or phrase. (talk about cultural “om” vs. anything). Use “Om” or another word or phrase that means something to you. (Individualized). It could be something from your faith or beliefs, or it could be a word that you find encouraging. A word to help you relax.

1. To begin this exercise sit in a comfortable seated position in a quiet location.
2. Sit in an “easy pose.” Cross your legs and place your hands in a full lotus position. Rest your hands on your knees, palms upward , relax your body, allow your mouth to open slightly
3. Close your eyes, try to clear your mind, and be still
4. Now, inhale, focusing on filling your lungs. Exhale completely noticing how your breath feels in your nose, throat, chest and belly as you inhale and exhale
5. As you exhale say “Om”
6. As you focus on your mantra or breath, your body will begin to calm. As thoughts arise simply acknowledge them and return your attention to your breath and mantra.
7. After 10 minutes.... Slowly bring your attention back to your surroundings. Acknowledge your presence in the space you’re in.

Reference:

How to meditate: A 10 step beginner’s guide. (2011, March 04). Retrieved from <http://stopand-breathe.com/2011/03/04/meditation-101-a-10-step-beginners-guide/>

In text: ("How to meditate:," 2011)

Peterson, S. (2011, March 03). Meditation techniques for teens. Retrieved from <http://www.livestrong.com/article/153081-meditation-techniques-for-teens/>

In text: (Peterson, 2011)

Compassion Meditation:

Compassion Meditation helps you gain the ability to empathize. This meditation will help you see someone else’s perspective.

1. To begin this exercise sit in a comfortable seated position in a quiet location.
2. Close your eyes, try to clear your mind, and be still
3. Begin like any other meditation by relaxing and becoming aware of your breath.
4. “Then let your mind drift toward someone you love. It could be either a person or animal. It could be someone who is ill or struggling, someone you know in the military, someone you are estranged from, someone you want a deeper connection with.”

5. "Gradually, let yourself drift inside this person's perspective. What would it be like going to work, being with family, dealing with the things this person is dealing with? See the world through this new set of eyes. Feel with a new heart. Stay there for a while before coming back to your own perspective.
6. As you do, feel free to say a prayer for this person or express a wish for their well being.
7. As you finish your meditation, return to your breath to quiet your mind and emotions and center yourself again in your own perspective."



Reference:

Peterson, S. (2011, May 3). Meditation techniques for teens. Retrieved from <http://www.livestrong.com/article/153081-meditation-techniques-for-teens/>

(Research supporting compassion meditation (as defined in the research it actually supports love-kindness meditation): <http://www.plosone.org/article/info%3Adoi%2F10.1371%2Fjournal.pone.0001897>)

Heart Breath

The heart breath is a form of meditation with verifiable physical benefits. To do the heart breath, relax and breathe on a ten-second cycle—five seconds in, five seconds out. As you do, breathe a positive mental state into the region of your heart. That state might be calm, appreciation, gratitude, or compassion. Feel that state filling your chest as you breathe.

What happens to your body when you do the heart breath is profound. Your heart rate shifts to become more "coherent." In other words, if you were to plot your heart rate variability on a graph, you'd see a smooth, regular, sine-wave like pattern. This change in your heart rhythm then influences other rhythms in your body, including blood pressure and brain waves. All the systems of your body begin to work together more closely, making you more creative and intuitive. If you want more information about the heart breath and its effects, investigate HeartMath.

***Peterson, S. (2011, May 3). Meditation techniques for teens. Retrieved from <http://www.livestrong.com/article/153081-meditation-techniques-for-teens/>

Photo Credit confident businessman image by MAXFX from Fotolia.com

Meditation can be an effective modality to increase your level of confidence. If you experience anxiety as a result of a lack of self-confidence, you can use meditation to release your anxiety. Affirmations and visualizations are additional techniques you can use during meditation to feel more self-assured. With practice, the anxiety and lack of confidence you experience now will dissipate and be replaced with the peaceful calm you experience in your meditative practice. Ideally, the only goal you should have is to bring the peace of these meditation periods into your daily life more often.



Affirmation Meditations

When you are sitting in a comfortable, relaxed position with your eyes closed, bring to mind the affirmation you have chosen for the day. This affirmation should be one clear statement that makes you feel more self-assured. Some examples are "I am a worthy human being" or "I am just right." You are most aware of your insecurities so only you can choose the affirmation best suited to correct misconceptions of yourself. Once you have clearly identified the affirmation, sit and engage in a breathing meditation for five minutes. Then, say the affirmation aloud repeatedly for at least ten minutes. Complete your meditation with two minutes of breathing meditation. If you are experiencing depression or extremely low self-esteem, you may feel the need to cry or become emotional while saying the affirmation. This is natural. Just allow the emotion to be released and continue to practice regularly.

Visualizations

You can increase your confidence by meditating with the images of yourself in a more self-assured and confident state. After five minutes of breath or sound mantra meditation, spend at least ten minutes visualizing yourself at your absolute most confident state. If you have never experienced this, use your imagination. Imagine what you look and sound like with confidence. Imagine others' reactions to you in this confident state. Allow your imagination to paint the most inviting and positive picture possible. Stay with these images as long as you like until you feel so comfortable with this visualization that you begin to imitate it in your life. Practice visualization everyday.

http://www.livestrong.com/article/104664-meditation-techniques-confidence/?utm_source=undefined_R1&LS-2659

Mindful Breathing Gathas

It helps to recite a few gathas, sing a mindfulness song or two, or to read an inspiring text before sitting down to meditate. This may ease us into a meditative space more easily. Once we are in that space, meditation will find its own momentum. In the following gathas, one can start with the visualisation of a flower or a mountain. But, please take care that the flower does not remain out there while you are sitting over here! The core of this exercise is to be a flower, and to bloom. Again, we must move from a botanical flower that we may start our visualization with to a human flower that we actually are. For, being a flower is not just a wish, but also a fact. A human being also blooms, just as a plant flowers. (Two CD's of Mindfulness songs, and all the sheet music for them is available in a boxed set entitled BASKET OF PLUMS published by PARALAX PRESS.)



