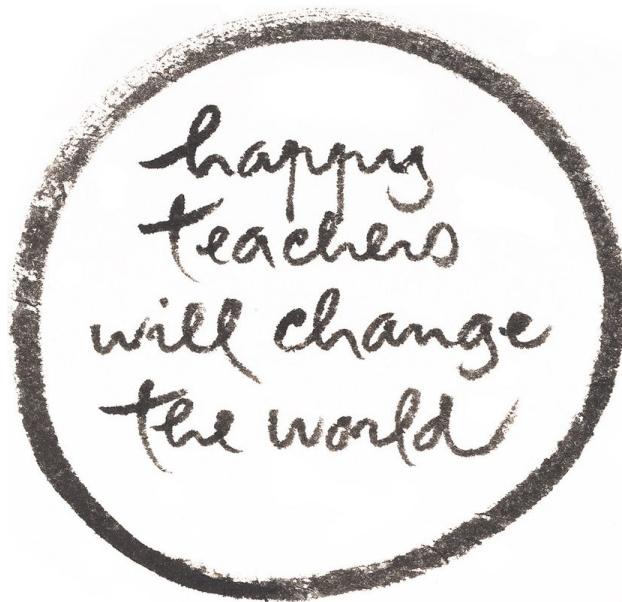


Mindful Educator Classroom Tool Kit



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Mindful Educator Tool Kit for the Classroom

Mindful Educator - Skill for being with the Ups and Downs of Life

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*Mindful Educator provides Stress Management & Resilience Techniques
for educators and helping professionals,
based on the principles of the MBSR (Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction) Workshop program
created by Jon Kabat-Zinn
at the University of Massachusetts Medical Centre in 1979.*

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WHAT IS MINDFULNESS?



Mindful or Mind Full

*Mindfulness is paying attention
to your life, in the here and now,
with kindness and curiosity,
so that you can choose your behaviour.*
Amy Saltzman, M.D.

Mindfulness for Classrooms

Mindfulness can be fun! It is not an add-on. Here you will find inclusive ways to bring Mindfulness practice into your life. This is a tool kit if you will, of all ages Mindfulness practices.

Please adapt and make them your own, in a way that suits your classroom.

Bring Mindfulness to all of your life with your students. Mindfulness with students is an evidence-based approach that

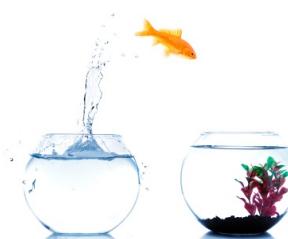
- Strengthens self-control
- Lowers anxiety and stress
- Increases positive moods
- Better decision making
- Increases self-esteem
- Improves Health and Body Image
- Improves Emotional Regulation Skills
- Improves social skills and communication

Remember the key is to take care of yourself first, putting the oxygen mask on yourself, before embarking on helping anyone else.

Simply pay attention to yourself, noticing body sensations, thoughts and emotions, and PAUSE before reacting. It is simple and yet not easy, a skill developed with practice over time.

MINDFUL EDUCATOR SELF CARE TIPS

- Be present (Are you remembering something about the past or worrying about something in the future? What is happening RIGHT HERE RIGHT NOW)
- Practice compassion (For yourself, children and others)
- Beware of thoughts (Thoughts are not always facts)
- Acknowledge what you are feeling - Emotions (Name it to tame it)
- Be aware of your breath (Long slow breathing with an emphasis on the exhalation relaxes the body)
- Be aware of your body (Grounding - befriend gravity)
- Accept things as they are (Respond vs react – it is what it is)
- Be mindful of technology (Turn it off, all of it, sometimes)
- Acknowledge transitions - Transitions are the spaces between moments. Transitions are not just about just getting you ready for the next experience, they **are** the experience.



