

Mindfulness and Leadership: How can they connect?



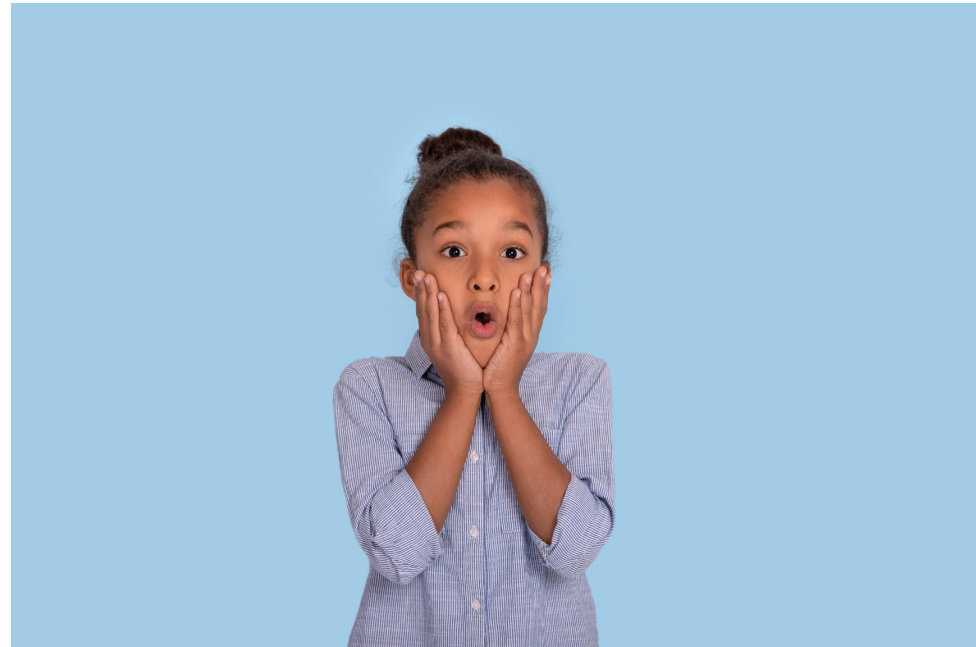
EITA Consultant: Jen Furness, M. Ed.

Intentions for the Day

- Investigate the research around social emotional learning and its implications for staff and children
- Discover strategies to lower stress as educators and administrators and improve children's experiences in our classrooms and our programs
- Practice simple mindful techniques that can be implemented in your organization
- Develop steps to implement mindful leadership in our own organizations

The Landscape for Leaders in Education

- Staff Stress/Attrition
- Financial Burden
- Administrative Directives
- Regulations



Why Does Mindfulness Matter for Leadership?



What Is Mindfulness?

“Being mindful is our ability to pay attention and respond to every situation in the healthiest way possible— to accept whatever happens and respond with kindness, compassion and understanding”

~ Kevin Pickhardt, CEO of Pharos

What mindfulness is and is not.

It Is:

- Mindfulness lowers levels of the stress hormone cortisol
- Enhances the immune response
- Lifts mood
- Helps us recover more quickly from stress
- And sharpens focus.

It Is Not:

- Mindfulness is not about being calm or any particular way
- Mindfulness is not about stress reduction
- Mindfulness is not the absence of thought
- Mindfulness is not religious
- Mindfulness is not a silver bullet