Breathing in, I know I am breathing in.
Breathing out, I know I am breathing out.
Breathing in, I see myself as a flower.
Breathing out, I feel fresh.
Breathing in, I see myself as a mountain
Breathing out, I feel solid.
Breathing in, I feel myself as still water.
Breathing out, I reflect things as they are.
Breathing in, I see myself as space.
Breathing out, I feel free.
Breathing in, I know that I am breathing in.
Breathing out, I know that I am breathing out.
As my in-breath grows deep,
my out breath grows slow.
Breathing in makes me calm.
Breathing out brings me ease.
With the in-breath, I smile,
with the out-breath I release.
Dwelling in the present moment,
I know this is a wonderful moment.
Feelings come and go, like clouds in a windy sky
Conscious breathing is my anchor.
<http://www.mindfulnessmeditationcentre.org/breathingGathas.htm>

Stress & Mind Traps (taken from the IQP proposal and Mindfulness Bases Stress Reduction workbook):

Stress is defined as a person's "response to their environment and interactions that are perceived as straining or exceeding their adaptive capacities and threatening their well-being" (Farlex, 2012). Research has been conducted that correlates stress to obesity, high blood pressure, and various diseases including cardiovascular diseases (Varvogli & Darviri, 2011). Furthermore, when a person perceives something as stressful the sympathetic nervous system is activated and stress hormones, such as cortisol, are released. High levels of cortisol can damage the hippocampus and weaken the immune system, which can lead to physical symptoms such as colds, and muscle soreness (Susanne, 2011). Furthermore, stress can hinder the development of brain circuits, specifically in early childhood.



Those are some of the biological effects of stress (discuss with them other effects of stress-emotional and intrapersonal changes such as increase in irritability, frustration, worry, and/or lack of concentration)

As a result of all these impacts that stress can cause we want to teach you about mind traps.

“Mind Traps are common mental habits that tend to exacerbate or worsen stress and pain. We want to help you recognize these traps so you can avoid falling into them.”

1. Negative Self-Talk: the way you talk to yourself and/or the way you interpret experiences.
 - a. We are hard on ourselves. Have you ever called yourself an idiot? Thought you weren't good enough?
 - b. Have you looked at a situation and thought: I can't do that, it's impossible. No one can help me. It won't change
 - c. Those are all things we say to ourselves-Think about how you'd feel if a friend said the things that you say to yourself- better bad right?

We think about these things over and over again in our head making our stress or anxiety worst.

We start to judge ourselves “No one wants to be friends with me” “I'm stupid.”

Mindfulness can help you learn to treat these thoughts as just thoughts/events rather than fact.

When they come into your mind you recognize them simply as a thought then let them fade and focus your attention towards something else.

(DO THE LEAVES ON THE STREAM EXERCISE?)

2. Catastrophizing: Thinking the worst, which increases your anxiety.

(Discuss what is an example?)

- a. For example, in a difficult situation it's expecting the worst, disaster. It's all the “what if's.”
- b. “What if they don't show up, what if she doesn't like me, What if I fail?”
 - i. It's raining-it's never going to stop-it's going to flood and we are all going to lose our crops and drown

3. Mind Reading: occurs when you think you know what someone else is thinking, feeling, or why they are acting a certain way without actual evidence.

- a. “She doesn't like me.”

4. Exaggerating the negative or discounting the positive: you think about bad in a situation instead of the good. So you downplay the positive stuff that happens in your life and think more about the bad or negative events of your life or day.

5. Perfect: You don't need to be an expert or right in everything, no one is and putting those expectations on yourself can lead to stress, depression, and anxiety. “I should be able to do it.” These un-realistic goals you set for yourself



6. Blaming: you hold someone else responsible for your problems and pain. It's important to recognize that you can't change other people or your situation all the time. But you can change how you act and how you perceive a situation.

Recognizing and being aware of these different mind traps, can help you step outside of them, not judge, and gain a greater insight into how your mind works and what mind traps you fall into. "It will allow you to work more skillfully with your mind, instead of letting your mind control you." (MINDFULNESS-BASED STRESS REDUCTION WORKBOOK)

Mindfulness Eating:

Mindfulness is being aware and focusing in the moment. It's fully paying attention to you and your surroundings in a free and non-judgmental way.

Mindfulness eating is focusing on the eating experience. This includes your thoughts, feeling, connections, and senses to the food. When doing mindfulness eating, become aware of the colors, textures, sensations, flavors, of the food. You will use your senses and focus on various food items.

It's important to understand there isn't a right or wrong way to do this exercises and it's not a comparison. This is a non-judgmental zone. Each of you has your own past experiences, senses, and thoughts that will be incorporated into your mindfulness eating experience.

The focus is to focus.

Use this as an opportunity to connect with yourself by using your senses to explore your eating experience. At the end of the exercise we will have the opportunity to reflect and share on our individual mindfulness eating experience.

Mindfulness Eating:

Mindfulness Eating can help reduce overeating by teaching you how to listen to your body's cues of hunger. Mindfulness eating can also help to identify food that pleases you and nourishes your body. Mindfulness eating is more than just sensing and scrutinizing food, it's connecting you and the food with it's past. Where did it come from? How did it arrive from it's beginning to in front of you now? (Chozen, 2009)

The center of mindful eating- the principles of mindful eating. (2006). Retrieved from <http://www.tcme.org/principles.htm>



“Principles of Mindfulness:

- Mindfulness is deliberately paying attention, non-judgmentally.
- Mindfulness encompasses both internal processes and external environments.
- Mindfulness is being aware of what is present for you mentally, emotionally and physically in each moment.
- With practice, mindfulness cultivates the possibility of freeing yourself of reactive, habitual patterns of thinking, feeling and acting.
- Mindfulness promotes balance, choice, wisdom and acceptance of what is” (“The center of,”).

When doing Mindfulness eating exercises think about the four categories:

1. Rituals surrounding food and eating
2. Connectedness with individuals at the meal
3. Community by which food is gathered and shared
4. Blessings surrounding food and eating
(physical sensations)

Mindfulness Eating Exercise:

Place a Hershey kiss in your hand. Imagine that you have just come to Earth from a distant planet without such food. Now, with this food in hand, you can begin to explore it with all your senses. Focus on one of the objects as if you’ve never seen anything like it before. Focus on seeing this object. Scan it with your eyes, exploring every part of it, as if you’ve never seen anything like it before. Turn it around with your fingers and notice what color it is.