MINDFULNESS TOOL KIT



Create a container for your classrooms to keep mindful reminders for your students, that can be used to imbed mindfulness into what you are already doing. A mindfulness box can hold things such as:

- A mindfulness bell used to bring attention to the present moment
- Breathing buddy – Stuffed animals to practice breathing with
- Calm Down Jar – Mind In A Jar
- Colouring pages and coloured pencils / markers
- Emotion Thumb Ball
- Finger labyrinth image sheet
- Gratitude jar and paper to write what you are grateful for
- Hoberman sphere or slinky to be used for demonstrating breathing in and breathing out
- Make your own stress ball instructions
- Mindful eating instructions
- Mindful feelings jar filled with feelings written on them
- Mindful Yoga cards to practice stretching and mindful movements
- Mindfulness Activity Sheets
- Mindfulness books
- Mindfulness cards
- Mindfulness thumb ball
- Squishy balls

1. MINDFULNESS BELL



- When it is rung, everyone in the class stops what they are doing and listens to the bell, until they can no longer hear the resonance of the bell.
- When you can't hear the bell, stretch (either standing up or in your chair).
- Then, just feel your breath in your body, allowing the body to relax, as best you can, and just feel the sensations in the present moment.

- It takes a while to get everyone into the flow of the Mindful Bell, so be patient.
- Just having the bell in the room can be a reminder for the class to be more mindful. You can invite a student to lead the Mindful Bell practice.



Vibratone: Latin Percussion LP775-BL Vibra-Tone Std.
Indigo Blue <http://bit.ly/MEvibratone>

*NOTE: the mindfulness bell is used to help *Pay Attention* not *get attention*.

2. ABCD PRACTICE



A = Anchor your attention to the present moment. For example, have your feet be the anchor

B = Breath and notice the quality of your breath; Shallow? Full? Fast? Slow? Chest? Belly?

C = Check in with yourself as if you were checking in with a good friend. How are you mentally? emotionally? physically?

D = Decide what you need right now? A glass of water? A deeper breath? To sit down? To move around?

*The ABCD Practice was created by Sara Escott as part of her mindfulness and drama in school program for elementary students.

3. CALM DOWN JAR



This activity is sometimes referred to as "Mind in a Jar" because the water signifies our mind and the glitter our thoughts and feelings. When the water is calm it is clear, much like our mind is clear when our thoughts and feelings are calm. When something happens that causes our thoughts and feelings to swirl around, even just a little, we cannot see quite as clearly. And when the mind is very active, we can't see (through the bottle) at all. If we needed to make a decision or respond thoughtfully to someone, we would be very challenged to do so until we were able to calm our mind and see clearly.

It is important for students to understand that our thoughts and feelings are not bad, even when they are upsetting - they are a part of what makes us who we are. Mindfulness teaches us to grow in our awareness of our internal and external states; to be curious of our thoughts and feelings, and learn to sit with them even when they are uncomfortable.

CALM DOWN JAR MATERIALS

- Small jar: make sure it's one that will close tightly to hold liquid
- 1 tube of glitter glue
- Liquid Soap
- Water

This is pretty simple: just add everything to the jar. Use warm water and give it a good shake to get the glue mixed in well. Bring on the peace! You may wish to use glue to seal the jar.

4. MINDFUL FEELINGS JAR



It's good to help students identify feelings in their body and build confidence in being with them. After we become familiar with the sensations in the body associated with emotions and learn to accept them, feelings aren't so scary. Having a jar with pieces of paper with feelings written in it gives us a chance to talk about feelings. You can sit down and look at the papers and talk about times you have felt

that emotion. You can also have some fun and play charades using the papers with emotions written on them. Research has shown that helping children develop acceptance of their feelings is helpful in reducing anxiety.

5. DRAWING THE BREATH ART ACTIVITY



Materials: Paper / Crayons or markers

- Pass out markers. Have everyone choose a colour to begin with.
- Find a starting point with eyes open on the left side of the paper.
- Invite everyone to close their eyes and breathe naturally, without changing the breath in any way.
- As they breathe, draw their breath, letting your movement follow the breath. The breath is the guide and the crayon/marker follows.
- After a few breaths, invite everyone to open their eyes.
- They can then colour in any closed spaces in the abstract drawing of their breath and add other colours to the drawing.
- Everyone's breath will look different. Some may go left to right in a wave fashion rarely overlapping or some may spike and continuously intertwine.
- Encourage everyone to share what their breath looks like and discuss all the beauty in their unique breath art.