Practice Makes Peaceful



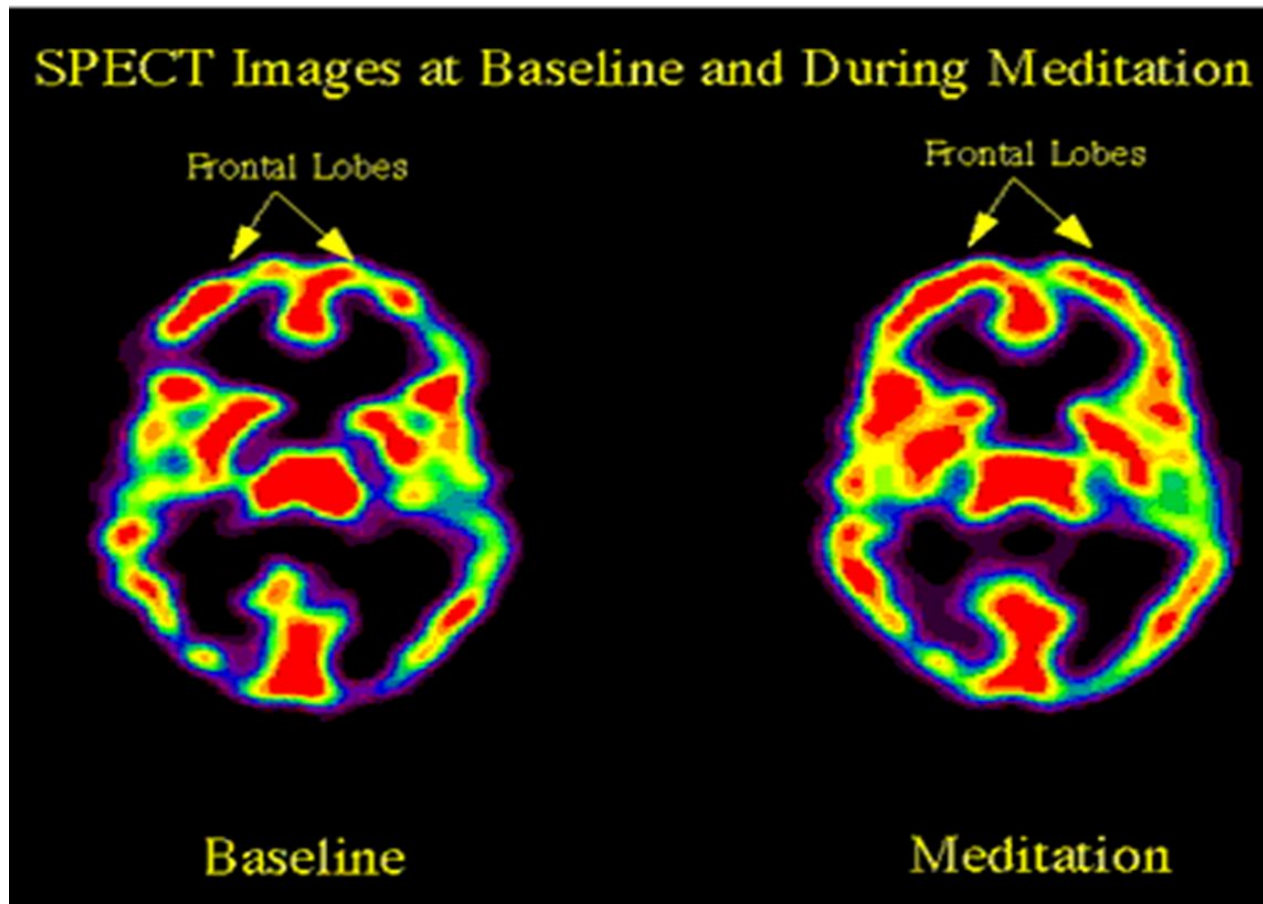
The Key: Integration of Both Leadership and Mindfulness

- Leadership is the cornerstone of staff engagement
- Nothing impacts engagement more than the behavior of leaders
- Mindfulness practice ensures we don't lose ourselves or our values in the chaos of leading a program