Notice the shape of it and where the surface reflects light or becomes darker. Next, explore the texture, feeling any softness, hardness, coarseness, or smoothness.

While you’re doing this, if thoughts arise such as “Why am I doing this weird exercise? “How will this ever help me?” or “I hate these objects,” then just see if you can acknowledge these thoughts, let them be, and then bring your awareness back to the object.

Take the object beneath your nose and carefully notice the smell of it. Bring the object to one ear, squeeze it, roll it around, and hear if there is any sound coming from it.

Begin to slowly take the object to your mouth, noticing how the arm knows exactly where to go and perhaps becoming aware of your mouth watering.

Gently place the object in your mouth, on your tongue, without biting it. Simply explore the sensations of this object in your mouth.

When you’re ready, intentionally bite down on the object; notice how it automatically goes to one side on the mouth versus the other. Also notice the tastes it releases.

Slowly chew this object. Be aware of the saliva in your mouth and how the object changes in consistency as you chew.



Slowly chew this object. Be aware of the saliva in your mouth and how the object changes in consistency as you chew.

When you feel ready to swallow, consciously notice the intention to swallow, then see if you can notice the sensation of swallowing the Hershey kiss, seeing it moving down to your throat and into your esophagus on its way to your stomach.

Take a moment to congratulate yourself for taking this time to experience mindful eating.

Elisha's Story: Mindful Eating (connections)

"Back in my midtwenties when my life felt out of control, I went on a one-month retreat. Each time we sat down to eat we were instructed to be aware of what we were eating, where it came from, and the people who prepared it and to be thankful for it and eat it mindfully. Since I was resistant to being there in the first place, I dug in my heels on this issue and just continued eating as I always had. Often my mind would be swimming with doubts, questioning my decision to even come to this place, thinking I had more important things to be doing, and worrying about whether I really fit in. Most of the time I would be halfway through the meal before I even really tasted the food.

One day, as another participant in the program was talking to me about the importance of being intentional and present in all the activities we do, I immediately thought of the eating and asked him, "Doesn't it annoy you that they make such a big deal about eating here?" He gently smiled at me, brought out an orange from his knapsack, and said, "treat this as an experiment. Take this orange and really think about where it came from, how it started from a seed in the ground how real people cared for the tree to make it healthy and then plucked the fruit from that tree. Think about how this orange was carried from there by many different people before it came to me, and now I'm giving it to you. Now, take this orange and drink it in with all your senses before even peeling it, much less tasting it. When you are ready to take a bite, chew it slightly, slower than you normally would, and then come back to me and let me know how it was for you." And then he left me.

As I sat alone, I noticed some resistance arising but decided to try his experiment. I reflected on all the effort it took for this little orange to get to me, including the fact that it was a gift from him, and noticed that I felt a twinge of appreciation, and a smile came to my face. I had to admit I liked that. I looked a little closer and noticed all the tiny indents in the skin. As I slowly peeled the orange, I noticed a mist of citrus spring into the air, as though the orange was rejoicing to be opened, which made me laugh, and then I smelled the pungent aroma. I noticed the contrast between the vivid orange of the outside of the peel and the pale, whitish inside surface. Once the orange was peeled, I brought it closer to my eyes and saw the smooth, veined texture of the outer membrane. As I broke apart one section, I really looked at all of the tiny individual pieces of pulp, swollen with juice. When I finally put a piece of orange on my tongue, tingling sensations ran up my cheeks. All of my attention was on the taste of the orange, I had eaten many oranges in my life, but I had never tasted an orange in this way.

And then I noticed that the distress I had been feeling was gone, and that I felt calm and at ease.”



Additional Practice

(Awareness of your body movements)

When practicing mindfulness eating it is important to not only be aware of your senses and the way you perceive food but sharpening your awareness of your body movements. For example, consider how you move a fork to your mouth, your posture when you eat, how you chew and swallow your food (Altman, 2006).

JOURNALING QUESTIONS:

1. What did you notice about the Hershey kiss regarding its smell, taste, touch, sight, and sound?
2. What did you like and/or dislike about this exercise?
3. Write down any thoughts or memories that popped into your head while doing the mindfulness eating exercise.
4. What did you notice before? What did you notice after? What did you learn?

Mindfulness Eating Homework:

Eating is a big focus of mindfulness. We eat on a daily basis, yet how often do you sit down and enjoy a meal. We are often distracted and busy and eating becomes a necessity instead of an enjoyment.

Pretend as though you have never seen this food before, truly examine and enjoy the tastes and the sensations that you can gather from food.

You can do this exercise with any object or food of your choice, just concentrate, give your full and undivided attention allow yourself to slow down and enjoy the food, enjoy sensing you're sensing.

It will give you an opportunity to enjoy eating, slow down, focus in the moment, and potentially not eat as much because you'll be "in-tune" with your body and mind (Stahl & Goldstein, 2010).



References:

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Stahl, B., & Goldstein, E. (2010). Mindfulness-based stress reduction workbook. Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Publication., Inc.

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Music Exercises

Age: 6-adult

Goal Area: social/emotional, cognitive/academic

Name of Activity: "Beach Ball"

Objective: People answer questions when they catch the ball.

Materials: age appropriate music, and a beach ball, iPod and speakers, White board, Dry/erase markers

Method: This is a dressed up, MT variation of "hot potato"

Procedure: When music begins, clients will toss ball back and forth. When MT stops the music, the ball stops moving. The person left holding the ball when the music stops will be asked a question. The question asked would depend on the functioning level of the patient and the goals you are working on in that group. The patients I will see tomorrow are generally low functioning adults. I may ask questions like, "What kind of things can you find at the beach?" or "Name another song that the Beach Boys sang." If I am working on self-concept with children, I might ask them to name one thing they like about themselves.

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Hot Beach Ball:

Hot ball encourages students to be engaged in discussion while giving all the participants the opportunity to get to know one another.

1. Have music playing in the background
2. When the music begins the students should toss the ball back and forth.
3. When the music stops, the ball stops, and the student holding the ball will be asked a question.



a. Examples:

- i. What kinds of things do you like doing at the beach?
- ii. What is one thing you like about yourself?
- iii. What is one thing that stresses you out?
- iv. How do you cope or handle stress?