*Created by Sue Hutton, Social Worker, Mindful Parenting Teacher

6. BREATHING BUDDIES



For young children, an instruction to simply “pay attention to the breath” can be hard to follow. A “breathing buddy” exercise can be more accessible: Each student grabs a stuffed animal, and then lies down on their back with their buddy on their belly. They focus their attention on the rise and fall of the stuffed animal as they breathe in and out.

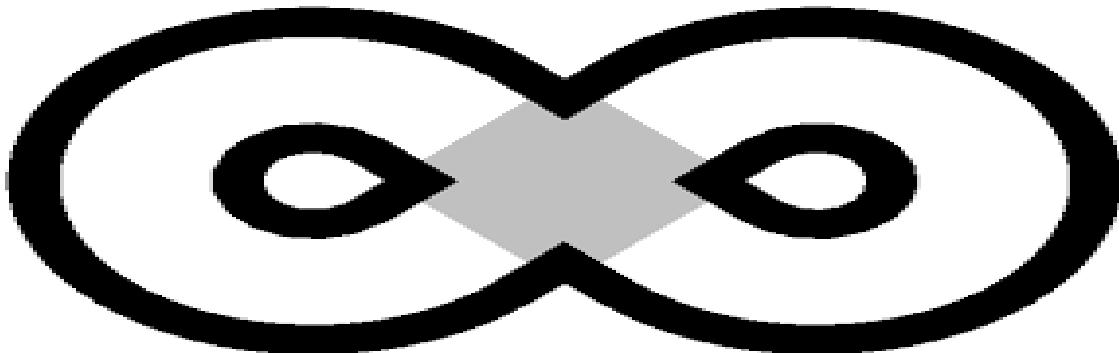
7. GRATITUDE ACTIVITY



Research shows that practicing the 3 E's of Gratitude get results and help people improve their wellbeing. Students can keep listing things and people they are grateful for. It doesn't have to just be one. Encourage them to *feel* what it's like to be grateful – where in the body do they feel it.

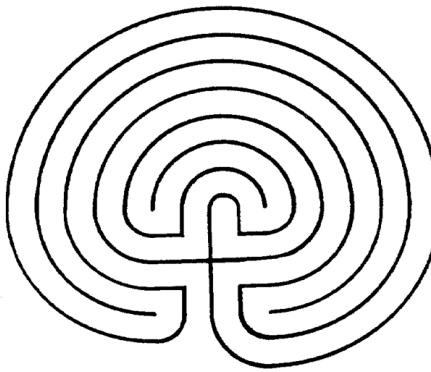
1. Exercise Gratitude: Do it **everyday**, just like physical exercise
2. Emote Gratitude: Mindfully feel the **emotions** (sensations associated with gratitude)
3. Express Gratitude: **Tell** it to people in your life, like your friends, teachers, and family
Have students write on small pieces of paper and contribute to the class Gratitude Jar.
Find a special time to open the jar and share what has been written.

8. INFINITY SYMBOL BREATHING



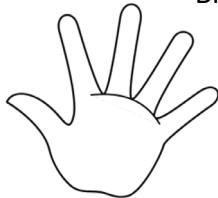
Trace your finger along the inside of this infinity symbol. Starting with your finger in the centre, take a slow breath in as you move along one side of the symbol, and when you cross over to the other side, allow your breath to gently exhale. Follow this breathing pattern while you trace the symbol as many times as you like. You can also practice Infinity symbol breathing by holding your finger in front of you, and tracing an infinity symbol with your finger in the air.

9. LABYRINTH FINGER TRACING



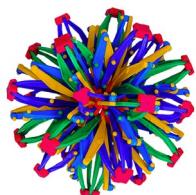
- Before you start, take some time to settle into a position in which you are comfortable. Take some slow deep breaths to centre you in your practice.
- Place a finger at the entrance of the labyrinth.
- As you follow the path with your finger inward, be conscious and intentional about releasing whatever stresses, worries, or distractions you might be feeling. Breathe deeply and slowly.
- Pause whenever you want, but don't lift your finger off the labyrinth.
- When distracting thoughts come up, simply let them pass and wish them well as they leave your mind.
- When you reach the centre, pause for a while and notice thoughts, emotions and body sensations. Be open to whatever is present.
- When you're ready, follow the path outwards, consciously returning and bringing the wisdom of the centre out into your life with you.
- Don't try too hard. Stay open and receptive.