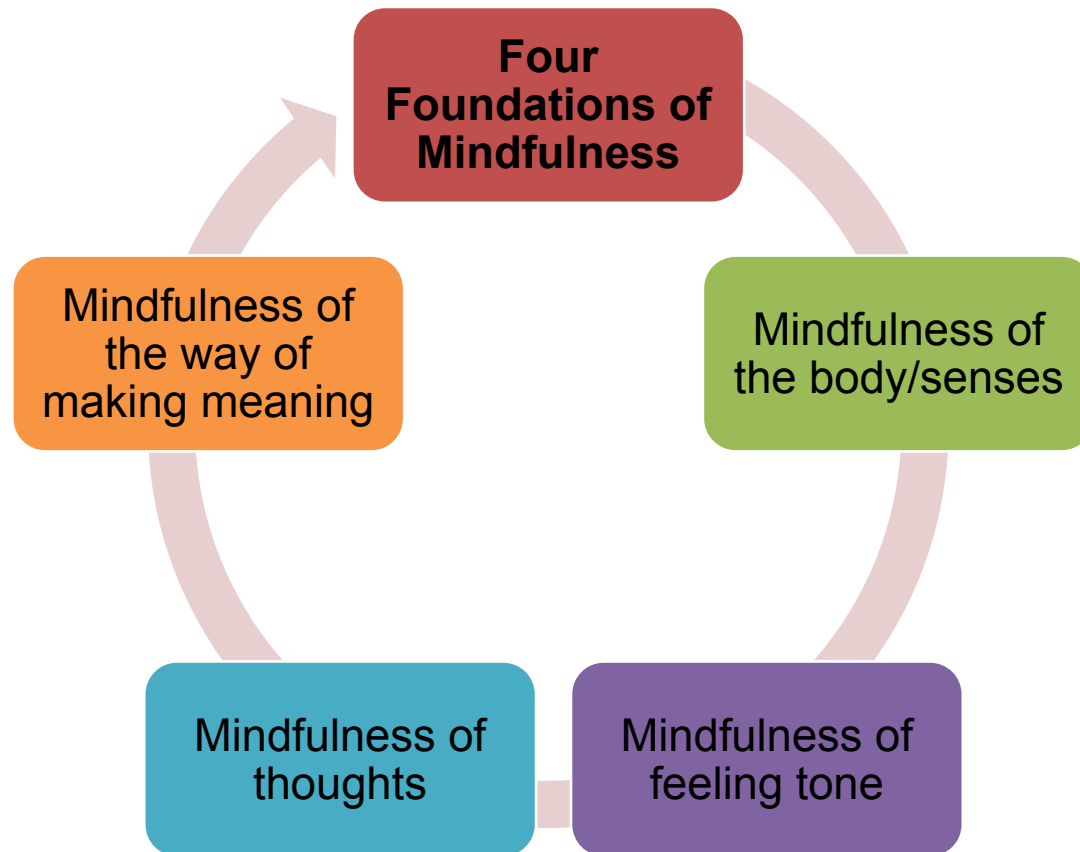


THE SEARCH FOR
THE TRUTH IS
NOT FOR THE
FAINT HEARTED.

Mindfulness Changes the Brain



Four Foundations of Mindfulness



“If you are depressed, you are living in the past
If you are anxious, you are living in the future
If you are at peace, you are living in the present”
-Lao Tsu



Formal Versus Informal



7 Transforming Practices

1. Be here now
2. Take 200 percent accountability
3. Lead from mindful values
4. Inspire a mindful vision
5. Cultivate beginner's mind
6. Empower others to shine
7. Nourish others with love



1. Be Here Now/Be Present

Allows us to observe painful or stressful moments without being sucked into them or allowing our behaviors to be dictated by them



How to be Present? How to be Mindful?