Age: 13-18+

Goal Area: Self-expression, group cooperation

Name of Activity: Programmatic Music or Sound Track

Objective: Students write an add-on story to programmatic music. They then select their own instruments

and accompany the story themselves.

Materials: A few selections of highly programmatic music; music that the composer used to create an image/story (like "Pictures at an Exhibition," or "Peter and the wolf," pieces of Edvard Grieg...) paper, pen, lots of interesting instruments to create a variety of sounds.

Method: Play a bit of 1, 2, or 3 pieces and tell the students they are going to write a story or script to the music. Have them choose the piece, if you want. Then give one student the pen and paper and tell him/her to begin a story. Pass the paper to the next student and ask them to read the previous part and continue the story. Content boundaries may be set dependent on student ages, needs, and facility rules. The story is then read back by the students or therapist with the music playing in the background. Part two: the students then think of their own way to accompany the story with their own instruments. Parts and/or roles are assigned, students choose instruments to represent these, and create their own programmatic music.

Adaptations: Record or video the story, and/or the student's music.

Submitted by: (optional name and email) Margie@musictherapytunes.com

It Is Your Turn:

1. Students will listen to a song
2. Once the song is complete have the students write their own add-on story to the song. They can choose to develop song lyrics or simply write a continuation story
3. Once the students have written their story ask them to share their story



Age: 13-18 +/-

Goal Area: self-expression, emotional expression

Name of Activity: Guided imagery and a song

Objective: Clients undergo a guided imagery experience and make a song about what they imagined.

Materials: A good guided imagery song conducive to the client's needs and interesting age-appropriate

instruments.

Method: This is not my expertise so feel free to write your own activities and send! Give the guided imagery

experience, at the level, which is appropriate to your training. The clients then make a song about what they

experienced. Perform and discuss. Songs can be as short or long as client's need. A Cinquain form below

and is a good, simple way to get clients writing.

Adaptations: Have the people draw a scene from their experience and discuss.

Submitted by: (optional name and email) Margie@musictherapytunes.com

A cinquain form is this: You will be writing a five-line poem. The first line is one word. The next line consists

of two words elaborating on line one.

The third line is three words long. Fourth line is four words, and the fifth line is one word. You can do it to

any poetry form you wish. Haiku fill in the blank. Try this one: I saw_____. I felt_____. I wanted_____ I wish_____I will_____ . Do a poem with the 5 senses.

Mind to Music

Allows the students to be self-expressive and emotionally expressive through a visual and auditory experience

1. Have the students close their eyes and visualize the guided story
2. Once the instructor has completed the guided imagery experience have the student create a song or poem about what they imagined and how they felt



Age: 13-18 and up

Goal Area: Emotional expression

Name of Activity: Drawing to different musical styles/moods

Objective: Kids will draw to various styles or “feels” of music, and discuss the results of how the feeling

portrayed in the music is reflected in the actual art.

Materials: Music of a variety of styles or moods, art materials of your choice, paper.

Method: Discuss what the aim for the activity is. Choose music, play it, create by it and discuss.

Adaptations: Kids can choose music of a variety of moods. This itself is a valuable experience! You can also

have them choose instrumental music only, or music highlighting the voice only. You can discuss what they

think the out come will be ahead of time, and if the results proved or disproved the hypothesis.

You can do this with any art medium. Crayons, paint, glue-paint, glow paint. Clay...

Lyrics and Chords: Up for grabs as need be.

Submitted by: Margie@musictherapytunes.com

Riding the Rhythm:

Riding the rhythm is an expressive exercise that allows students to draw to different music styles/mood

1. Play pieces of songs and as they are playing have the students draw to the various styles or ‘feels’ of the music
2. One the songs have added and the students have drawn, discuss the results of how the feeling portrayed in the music is reflected in their art
3. Ask them how their art would have changed had the music been instrumental, mostly vocals, opera, etc., how would the style of music affect their art?



Age 13-18

Goal Area: self-expression, and math

Name of Activity: Dice game

Objective: Students share information about themselves.

Materials: Dice, favorite songs, rules.

Method: Students take turn rolling the dice. If the dice land on an even number, the student must say something about himself or answer a question asked by another student. If the number is odd, he gets to

ask a question. If the dice land on doubles, then a favorite song is played. You may want to make a rule that

certain language and content is not allowed- depending upon the needs of the group and/or facility.

Submitted by: (optional name and email) Margie@musictherapytunes.com

The Roll to the Rhythm

This exercise allows the students to be self-expressive while rolling dice

1. Students take turns rolling the dice
2. If the dice total is:
 - a. An even number: The student answers a question from someone else in the class
 - b. An odd number: The students get to ask another individual in the class a question
 - c. A Double: The student gets to have a favorite song played that is appreciate in language and content

Age: 13-18 and up

Goal Area: emotional expression

Name of Activity: Which one am I

Objective: Students share how they feel and why they relate to the song.

Materials: List of popular songs, recording of those songs.

Method: Students are given a list of popular songs. They choose one song that represents where they are

"at". Today and tell the group why. The song is then played and the mood, feelings, and related situations

discussed.

Adaptations: To make it a little safer for members, students can discuss how the person in the song feels and

why.

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Lyrics: Please tell me what you use for this activity. Any variations?



That's Me!

1. Students are given a list of songs or can think of their own song that represents how they are feeling/ where they are "at" that day
2. The student's song is played (if appropriate) and the mood, feelings, and related situations are discussed

Goal Area: mental alertness, cognitive stimulation, and mood elevation.

Name of Activity: Music Trivia

Objective: Participants will earn points by naming artists, titles, performing tasks and contributing to the game in general.

Materials: iPod and speakers, White board, Dry/erase markers

Method: 1) Split your group into two teams. Have them come up with a team name.

2) Decide who goes first (the team who has a person with the closest birthday goes first, for example).

3) Play a song for that team. Teams get one point for artist, one point for song title. You can throw in fun points here and there, like a point for dancing the Cupid Shuffle or a point for naming the movie that Eye Of the Tiger is famous for.

4) Repeat step 3, alternating between teams. If a team is at a loss for artist or title, you can allow the other team to "steal" their point.