10. FIVE FINGER BREATHING



Breathe in slowly and fully tracing up your finger, and out as you trace down the other side beginning with your thumb and continuing with each of your other fingers. As you follow the outline of your hand you will feel your body calming.

11. HOBERMAN SPHERE



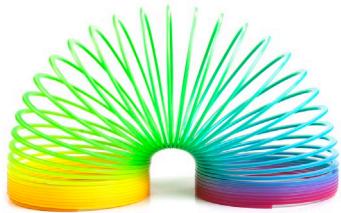
4 Breathing Ball Activities

- Demonstrate the Lungs: explain how the lungs expand and contract with the inhale and exhale
- Self-Regulation: Leave the breathing ball in the quiet area of your class, on a child's desk, or on a bedside table for children to use on their own. It's an engaging tool for self-regulation once children know how to use it.
- Children Follow the Ball: The teacher opens and closes the ball, the class breathes to match the pace of the movement. [Make sure you are breathing at a pace suited to the age and lung capacity of the group you're teaching. Kids won't be able to follow a breathing ball that is opened and closed too slowly. It's not physically possible for little lungs to keep up with adult lungs.] Kids can use their fingertips pressed together to mimic the movement of the ball.
- Breathing Ball Follows the Child's Breath: Instead of starting with #3, invite a student to sit with you and take a few deep breaths moving their arms and emphasizing their breath. Then the teacher opens and closes the breathing ball to follow the breath of the student, instead of the child following the breathing ball. When you follow the breath for a few cycles, it can start to change on its own. Try this exercise for a minute with different children and kids soon see the different breathing rates and how awareness can change the breath.

<https://youngyogamasters.com/2017/04/12/hoberman-sphere-breathing-ball-in-kids-yoga/>

Consider these Ventilation/Respiration Rates for Children and Adults
Average resting respiratory rates by age are cited on Wikipedia:
-birth to 6 weeks: 30–40 breaths per minute
-6 months: 25–40 breaths per minute
-3 years: 20–30 breaths per minute
-6 years: 18–25 breaths per minute
-10 years: 17–23 breaths per minute
-Adults: 12-18-breaths per minute
-Elderly ≥ 65 years old: 12-28 breaths per minute.
-Elderly ≥ 80 years old: 10-30 breaths per minute.
Children breath faster because their lungs are smaller.

12. SLINKY BREATHING



Imagine the backbone is a slinky that you can gently separate, expanding the spaces between the vertebrae, but with soft shoulders and a broad collarbone. Have the students hold the slinky lengthwise in their hands and gently draw it apart vertically as they breathe deeply in through the nose and lengthen their own backs. Providing a prop for this imagery can really help kids visualize the cue and lead to better posture and deeper breathing.

13. MINDFULNESS THUMB BALL



Thumball is a soft stuffed ball to throw, roll, or pass in a circle or randomly. Catch it! Look under your thumb. Respond to the prompt. Kids absolutely love this interactive tool that will get them talking and sharing. Without even knowing it, you will be encouraging the use of interpersonal skills including taking turns, eye contact, listening, responding, valuing similarities and respecting individual differences. Topics include self-calming, insightfulness, irrational thoughts, self-awareness, believe & achieve and "The Present Is a Gift"

<https://www.cavershambooksellers.com/search/X59869>

NOTE: Teachers can make their own version of the above with a small soccer ball

14. EMOTION THUMB BALL



A thumball is a soft stuffed ball to throw, roll, or pass in a circle or randomly. Throw it, roll it, pass it or catch it. Look under your thumb. React to the word, phrase, or graphic found there. Each panel has a different word, graphic, or photo, and each ball has 32 panels. Each panel has a word relating to an emotion. As you pass the ball around, players read and respond to prompts about their emotions.