- Feeling Hands
- Mindfulness and Feeling Hands

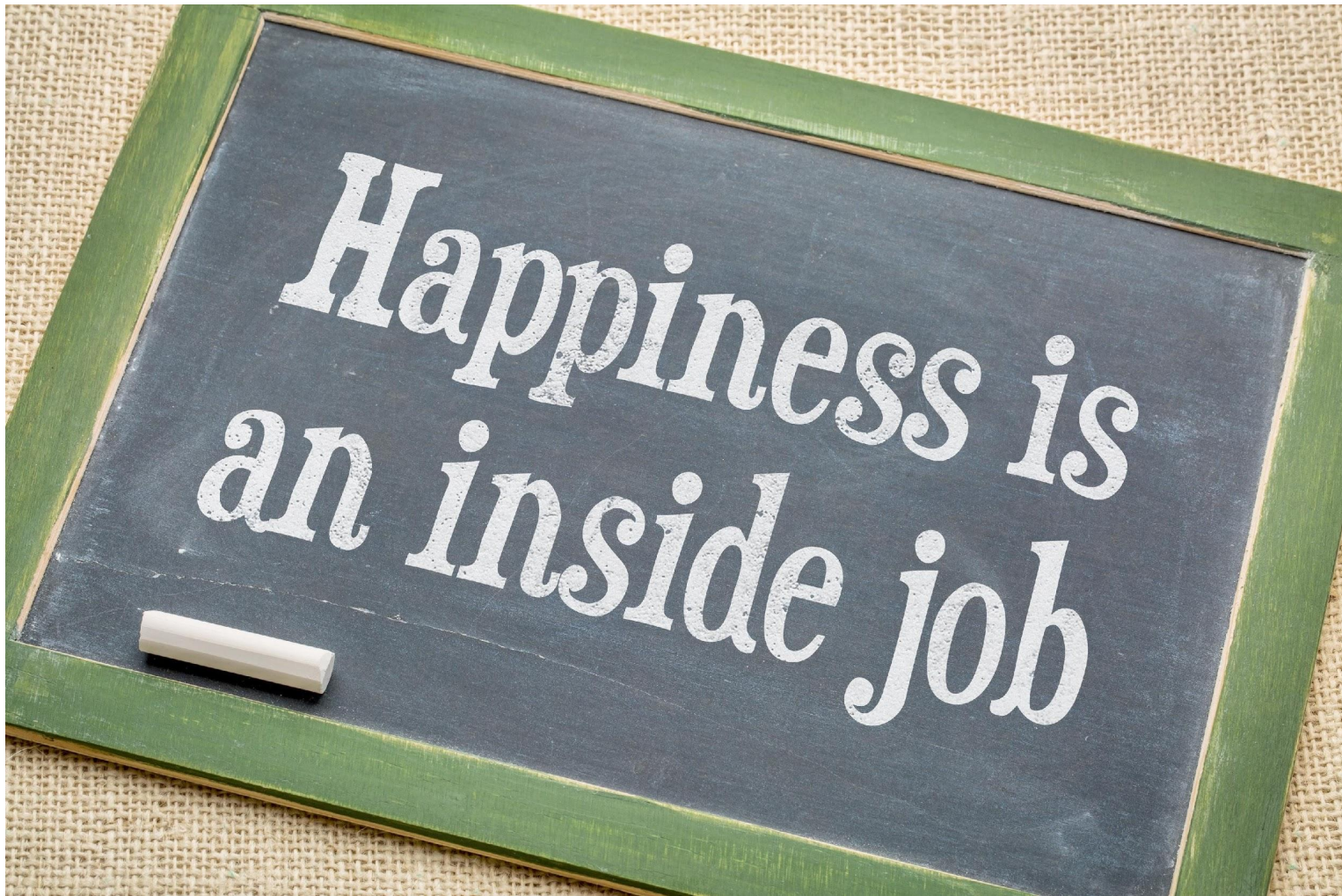


2. Take 200 Percent Accountability

- Rationalization
- Defensiveness
- Denial
- Aggressiveness
- Blame
- Isolation (running away)
- Stonewalling
- Passive-aggressive retreat/withdrawal
- Deflection