5) Towards the end of the session, make it a "free for all." Anyone can guess at any time. Warning: you have to pay close attention to who guesses correctly first. It is hard when a few people shout it out at once. I do not blindly choose songs either. There are two reasons that I can think of to rig the game this way. (A) I want to set the patient up for success. If they are slow to answer and points are popping up from everyone but that patient, play something you think they will know right off the bat. (B) I want to shape a person's mood. Today a patient came into session late. She planted herself right in front of me with arms crossed and started yelling at the staff. Well, my next song was Michael Jackson, something I really thought she'd enjoy.

By the end of the hour she was dancing like crazy, smiling and laughing! It is awesome to see changes like that happen in front of you.

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Know Who?

1. Split the class into two teams. Have them come up with a team name
2. The team with the student who has the closest birthday goes first (Team 1)
3. A song is played.
 - a. The team gets 1 point for the artist and 1 point for the song title. The instructor at their discussion can add additional points for movies the songs played in, dancing to them, etc
4. If team 1 cannot identify the artist or song title, team 2 can try to steal (and visa versa)
5. Repeat step 3 with Team 2
6. Towards the end of the session, the first time that raises their hand that has both the artist and title of the song

Age: Can vary from age 11 to older adult

Goal Area: social/emotional expression, sharing and healing in a non-threatening activity.

Name of Activity: Thoughts online

Objective: People read through a list of song lines and choose sentences (from lyrics) that represent where they "are at" and how they feel about their lives.

Materials: Here is a sample of two pages (cut and paste) http://www.scribd.com/full/36140545?access_key=key-1me4nxsflkf9el5tl5oz

Method:

*It is often difficult to put into words what we are feeling./It is even more difficult to write a song about it. This is a songwriting activity that won't instill fear in your patients once you introduce the session. It is cut & paste project. Anyone who can cut and paste (and even those who can't) can be successful.

*In preparation for this activity, you must create a page of song lyrics (one line from different songs-about30-35 per page). This number of lines (and whether you give them one, two, or three pages) should vary depending on the functioning level of your group.

* There's a little bit of Counting Crows, Whitney Houston, Sara Bareilles, John Mayer, Rascal Flatts, Casting Crowns, Michael Jackson, and everything else in it. Here is a link to copy and paste into your browser. There is a two-page list of lines from songs appropriate for substance abuse and other folks needing a change/healing in life. http://www.scribd.com/full/36140545?access_key=key-1me4nxsflkf9el5tl5oz

The steps to this activity are simple enough:

1. Pass out lyric sheets.
2. Patients read through each line and put a mark by the ones they like (at least 10 lines).
3. Patients cut out the lyrics they put a mark by.
4. Patients rearrange song lyrics in a way that makes sense to them.



5. Patients can glue the lyrics to a piece of construction paper and decorate.

Adaptations:

- a) People going through substance withdrawals or who are experiencing any sort of tremors will have difficulty cutting out lyrics. In this case, you may cut the lyrics for them OR allow them to hand-write the lyrics.
- b) Use glue sticks rather than bottles of glue. The reasons for this are obvious, I think.
- c) Patients can change lyrics/add to lyrics/etc. to make the song exactly how they'd like.
- d) For people with visual impairments, make text large and easy to read. Give them fewer lines of lyrics to read so as not to overwhelm them.
- e) It is easy for patients to get overwhelmed with the amount of words on a page. Plan accordingly by providing fewer choices: larger text, fewer lines, and fewer pages.

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Age: 18-29

Goal Area: Self knowledge and expressions

Name of Activity: Past, Present, Future

Objective: Members discuss feelings, life events, decisions, and goals.

Materials: List of current and past popular songs.

Method: Members write down a song from the list (or their personal song choices) that represents their past, present, and future. They discuss these with their peers. The group may end by singing along to a group song choice.

Adaptations: Please tell me!

Submitted by: (optional name and email) Margie@musictherapytunes.com

Age: adult (geriatric or brain injured)

Goal Area: to maintain attention span

Name of Activity: Symphony of Words

Objective: The client plays a specific instrument each time a particular word is used in a familiar song.

Materials: guitar, chosen song, rhythm instrument, or bell that blends with the key of the song.

Method: Set the instrument(s) up in front of the client. Ask the person to play that instrument each time they hear the word _____. Play and do. An example for the song below is to have the person play each time

the word "mountain" is used.

Adaptations: (optional) Have a few instruments to be played for different specific words.

Submitted by: (optional name and email) Margie@musictherapytunes.com



Lyrics and Chords:

D

She'll be comin' round the mountain when she comes.

A

She'll be comin' round the mountain when she comes.

D D7 G Gm

She'll be comin' round the mountain She'll be comin' round the mountain..

D Asus A D

She'll be comin' round the mountain when she comes.

Age: adult/older adult/hospice

Goal Area: social, cognitive, emotional connection, personal/group discussion, to stimulate memories and self-expression.

Name of Activity: Where were you When??

Objective: To stimulate relationship through discussion of topics elicited through song lyrics.

Materials: A variety of songs on topics relevant to the levels, needs, abilities, experiences and age of the particular group.

Method : Present a variety of songs to the group. Ask what they would like to sing. Discuss feelings, events, memories etc as brought up by the song.

Here are some conversation starters and topics that Michelle found helpful:

This exercises combines social, cognitive, and emotional connections by personal/group discussion to stimulate memories and self-expression

1. Have the students listen to the song and discuss feelings, events, memories etc. that are brought up by the song

Have a Dance/Singing Party

A dance party allows the students to choose their own music, dance with others and release stress

1. Allow the students to pick their favorite songs, then open up the dance floor

References:

Minus the dance/singing party, all exercises were compiled from :

La Bella, M. (n.d.). Music therapy lesson plans. Retrieved from <http://musictherapytunes.com/AAA/-Lesson plans for site August 2011 gillbold9 pt font.pdf>

Benefits to physical exercise:

Physical exercise lowers symptoms of anxiety, improves quality of sleep, releases endorphins, feel-good neurotransmitters, reduces risk of stroke, heart disease, and high blood pressure (Clinic, 2012; Zelman, 2012).



Jumping jacks

Doing jumping jacks for 15 minutes can be an efficient way to do some cardiovascular training.