<https://www.cavershambooksellers.com/search/emotion+thumb+ball>

15. Alphabreaths (Book and YouTube Link)



Alphabreaths: The ABCs of Mindful Breathing by Christopher Willard PsyD (Author), Daniel Rechtschaffen MA (Author), Holly Clifton-Brown (Illustrator).

YouTube Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dnvn6t51TyQ>

16. BREATH VISUALIZATION

Rose and Dandelion Visualization:



Breathing in...
Smell the rose.



Breathing out...
Blow out the
dandelion.

Hot Chocolate Breath:



Bring your hands together as if you are holding a mug of hot chocolate (or a beverage of choice!). Hold your “mug” down in front of your belly. Bring your hot chocolate all the way up to your nose as you take a long inhale through your nose and sniff the sweet smell. But the drink is too hot! Exhale through your mouth and blow on the drink to cool it down as you draw the mug back down to your belly. Repeat. Credit: Sara Escott, Video: <https://youtu.be/aaJNuU2TIBs>

Shark Fin Breath:



Inhale deeply through your nose and raise one hand straight above your head as if your hand was a shark fin growing from the top of your head. Exhale slowly as you draw the hand down from your head over your nose and chin, and all the way down to your chest. As you exhale, you can also make a “shhhh” sound with your mouth.

Repeat.

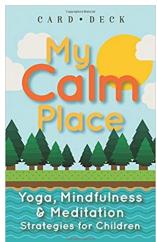
Credit: Master of Mindfulness: How to Be Your Own Superhero in Times of Stress by Laurie Grossman and Mr. Musumeci's 5th Grade Class. Video: <https://youtu.be/26HMB13wzdw>

Tree Breath:



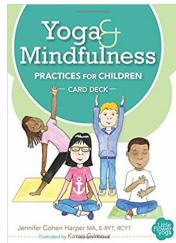
Bring your hands together in front of your chest, one hand in a fist and the second hand covering the first. This is your tree seed. Inhale and grow the seed, opening the hand that was in a fist so that your hands are flat together in a “prayer” position. Draw your hands up to the sky, then opening your arms and expanding your branches. Exhale, bring your hands back together and lower them, returning them once again to your chest. Repeat. It’s also a great stretch! Credit: Sara Escott, Video: <https://youtu.be/s6dAX0p4vo8>

17. Mindfulness Cards



My Calm Place: Yoga, Mindfulness & Meditation Strategies for Children
Cards by Barbara Neiman

18. Yoga and Mindfulness Cards



Yoga and Mindfulness Practices for Children Card Deck Cards by Cohen Harper, Jennifer (Author), Karen Gilmour (Illustrator)

19. Mindfulness Activity Task Cards (free download)

<https://www.teachstarter.com/gb/teaching-resource/mindfulness-activity-task-cards-gb/>



- Mindful Breathing
- Pinwheel Breathing
- Belly Buddies
- Shark Fin
- Breathing Colours
- Breath Star
- Back-to-Back Breathing
- Body Scan
- Mindful Eats

A set of 17 task cards with instructions for classroom mindfulness activities.

Use this [teaching resource](#) when practicing [mindfulness](#) with your students.

These task cards contain 17 different mindfulness exercises, with instructions, for you to use in the classroom. The mindfulness activities include:

- Mindful Steps
- Mindful Sounds
- Super Senses
- A Moment of Gratitude
- Sensory Bottle
- Mindful Explorers
- Sense Countdown
- Heartbeat

20. MINDFUL EATING



eating mindfully

Use your 5 senses to explore one bite of food. Begin by looking at the food, smell the food, touch the food and even listen to the food. Next put that one bite of food into your mouth and experience the sensations of having that food in your mouth before swallowing or chewing. The third part of Mindful Eating is slowly chewing the bite of food and notice if the texture or taste changes. And finally swallowing the bite of food.

What do you notice about the experience? Did you notice anything new? We can also examine connection – by investigating how many people it took to bring the food to you: the elements of nature – earth, sun, wind, rain; the people – farmers, packaging advertisers, food packers, truck drivers, truck manufactures, etc.

*Note: Some Ideas for mindful eating: fresh fruit if possible or fruit bars, popcorn, crackers.