Self-Care is Critical

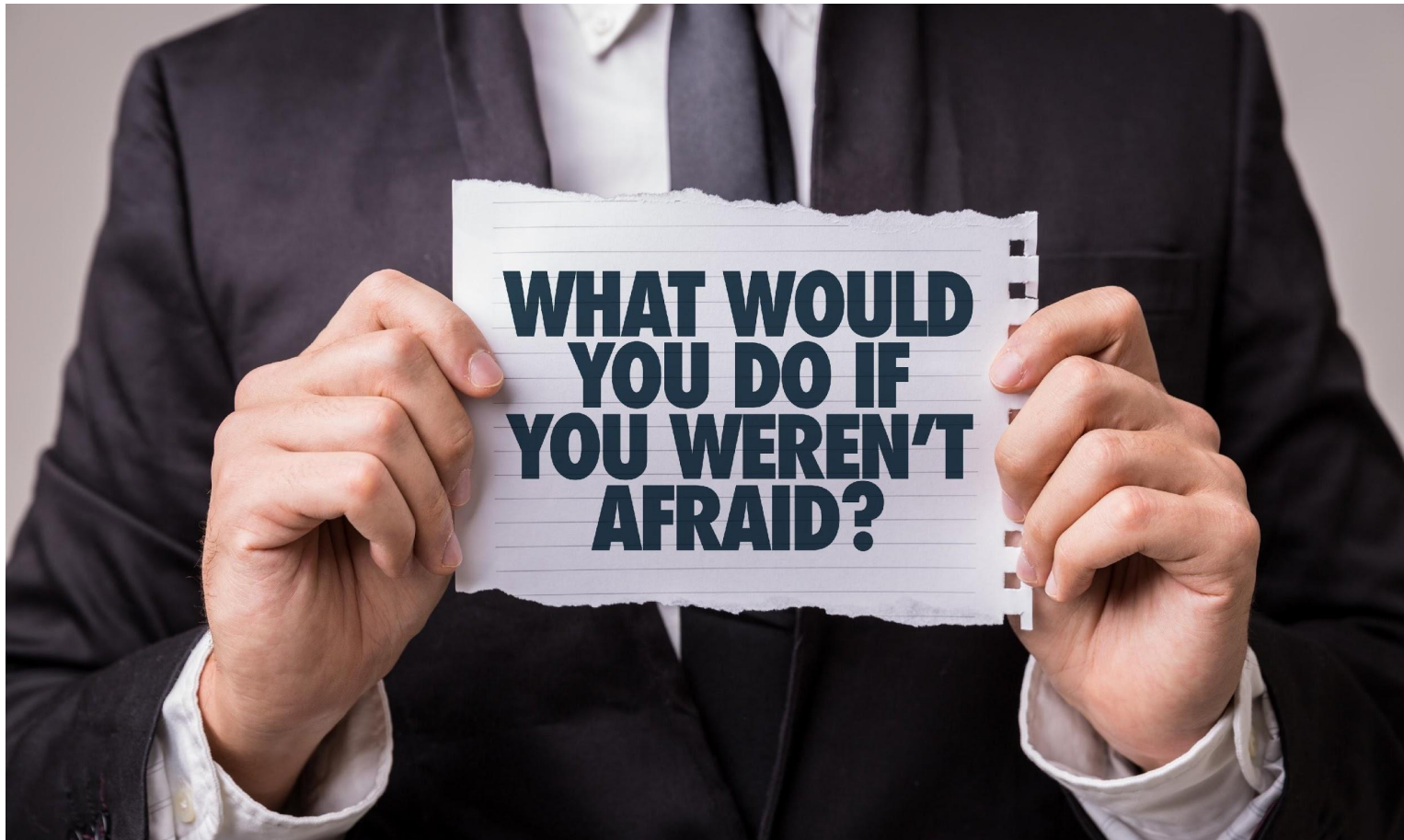


Reflection.....

- Could an imbalance on the wheel be creating your reactions at work?
- Switch gears to practices to reflect on what you should try.

3. Lead From Mindful Values





What Do We Mean By Values?



Which Value Do I Start With?



Meet Your Shadow



Values and Mindfulness

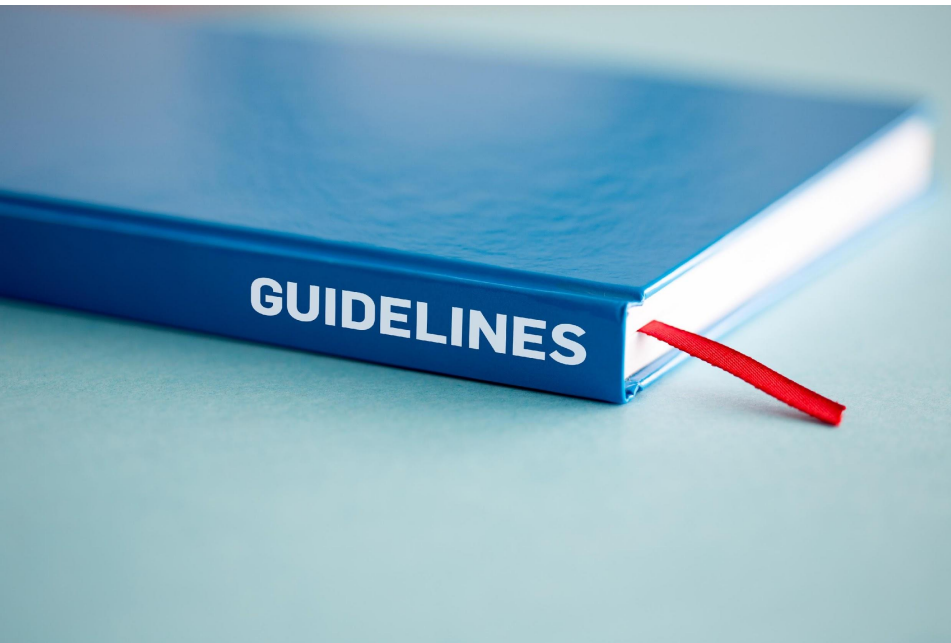


Stay on Track!

- Tune into your senses (That whole mind/body thing we talked about earlier)
- Be open to feedback



Establish Organizational Values



- Less is more
- Establish clear behavioral standards around your values
- Create an agreed story around the values

4. Inspire a Mindful Vision

- Working in an environment where you feel like your work is important and meaningful is the key to mindful livelihood which is the basis of mindful vision.
- Connecting our livelihood to making a positive difference for others helps us to be more engaged and happier in our work.