1. Begin by stretching your arms, lower back, and legs for a couple minutes
2. Once you have stretched have them shake their arms and legs to make sure they are loose
3. Note: make sure they have proper footgear: tightly tied shoes
4. To begin the jumping jack, stand with your feet shoulder-width apart and arms at your side
5. Jump up and spread your legs, while playing your arms high over your head. Keep your heads up, palms facing outward
6. To complete the first jumping jack, bring your feet back together while lowering your arms back to your side
7. Continue to repeat steps 4-6 as long as you want

To increase the intensity:

1. Perform jumping jacks for a longer duration
2. Use ankle and wrist weights
3. Complete the exercise as a faster rate

("Are jumping jacks," 2011)

Lunges:

Lunges are used to strengthen the legs while at the same time you are engaging your stabilizer muscles to keep you upright.

1. Keep your upper body straight, shoulders relaxed,
2. Keep a point of approximately equal height, on the other end of the room and look at the point throughout the exercise to keep your chip up
3. Now, step forward with one leg, lowering your body into a lunge until both knees are bent to about 90 degree angle
4. Make sure your front knee is directly above your ankle and your other knee does not touch the floor
5. Keep your weight in your heels as you push back to the starting/standing position
6. Continue lunging, alternating legs for 30-60 seconds.

(FitSugar. 2012.)

Walking:

The American Heart Association states that a cardiovascular exercise in some capacity for 30 minutes is recommended to do 5 to 7 days per week. Walking for 30 minutes can help burn calories, 30 minutes of walking

("Aerobic exercise,")



Neural Spine Position (Pilates):

Neutral spine is the natural position of the spine when all 3 curves of the spine – cervical (neck), thoracic (middle) and lumbar (lower) – are present and in good alignment. This is the strongest position for the spine when we are standing or sitting, and the one that we are made to move from. Knowing how to find the neutral spine position is crucial for doing many Pilates exercises correctly.

Use the following exercise to help you find the neutral position for your spine.

Difficulty: Easy

Time Required: 5 min.

Here's How:

1. Basic Position
2. Lie on your back with your knees bent and your feet flat on the floor. Make sure that your legs are parallel with your heels, toes, knees, and hips all in one line. Let your arms rest at your sides.
3. Relax
4. Relax your body, including your shoulders, neck, and jaw. Allow your back to rest on the floor, without effort. Your rib cage is dropped with the lower ribs released to the floor as well.
5. Breathe Deeply
6. Bring your breath all the way into your body, allowing it to move into your back and the sides of your rib cage, and all the way down to the pelvis.
7. Pelvic Tilt
8. Exhale and use your abs to press your lower spine into the floor in a pelvic tuck.
9. Inhale to release.
10. Exhale
11. Exhale and pull your lower spine up, away from the floor creating a pelvic tilt.
12. Inhale to release.
13. Inhale again.
14. Many people habitually have their spine in one of these two positions, tucked or tilted. To be in neutral spine, you want to be in between these positions, with the lower abs flat and just a slight, natural curve of the lower spine off the floor. Use the following image to establish neutral spine.
15. Balanced Pelvic Placement
16. Imagine that there is a cup of water sitting on your lower abdomen, just a couple of inches below your belly button. Allow your abdominal muscles to drop in toward your spine, making your belly flatter. Remember that you don't want the water to spill, so your pelvis cannot be tipped forward or tucked under.
17. Body Scan
18. You should now be relaxed with your body in a balanced alignment on the floor. Your breath is deep and full, and your abdominals drop toward the floor. The natural curves of the neck and lumbar (lower) spine, however, are away from the floor. Be sure that your lower spine is not pressed into the floor. That would be a pelvic tilt. (Ogle, 2010)

Picture Source: ("Neutral spine," 2012)



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Art Exercises:

Draw or Paint your Feelings:

Students will gain an understanding of how much of a role feelings plays in art making. The connection between line, color, texture, shape etc. will be explored as students create a painting which expresses a certain emotion or feeling.

1. Talk about feelings. What does the word feeling mean? What kinds of feelings do we experience on a day-to-day basis.
2. Talk about color. How do certain colors make us feel? Why?
3. Talk about line. What kinds of lines are there? Straight, jagged, squiggly, zig-zag, etc.
4. Warm up by having students draw lines (using pencil on newsprint) based upon certain feelings. IE: draw happy lines, draw angry lines, etc.
5. You can also encourage your students to draw lines based on the music they are hearing (IE: jazz, classical, pop etc.)
6. Once everyone is "warmed up" begin working with the paint. Make sure each student has a paintbrush, water and access to at least the three primary colors (red, yellow and blue).
7. Give a quick demonstration of how paints are used properly (always clean brushes before dipping into a new fresh color ... treat the brushes well by not squishing them down on the paper etc. Also, review color mixing (yellow + blue = green; red + yellow = orange; red + blue = violet)
8. Everyone can then decide on an emotion or feeling which they will express using various paint colors, lines, textures and shapes.
9. Allow your students to take as long as they need to create the final work, encouraging them to stand back from time to time to have a really good look at what they are doing. Is it moving in the direction they want it to? Are the desired feelings starting to emerge?



10. Remember too that this is a very intuitive and subjective exercise and as such the works should not be analyzed by the instructor, but rather by the students themselves.

11. When the paintings are complete, hang them up and see how others interpret the work. Does everyone see similar emotions or feelings in the same works? Yes? No? Why? (Mulder-Slater, 2011)

SELF-CONFIDENCE BUILDING EXERCISE:

Self-Confidence Building Exercise gives students an opportunity to creatively express their positive traits and focus on themselves in a constructive manner.

1. Simply draw your name in the middle of a piece of paper.
2. Think about all of your positive traits. Now use images to symbolize these traits. If you are good at basketball, draw a bouncing ball; if you are a gardener, draw some flowers. Really let your imagination take over with this project. Remember to use your favorite colors when creating this name piece, and keep it hung close by to remind yourself of how wonderful you really are.
("Quick art therapy," 2009)

PAINT A MOUNTAIN AND A VALLEY:

Walking Through the Valley

The mountain can represent a time where you were happy, the valley, when you were sad. Add elements that reflect specific events as well.

1. Give a sheet of paper to each student
2. Have the student create an image of a valley with a mountain top on either side of the valley.
3. Have them write or draw an image that reflects a low point in life.
4. Next, have each student come up with two high points in life.
5. After the exercise is complete share work and discuss which was more difficult to come up with- the low points or the high points. The low points were probably easier to remember. Ask the students if they could would they never go through the valleys? Or did they learn something from going through that challenging experience? ("Art therapy techniques," 2010)

Balloon:

The students will be given the opportunity to express their negative thoughts and emotions on a balloon then watch as they release the balloon into the sky.

