Mindfulness as a tool when working with youth

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STAYING PRESENT
MINDFULNESS PRACTICE

• Take three deep breaths
• Close your eyes – or take a soft gaze
• Just notice your breath
• Notice your thoughts (are they fast- slow- past-present-future)
• Is there judgement in your thoughts
• Check in with your body
• See if you can notice your heart beating – how many beats per breath?
OBJECTIVES FOR TODAY

- Understand what mindfulness is
- How it can be utilized in clinical and school practices
- How can it be a tool in working with youth
- Understand the research
- Understand the challenges of mindfulness
Learning objective of this presentation will include

1.) Understanding the challenges of utilizing mindfulness practices with youth and develop knowledge on how these can be addressed.

2.) Understand various formal in informal mindfulness techniques to utilize with youth.

3.) Develop knowledge of the current research and evidenced based mindfulness practices currently in use with youth.

4.) Develop knowledge on available resources in utilizing mindfulness with youth.
YOUR EXPERIENCES

• What exposure have you had to mindfulness?
  
• Training? --- School Psychologists? Diagnosticians?
  
• Personal?

• Retreats?
  
• In working with your students/ clients/ etc.

• Challenges in utilizing mindfulness?

• So, WHAT is mindfulness?

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MINDFUL LISTENING EXERCISE

• Partner up

• Talk for three minutes without responding only listening

• Change roles

• Discuss as a group
WHAT IS MINDFULNESS?

• “Paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally” (Kabat-Zinn, 2009).
• “Waking up from a life lived on automatic pilot and based in habitual responding” (Sigel, 2007).
• Creating space, a cushion, between a deeply ingrained reaction and a behavior. Responding to life with intention, awareness, and presence

• Paying attention in a particular way
• With intention, on purpose
• With open-hearted, non-judgmental awareness
• In the present moment
WHY USE MINDFULNESS?

• Why do you want to use mindfulness?

• What do you think this will help with in your work?
WHY UTILIZE MINDFULNESS WITH YOUTH?

• can offer children and teens the ability to focus- Attention, develop increased compassion for self and others-(Compassion), increase emotional regulation as well as increase their ability to better manage stress (Behavior).

• Although many professionals working in the mental health profession know that this to be true it can be difficult to understand how and when to bring mindfulness into our work with children and adolescents.
Two recent studies from Harvard, Yale, and MIT found that mindfulness may help improve mental health and academic performance in students.

Many other studies are available on mindfulness with kids and teens, as well as mindful parenting.
WHEN TO USE MINDFULNESS

• By having a clear reason for why you want to offer mindfulness to the children you work with or even with yourself you are able to have a realistic objective of what you hope to accomplish by teaching mindfulness to youth.
MY EXPERIENCES

- Vipassana Meditation
- Meditation Retreats
- Yoga practice
- Mindful Parenting Groups
- DBT informed treatment
- Working with Children, Teens and all other populations for the last 10 years.
USE OF MINDFULNESS IN MY PRACTICE AND IN MY LIFE

• Bringing mindfulness into my work on many levels
• Creative ways to be mindful with children and with teens
• Understanding Research surrounding mindfulness
• Finding creative ways to bring it into session
  • Both formally and informally
FORMAL AND INFORMAL MINDFULNESS PRACTICE

• What is the difference between formal and informal mindfulness practice?

• How about the difference between mindfulness and meditation?
GROUNDING OR ANCHOR PRACTICES

• Using a sensation and often the breath to focus on the present moment.
  • Using a sound, a taste, sight, smell, or what you touch or feel)
  • Bell sound
  • Bubble Breathing
  • Tasting something – candy/ orange/ raisin
  • Using a paddle and small ball
  • Pinwheel breathing
MINDFUL MOVEMENT

- Mindful walking – gratitude/ sensation/ positive thoughts
- Move to the beat – drumming
- Yoga and stretching / body awareness
- Progressive Muscle relaxation
THE BREATH AS AN ANCHOR

- What is the breath continuously brought up in mindfulness practice?
- Breath as an anchor practice
- Body Breathing
MINDFULNESS WITH TEENS

Resources and ways to explore this work

• Brainstorm –
  • designed for teens
  • Offers lot of mindfulness practices and reasons to use them.
• DBT with teens
• Apps that teens can use
• Podcasts
• What type of issues do you think come up for teens that we can bring mindfulness in as an intervention.
RESOURCES

Brainstorm

DBT with Teens Workbook
Name it to Tame It
DIALECTICAL BEHAVIORAL THERAPY

• Using senses for mindfulness
• Mindfulness for Grounding/ Centering
APPS TO USE WITH TEENS

• Stop Think Breathe
• Insight timer
• Headspace
• Calm

Mindsight institute out of UCLA - MARC (Mindful Awareness Research Institute)
CHALLENGES

• What types of challenges come up when utilizing mindfulness with teens?

• How and when do you manage these?

• Working with children with trauma.
• Mindfulness can be incredibly frequently utilized when working with children

• “Inner Kids teaches children and caregivers why and how to practice mindfulness and meditation in a way that is consistent with modern science, psychology, classical contemplative training, and educational pedagogy. Inner Kids doesn’t offer techniques for every challenging situation. Instead, it is a process-oriented approach through which children, parents and professionals develop a way of being in the world that strengthens and supports how they relate to other people, to the planet, and to themselves. Mindful games to bring attention, balance, and compassion to their daily routine.” (Susan Kaiser Greenland, 2017)
INNER KIDS PROGRAM

- Picture of inner kids
- Stop, Think, Breath Kids

https://youtu.be/QKDLEdpRIRE?list=PLZnnWZRQ21N5_bgzO7r5hUxQGb36bNNE9
COOL OUT BREATH – STOP, THINK, BREATH KIDS
THE MINDFUL PROVIDER

• Relational Mindfulness

• Self care and personal practice

• How does this impact our work with kids?
PARENTS AND MINDFULNESS

• Mindful Parenting Groups
• Working with a family therapist
• Offering mindfulness to parents
• Podcasts on Mindful Parenting
  • Mindful Momma
  • Mindful Parenting in a Messy World
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QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS
REFERENCES

• Applications
• Stop, Think, Breath Kids
• Stop, Thin, Breath
• Insight Timer
• Books
• Brainstorm- Daniel Siegel
• Inner Kids
• The Mindful Child- Susan Kaiser Greenland