5. Cultivate Beginner's Mind



Attributes of Beginner's Mind

- Associating
- Questioning
- Observing
- Experimenting
- Networking



From *Initiative* to *Experiment*

1. Releasing bias and accepting reality
2. Create a safe learning environment

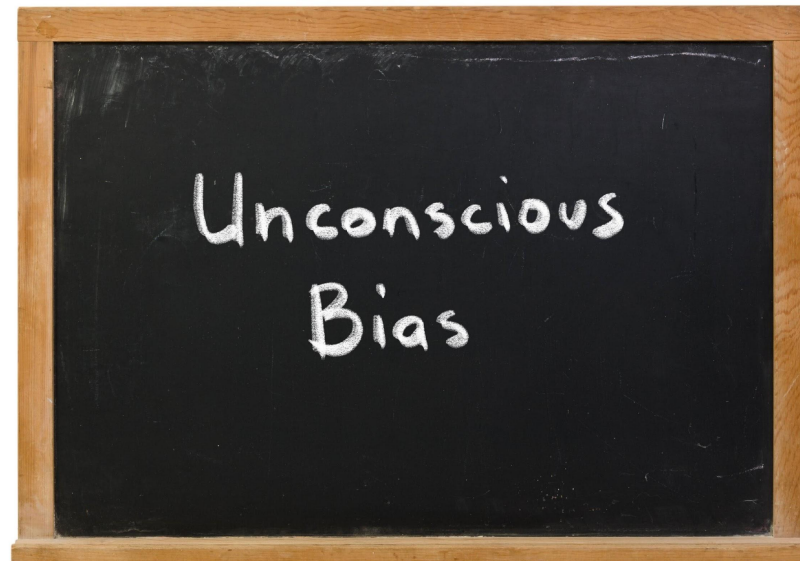


Releasing Bias and Accepting Reality



- Confirmation Bias- the tendency to search for or interpret information that confirms our beliefs or hypothesis.
- Sunk Cost Bias- persisting with bad decisions irrationally because of investments already made that we cannot recover.

Implicit Bias and suspension/expulsion



Staats, C., Capatosto, K., Wright, R.A., & Contractor, D. (2015). State of the science: Implicit bias review 2015. Columbus, OH: Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity.

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights. (2016, June). 2013-2014 Civil rights data collection: Key data highlights on equity and opportunity gaps in our nation's public schools. Retrieved from <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/crdc-2013-14.html>

Implicit Bias: Implications



**Greater home-school
collaboration**



**Teachers may benefit
from increased training
and ongoing guidance
to understand how to
best use this
information and
increase their
empathetic
understanding of the
child**



**Lessons learned from
k-12 research around
similar disparities:**

Release Insecurities and Empower Others By Cultivating Generosity



“In the beginner’s mind there are many possibilities, in the expert’s mind there are few.”