1. Inflate a balloon and tie a string around the base of the balloon
2. Write down all your negative thoughts and feelings either on the balloon or on sticky notes that you attach to the balloon
3. Carry the balloons outside and release the balloons-send away negative feelings
("100 excellent art," 2011)



Kinesthetic Painting:

- Use music and movement as inspiration for kinesthetic artwork. Place a large sheet of bulletin board paper on a wall and position small containers holding red, yellow and blue paint with small brushes in close proximity. Play different types of music and move accordingly while painting in time with the tempo. Change the music and see how it affects the body's movements while painting (Lipoff, 2012).

Scribble Chase:

Scribbling is a physical process that emphasizes freedom of movement. It can help us relax and get into the sensory mode of our bodies as well as the creative, right hemisphere of our brain. This exercise also allows students to partner up and work together.

1. Find a partner and select two crayon of different colors. One person slowly begins to scribble while his/her partner mimics or follows his/her partner.
2. Take turns. Now the other student scribbles while the other student follows. Working together in this manner, fill paper with scribbles.
3. Once the paper is filled with scribbles. The partners should study the scribble and find two objects or images in your picture. Outline and "color in" these 2 images with more crayon.
4. "Using Liquid Watercolor™ in Bingo bottles, work together to cover entire paper with color. Wax crayon will....." (got cut-off) ("Scribble chase," 2004)

(With this in mind, I often begin Teacher Trainings with some form of a scribble warm-up. My favorite is a paired up exercise called a "Scribble Chase." Click here for the printable lesson plan from my book Smart Art Ideas 2(MOREART). While the original lesson plan used Colorations® Liquid Watercolor for the top layer, I've come to enjoy it even more using Colorations® No-Drip Foam Paint. (BFPSET). Scribbling is it's a great way to energize a room at the beginning of a workshop, and we got beautiful results from the Scribble Chase warm-ups shown here. Both were created by teachers at this week's Messy Art Workshop, hosted by Beach Cities AEYC at Long Beach City College. I suggest you try "grown-up" scribbling sometime soon. Happy New Year!

Here is the link with pictures:.....http://www.excelligencelearning.com/Scribble_Chase.pdf



How Nature Represents My Feelings Collage:- Mapping what I have Inside My Heart:

This exercise helps to build self-compassion, self-awareness, and positivity while connecting their thoughts and feelings to nature scenes. The students get to compare external states and those observed through nature with what they students are internally feeling.

Materials: 11"x14" 80 lb. paper, watercolors, markers, watercolor crayons, black sharpies. Nature magazines, scissors, glue stick, something to write with,

1. Have the students find and cut out a minimum of six pictures from nature magazines that identify five different feelings or emotions they've felt.
2. Create a Collage of those pictures
3. Open discussion of their collages and why they chose the pictures they did
 - a. Have the students express what feeling the picture is representing and when they have experienced that feeling or emotion

Mind Jar (peanut butter jars):

This glister exercise distracts students from their own thoughts and helps to settle their mind in preparation for mediation exercises.

Materials: Jar with tight seal, Glitter Glue, Glitter, Water, Food Coloring or Condensed Liquid Watercolor

** (both of a calming color (blues or greens, maybe pink, but pink is physiologically stimulating, you could go with a deep purple/pink), fine glitter of similar color, and water.

1. Just add glitter to glitter glue and add water plus food dye (i used liquid water color) and shake.
2. Add more water to fill the jar
3. SEAL THE LID
4. Shake the jar and watch the glitter settle while it settles do deep breathing

Impermanent Nature Art: Emphasis on Mindfulness and Being in present/letting go.

1. Children go on meditative walk using meditative walk style described in preface and later join in circle.
2. Children make "Nature Art" in the woods and leave it there after circle. It does not have to be leaves for materials. Any found nature materials arranged into a design is acceptable. Have group discussion about inherent peace and calm in nature and having the choice to do a simple activity that does not have complexity nor many steps, yet emphasizing that nature therein gives us everything we need without giving us much of anything at all and how beautiful is that in her simplicity? Discuss how it lends us to be free and calm.



Quote Inspiration: (Should we find quotes for the students??)

This exercise allows the students to create a drawing related to a quote they like.

1. Every student finds a quote they like and draw a picture relating to the quote ("100 excellent art," 2011).

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The 3-Minute Breathing Space-Basic Instructions

I. AWARENESS

Bring yourself into the present moment by deliberately adopting an erect and dignified Posture. If possible, close your eyes. Then ask:

"What is my experience right now . . . in thoughts ... in feelings ...and in bodily sense»
Tones?"

Acknowledge and register your experience, even if it is unwanted.



2. GATHERING

Then, gently redirect full attention to breathing, to each breath and in each outbreath as they follow, one after the other”.

Your breath can function as an anchor to bring you into the present and help you tune into a State of awareness and stillness.

3. EXPANDING

Expand the sphere of your awareness around your breathing, so that it includes a sense of the body as a Whole, your posture, and expression.

The breathing spaces provides a way to Step out of automatic mode and reconnect with the present moment.

The key Skill in using MBCT tools is to maintain awareness in the moment. Nothing else.

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Floating Leaves on a Moving Stream

This can be an eyes closed exercise. First, read the instructions and when you are sure you understand them, close your eyes and do the Exercise.

Imagine a beautiful slow-moving stream. The Water flows over rocks, Around trees, descends downhill, and travels through a valley. Once In a while, a big leaf drops into the stream and floats away down the river. Imagine you are sitting beside that stream on a Warm sunny day, watching the leaves float by.

Now become conscious of your thoughts. Each time a thought pops Into your head, imagine that it is written oh one of those leaves. If you think in Words, put them on the leaf as Words. If you think in Images, put them on the leaf as an image. The goal is to stay beside the stream and allow the leaves on the stream to keep floating by. Don't try to make the stream go faster or slower; don't try to Change what shows up on the leaves in any way. If the leaves disappear, or if you mentally go somewhere else, or if you find that you are in the stream or on a leaf, just stop and notice that this happened. Fight that knowledge away and once again return to the stream, watch a thought come into your mind, Write it on a leaf, and Eet the leaf float away down the stream.