21. BODY SCAN VISUALIZATION



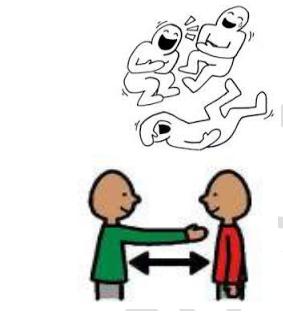
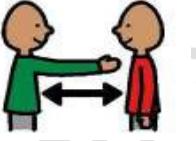
Ask students to lie on exercise mats or sit in their chairs and slowly inhale through their nose. Then, students are asked to visualize each part of the body, paying attention to whether they feel tense or relaxed.

- Check in with yourself. Notice how you are feeling now.
- If imagery is helpful, imagine that your attention is a flashlight and you are moving it throughout your body as the various parts of the body are mentioned. The body scan first starts at the crown of the head, followed by the forehead, the eyes, the nose, the cheeks, the jaw, the mouth, the chin and finally the ears including any sounds that are noticed.
- Then turn your focus to the neck and shoulders, notice any tension or sensation of air in the throat.
- Now pay attention to your arms, elbows, wrists, hands and fingers.
- Shifting your focus to the chest area, notice the rise and fall of the chest when you breathe in and out. Notice any aches and pains and take a deep breath in and focus on relaxing this area.
- Afterwards, turn your attention to your stomach, your lower back, your hips, and your sitting bones.
- Now move your attention to your thighs, feel the weight of your legs.
- Next turn your attention gently towards your knees and your calves, noticing how your muscles feel.
- Finally moving your attention to your feet, the toes, the heels, the tops and the bottoms of the feet.

- Notice how you are feeling now.

NOTES: Safety First: Have blankets on hand so that the students feel protected. Offer choice for the position – it could be lying down on the back or on the side or on stomach. Closing eyes is optional. It is ok to move if they have to. Make the appropriate choice for having the door opened or closed. You may wish to have a “guardian” for the group who keeps their eyes open and make sure that everyone is safe.

22. MANAGING TEST ANXIETY

Managing Test Anxiety	Core Breathing Practice
1. Sleep	 <p>Let's begin by sitting down in a comfortable position and closing your eyes, if that is comfortable for you, or looking down at your hands.</p>
2. Listen to Music	 <p>Let's begin by paying attention to your breathing.</p>
3. Laughter	 <p>Taking calm, slow breaths, gently breathing in through your nose, and then letting go of each breath.</p>
4. Talk to a Friend or Adult	 <p>Keeping your shoulders relaxed, picture the air coming into your body and going out again.</p>
5. Practice a Relaxation Technique – Deep Belly Breathing	 <p>If your mind wanders, as it will, gently and kindly bring your attention back to noticing your breath.</p>
6. Exercise	 <p>Feeling your belly rising and falling, keeping it soft and relaxed.</p>
	<p>When you are ready, opening your eyes slowly and taking another slow, deep breath with open eyes.</p> <p>Take a minute to notice how you feel now.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did you notice about your breathing? • Did you notice if your attention wandered from the breath? • Were you able to bring it back to noticing your breathing?

23. RESOURCES

Free Apps (with guided practices):

- Breath2Relax
- Calm (free for teachers) <https://www.calm.com/schools>
- De-stress-ify
- Insight Timer
- Mindshift
- OMG I Can Meditate
- Smiling Mind
- Stop, Breathe & Think