-Shunryu Suzuki

7. Nourish Others With Love



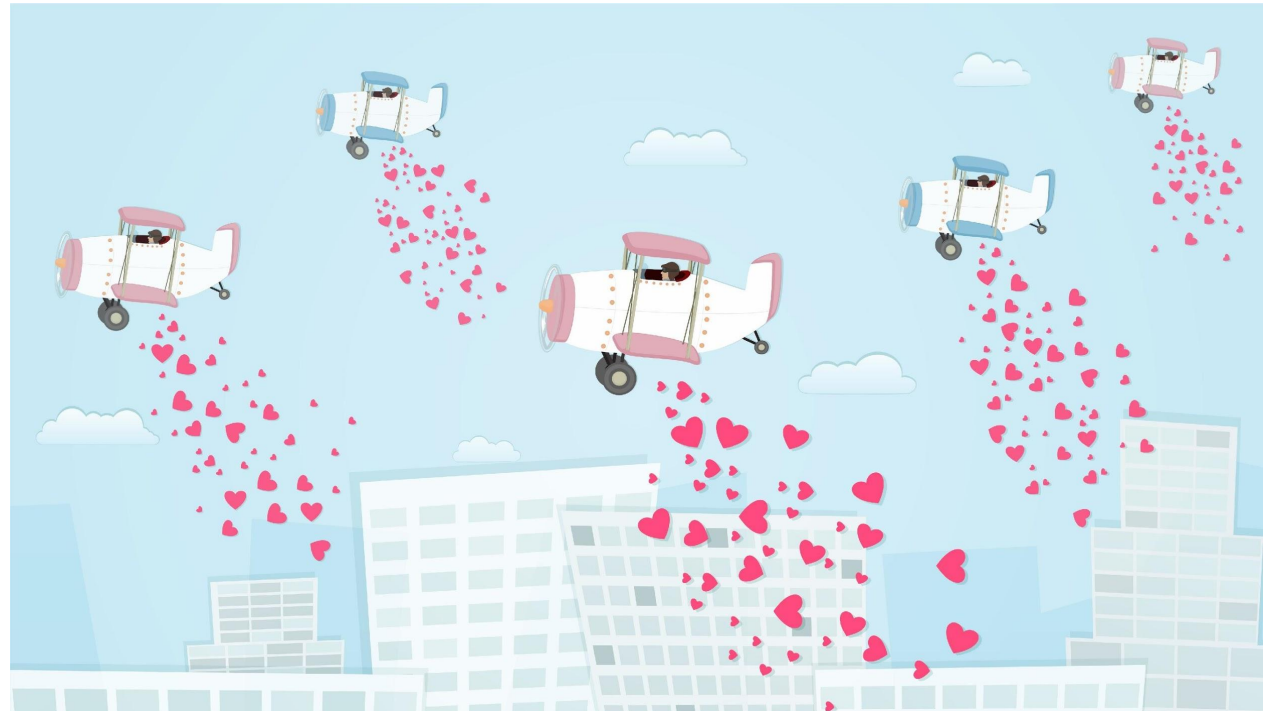
Three Heart-based Mindfulness Practices

1. Lovingkindness
2. Empathetic joy
3. Gratitude



Empathetic Joy

1. Lovingkindness
2. Empathetic joy
3. Gratitude



Gratitude

1. Lovingkindness
2. Empathetic joy
3. Gratitude

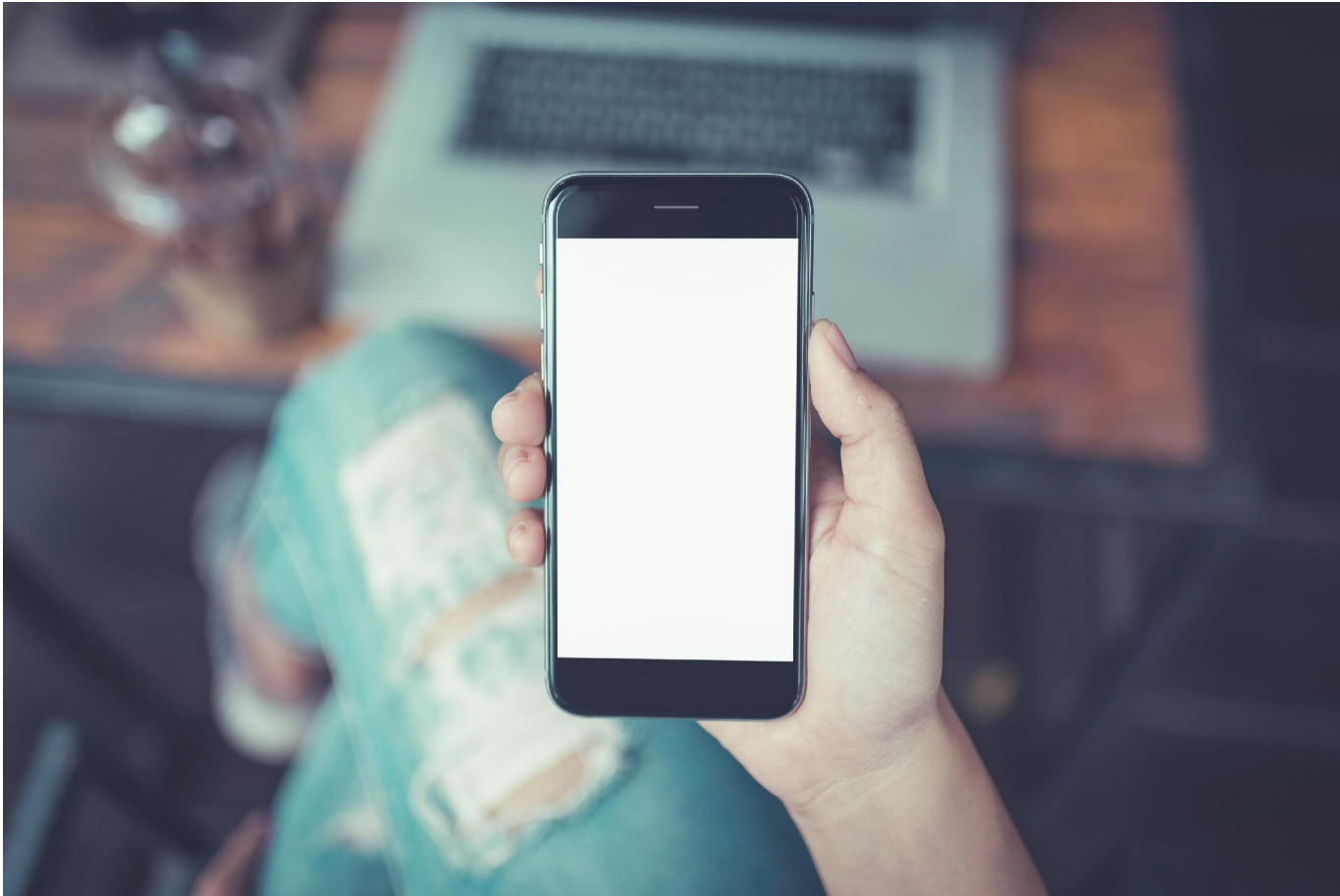




Mindfulness Bells

- Willard, C. (2010). Child's mind: Mindfulness practices to help our children be more focused, calm and relaxed. Berkley, CA.

Practice



Reflection and Action Planning

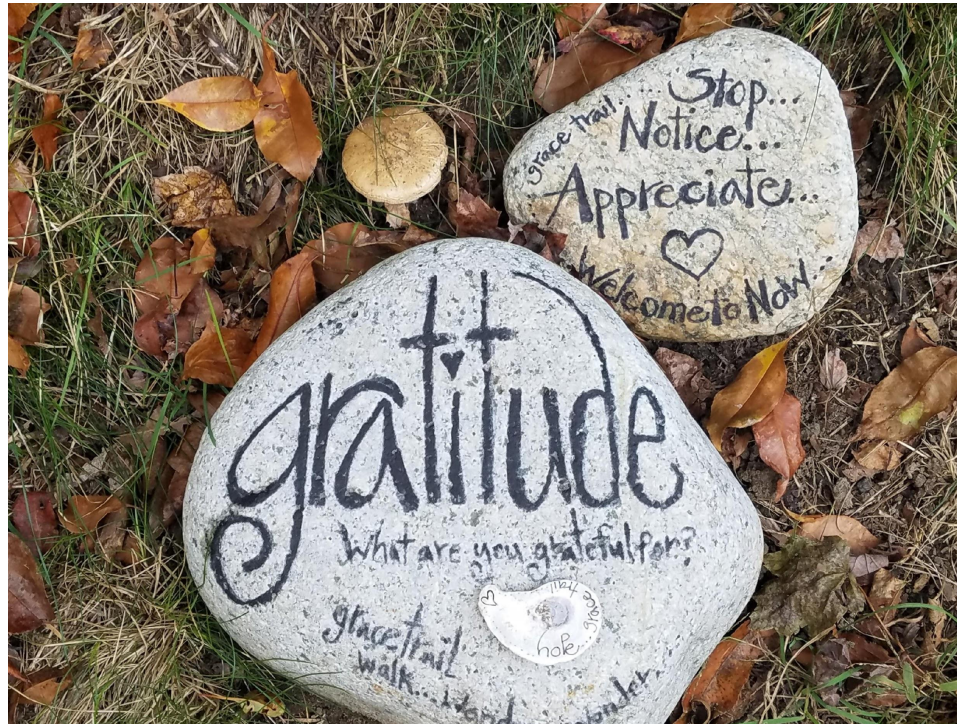


- Handout: Strategies for Yourself, staff, team members
- Handout: Book List
- Handout: List of Apps to consider
- Center for Investigating Healthy Minds:
<http://www.investigatinghealthyminds.org/ci-hmProjEducation.html#kindness>
- Mindful Schools:
<http://www.mindfulschools.org/>



How do we control the mind to Make lasting change?





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References:

- Slides edited from joint presentation by Jennifer Furness, M.Ed. and Marnie Aylesworth, D. Ed., November, 2018.
- Staats, C., Capatosto, K., Wright, R.A., & Contractor, D. (2015). State of the science: Implicit bias review 2015. Columbus, OH: Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity.
- U.S. Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights. (2016, June). 2013-2014 Civil rights data collection: Key data highlights on equity and opportunity gaps in our nation's public schools. Retrieved from <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/crdc-2013-14.html>
- Willard, C. (2010). Child's mind: Mindfulness practices to help our children be more focused, calm and relaxed. Berkley, CA.