Confine doing this for at least five minutes. Keep a watch or a clock close by and note when you start the exercise. This will be useful in answering some of the questions below. If the instructions are clear to you now, go ahead and close your eyes and do the exercise.

Floating Leaves on a Moving Stream. Hayes. S. C. (2005). *Get Out of Your Mind & Into Your Life* New Harbinger Publications. Oakland CA.

Floating Leaves on a Moving Stream

How long did you go until you got caught by one of your thoughts?

If you got the Stream flowing and then it stopped, or if you went somewhere else in your mind, Write down what happened just before that occurred:

If you never got the mental image of the stream started, write down what you were thinking while it wasn't starting:

Relaxing the Body and Mind

Body Scan Exercise

Select a comfortable place to sit or lie down. If your intention is to relax and re-energize you should sit on the floor or a chair with your back straight and erect and your hands resting on your lap. If your intention is to go to sleep you should lay on your back with your hands by your side.

You can't do this exercise wrong...it's only natural that your attention will wander at times...just notice when this happens and gently return to wherever we are in the exercise.

Start by focusing on your breathing, no need to change your breathing just notice the breath as it flows naturally in and out. You may notice the sensation of the air coming in through your nose and out through your mouth. . .or you may pay attention to how your stomach moves in and out with each breath.

Now bring your attention to your left foot.. .notice the sensation of your shoe on your foot, or foot on the floor. . .scanning your attention over and through each of your toes.. .your arch and heel. . .up to your ankle. You may notice warmth, pressure, tingling sensations. . .whatever, just keeping your attention on your left foot. And now imagining your in-breath flowing through your left leg and into your foot and noticing how the muscles relax on the out-breath. Breathing in and out of the left foot a few more times.



New bringing your attention to your left lower leg, ankle to knee. Noticing the shin and calf. . .tuning into sensations there. . . warmth, tingling, tension, whatever is there, just noticing. And directing your breath into your left lower leg on the in-breath and relaxing on the out-breath.

Each time distracted, just returning to wherever we are in the exercise. (mentioned occasionally throughout exercise)

Now focusing on your left upper leg, knee to hip. Notice sensations in the quadriceps and hamstring. Moving your awareness gently up your leg to your hip. Notice the sensations of your leg on the chair. Just tuning into sensations. . .tension, tingling, whatever is there. Breathing into your upper leg and relaxing on the out-breath.

Repeat the progression now for the right leg, and lower leg, upper leg

Notice both for a moment, resting your awareness on the length and width of them, scanning your awareness up and down both legs together.

Now focusing awareness on your left hand, scanning over each finger and thumb, palm and the back of your hand. Notice sensations in all those tiny muscles and joints. Whatever is there.. .warm or cold. . .tingling.. .pain or tension, just noticing. Now imagining your breath going all the way down into your left hand and all the muscles relaxing on each out-breath.

Focusing attention now on your left forearm, wrist to elbow. Noticing sensations. . .whatever is there...breathing in and letting go.

Moving awareness to your left upper arm, elbow to shoulder and all the way to the back of your neck. Scanning over bicep and tricep, shoulder. . .noticing sensations in left upper arm.. . warmth, tension tingling, soreness. . .whatever is there. . .now breathing into your left upper arm and allowing tension to melt away on each out-breath.

Repeat progression for entire right arm...fingers to shoulder.

Noticing both arms and legs now...relaxed

Now becoming aware of your stomach moving in and out with each breath, not changing your breathing, just noticing movement. And scanning up your body to the chest and neck. Becoming aware of Sensations in the front of your body. Breathing in and relaxing on each out-breath.



And now focusing attention on the base of your spine. . .moving your awareness slowly up each vertebrae and out to each side. All the way up to the back of your neck. Noticing sensations in your back, whatever's there. . .making room for pain or discomfort and focusing your inbreath and out-breath to the back. Visualizing tension melting away.

Now focusing your attention on a point between your eyebrows, at the top of your nose. . .and scanning your awareness over your forehead to your left and right temple. Focusing on your left cheek. . .and right cheek. Softening your eyes and jaw. Allowing tension to melt away from all the muscles of your face.. .and neck. Scanning your awareness up over your forehead and straight to the back of your neck. Noticing the left and right side of your head. Noticing your whole head sitting firmly on your shoulders. Relaxed.

Now, finally, noticing your whole body.. .scanning your attention slowly, gently from head to toe. . .down each of your arms to your fingers. Imagining each in-breath washing through your entire body and each out-breath letting go of tension. Just noticing the sensation of your entire body. . .heavy and relaxed.

And to the exercise focusing again on your breathing. . .noticing the sensation of the air in and out of your nose and mouth.. .notice how your body moves with each in and Picturing the room around you in your minds eye. . .and gently opening your eyes when you are ready.



HANDOUT 8.2



The 3-Minute Breathing Space—Basic Instructions

I. AWARENESS

Bring yourself into the present moment by deliberately adopting an erect and dignified posture. If possible, close your eyes. Then ask:

“What is my experience right now ... in thoughts ... in feelings ... and in bodily sensations?”

Acknowledge and register your experience, even if it is unwanted.

2. GATHERING

Then, gently redirect full attention to breathing, to each inbreath and to each outbreath as they follow, one after the other.

Your breath can function as an anchor to bring you into the present and help you tune into a state of awareness and stillness.

3. EXPANDING

Expand the field of your awareness around your breathing, so that it includes a sense of the body as a whole, your posture, and facial expression.

The breathing space provides a way to step out of automatic pilot mode and reconnect with the present moment.

The key skill in using MBCT is to maintain awareness in the moment. Nothing else.

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Nature?	<p>Leaves on a stream</p> <p><i>They wanted to more move walk to dance!</i></p>
Dance/ Music/ Rhythm	<p><i>Students brought in their favorite music that uplifted themselves and emotions. Shared their love of music with others and all learned and enjoyed greatly. An amazing connectedness was formed with the group through this universal language of Music and movement.</i></p>
Humor	<p><i>Laughter is the best medicine! Students shared complimentary jokes about each other on what they learned. Some wrote poems and others phrases to remember our time together. A truly beautiful and transformative journey!</i></p>