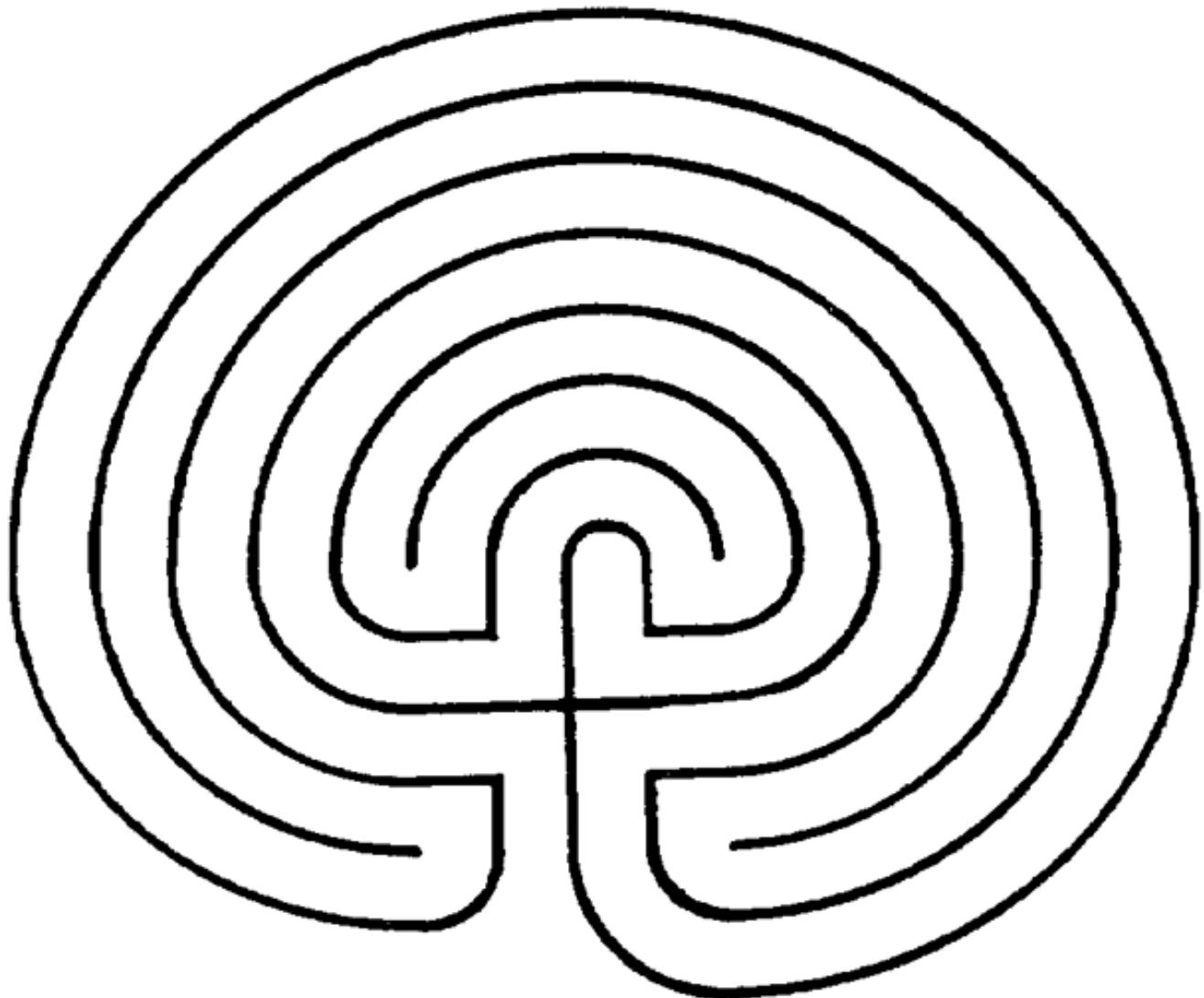
Books for Educators:

- Buddha's Brain: The Practical Neuroscience of happiness, wisdom & love, Rick Hanson
- Mindful Teaching and Teaching Mindfulness: A Guide for Anyone Who Teaches Anything, Deborah Schoeberlein
- Mindfulness for Teachers: Simple Skills for Peace and Productivity in the Classroom, Patricia A. Jennings
- **Teaching Mindfulness Skills to Kids and Teens**, Christopher Willard PsyD (Editor), Amy Saltzman MD (Editor), Susan Kaiser Greenland JD (Foreword)
- The Mindful Path to Self-Compassion: Freeing Yourself from Destructive Thoughts and Emotions, Christopher K. Germer, PhD
- Wherever You Go, There You Are, Jon Kabat-Zinn

Books for Kids:

- 10 Mindful Minutes: Giving our Children- & Ourselves- the Social and Emotional Skills to Reduce Stress and Anxiety for Healthier, Happier Lives, by Goldie Hawn and Wendy Holden
- A Handful of Quiet: Happiness in Four Pebbles, by Thich Nhat Hanh
 - Have you Filled your Bucket Today? A Guide for Kids, by Carl McCloud
 - **Master of Mindfulness: How to Be Your Own Superhero in Times of Stress**, by Laurie Grossman and Mr. Musumeci's 5th Grade Class
 - Mindful Games: Sharing Mindfulness & Meditation with Children, Teens & Families, by Susan Kaiser Greenland
 - Moody Cow Learns Compassion, by Kerry Lee MacLean
 - **Moody Cow Meditates**, by Kerry Lee MacLean
 - No Ordinary Apple, by Sara Marlow
 - Please Explain Anxiety to Me! Simple Biology and Solutions for Children and Parents, by Laurie Zelinger, Jordan Zelinger
 - Sitting Still Like a Frog, by Eline Snel
 - Take the Time: Mindfulness for Kids, by Maud Rogers
 - Your Fantastic Elastic Brain, by JoAnne Deak

24. Finger Labyrinth Sheet



Mindfulness

25. Thoughts are Not Facts (Infographic)

**THOUGHTS are
NOT FACTS PRACTICE**

mindful
mindful.org

When you put some space between you and your reaction, it changes your relationship to your thoughts—you can watch them come and go instead of treating them as matter of fact.

If you're stuck on a negative thought, ask yourself:

- 1 Is it true?**
Often the answer is, "Well, yes." This is the brain initially reacting—the autopilot you live with and believe is you.
- 2 Is it absolutely true?**
Is this thought 100% accurate? Can you see the thought in a different way?
- 3 How does this thought make me feel?**
Notice any storylines you're holding onto, and name your feelings: *sad, angry, jealous, hurt*.
- 4 What would things be like if I didn't hold this belief?**
Imagine possible benefits to your relationships, energy levels, and motivation.

Excerpt from *Uncovering Happiness* by Elisha Goldstein, adapted from *Love What Is* by Byron Katie.

26. 7 Things Mindful People Do Differently (Infographic)

**7 Things
Mindful People
Do Differently**

1
Approach everyday things with curiosity—and savor them

2
Forgive their mistakes—big or small

3
Show gratitude for good moments—and grace for bad ones

4
Practice compassion and nurture connections

5
Make peace with imperfection—inside and out

6
Embrace vulnerability by trusting others—and themselves

7
Accept—and appreciate—that things come and go

List created by Elisha Goldstein, Ph.D., psychologist, author of *The Now Effect*

27. A Mindful S.N.A.C.K. (Infographic)



A Mindful S.N.A.C.K.

The next time you're feeling stressed out, overwhelmed, or unsure, reach for a moment of calm awareness: a mindfulness SNACK. Here's how to do it:

S	N	A	C	K
Stop	Notice	Accept	Curious	Kindness
Just stop whatever you're doing. (Stopping, by definition, requires us to begin again. We can always begin again.)	What is happening within and around you?	This is a tricky one. Whatever it is you're struggling with (time, kids, sleepiness, frustration) acknowledge it for what it is, without judgment.	Ground yourself with questions about your experience and environment: What am I feeling? What do I need right now?	Respond to yourself and others (mistakes and all) with kindness and observe how that helps things get back on track.

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28. THINK before you.... (Infographic)

Before you....



THINK!!

T = is it True?

H = is it Helpful?

I = is it Inspiring?

N = is Now a good time?

K = is it Kind?

29. Mindful Listening (infographic)



LISTEN TO UNDERSTAND

- **Listening to** WHAT IS BOTH SAID & UNSAID
- **Listen** WITHOUT JUDGING
- **Listen** WITHOUT REACTING
- **Listen** WITHOUT INTERRUPTING
- **Listen** WITHOUT DISTRACTION (email, texts, etc.)
- Let the person know they are **TRULY BEING HEARD**

GIVE THE GIFT OF YOUR MINDFUL ATTENTION.

30. 5 4 3 2 1 Grounding Technique



5 4 3 2 1

GROUNDING TECHNIQUE

5 things you can see

4 things you can feel

3 things you can hear

2 things you can smell

1 thing you can taste



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