

AN INTRODUCTION TO MINDFULNESS 

Sound Body Sound Mind

Mindfulness Education Curriculum

A collaboration with

**UCLA MINDFUL AWARENESS
RESEARCH CENTER**

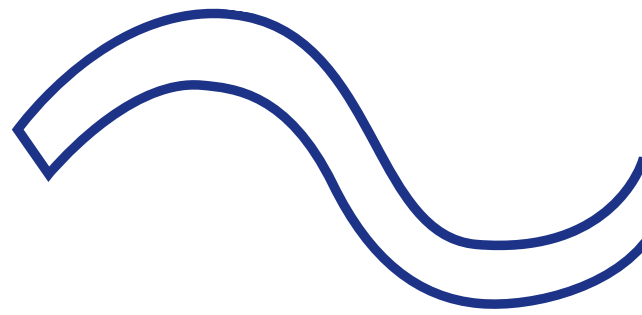


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Health

Sound Body Sound Mind

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INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS MINDFULNESS?

Mindful awareness can be defined as paying attention to present moment experiences with openness, curiosity, and a willingness to be with what is. It is an excellent antidote to the stresses of modern times. It invites us to stop, breathe, observe, and connect with one's inner experience.

WHY MINDFULNESS?

Mindfulness has scientific support as a means to reduce stress, improve attention and focus, boost the immune system, reduce emotional reactivity, and promote a general sense of health and wellbeing. Research also shows it to be helpful with difficult mental states such as anxiety and depression, and for strengthening areas in the brain in charge of decision making, emotional flexibility, and empathy. Mindfulness helps us change our relationship with our thoughts, which in turn effects our behavior, so that we respond more skillfully to life's unavoidable challenges. More teens are experiencing high rates of anxiety and depression, and mindfulness can be particularly helpful with this growing mental health crisis.

Watch the video below to learn more about mindfulness and how to implement it in your classroom!



IN EACH LESSON, YOU WILL FIND

- **CONCEPTS**
Introduction to mindfulness concepts to assist you with lesson implementation
- **TEACHING TIPS**
Reflection questions and mindfulness practice activities for you and your students
- **LESSON VIDEO**
Videos taught by our experts and designed specifically for students
- **RESOURCES**
Supplementary resources to complete your well rounded mindfulness instruction

LESSON PLAN

HOW TO

HOW TO USE THESE RESOURCES

- In each lesson, we will provide you with one guided video, reflection questions, a daily challenge, and a daily challenge prompt.
- There are sections titled "TEACHER PROMPT" for you to recite to your class.
- After showing the guided video, use the "REFLECTION QUESTIONS" to facilitate a class discussion. You may find that your class discussion may flow naturally, but allocate 5 to 10 minutes to discuss the video lesson.
- Each video includes a mindfulness challenge based on the week's video topic. These are written out in the "DAILY CHALLENGE" section. Facilitate the daily challenge on all days outside of the video lesson day.
- For each lesson, there is a "DAILY CHALLENGE PROMPT". This is intended to help you facilitate and a guide the daily challenge. You may use this verbatim or you can freestyle.
- As you continue through the weeks and advance through the complexity of the lessons, there are additional sections titled "DIVE DEEPER." These are optional prompts you can share with your students to help them understand more about the lesson.
- Please note: these lessons were specifically designed for middle school and high school students. They may be modified for other classrooms based on instructor discretion.

LESSON 1: INTRODUCTION TO MINDFULNESS

LESSON 1 TOPICS

- Introduction to mindfulness
- Sound and posture

LESSON 1 OBJECTIVES

- Students should understand what mindfulness is and its benefits.
- Students should be able to practice mindful listening
- Students should know the three components of a mindful body position and how it is helpful when meditating.

CONCEPT OVERVIEWS

INTRODUCTION TO MINDFULNESS

Mindfulness is a natural capacity that we all have to be present, open, curious, and kind. It allows us to be with things as they are, free of judgment or resistance. Developing mindfulness takes practice just like learning a sport or a musical instrument. Mindfulness has been shown to prevent depression, help with sleep quality and anxiety management, and increase attention and focus. It also helps us to develop empathy, gratitude, generosity, and patience.

MINDFULNESS

Paying attention to your present moment experiences with kindness, curiosity, and acceptance.

MINDFUL BODY POSITION

We teach students to recognize how a still and upright body position supports meditative practices, allowing them to concentrate and tune in to one anchor at a time. At the same time, we encourage many moments of “informal” practice which includes noticing their surroundings, body sensations, and emotions throughout the day.

SOUND AND POSTURE

Listening to sounds, on purpose, is one helpful way to access mindful awareness. We teach students to “anchor” to sounds, meaning to rest their attention on what they can hear, and if they notice that their attention has wandered off at any time, they can return to listening to the ambient noises around them.

We teach students the components of a “mindful body position” because it helps many people to concentrate, and notice urges. This position includes three main components: upright, still, and relaxed (not too rigid). It is important to let students know that they can practice mindfulness while walking, standing, and lying down as well. Many mindfulness practices involve bringing our full attention to what we are doing while we are doing it. This means that mindfulness can be practiced while doing dishes, playing sports, or listening to someone tell a story.

LESSON PLAN

TEACHING TIPS

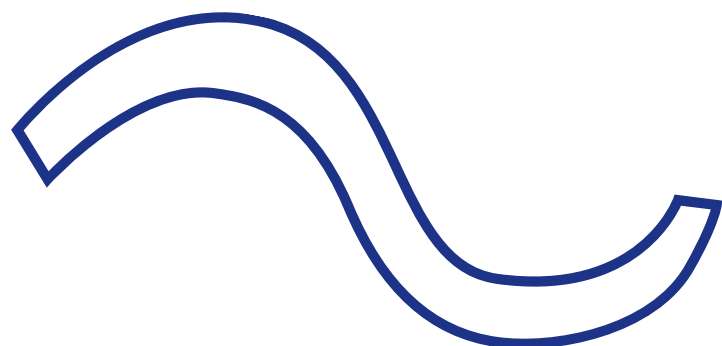
PRACTICE REMINDERS

- Remind students that sharing and practicing are optional and that they always have the option to rest during the practice.
- Sitting still may sound relatively easy, but it takes practice.
- It is important to emphasize that mindfulness is not about getting rid of thoughts or getting angry with ourselves for having thoughts during meditation. We are changing our relationship to our thoughts, being kind, open, and curious toward ourselves instead of judgmental.
- If students are fidgety or seem unfocused, allow them to move and practice in their own way. It may not look like they are doing anything, but creating space for these practices is like planting seeds of possibility for students to discover some aspects of the practices that resonate with them.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCE

OUTSIDE READING

Mindful Monkey, Happy Panda by Lauren Alderfer is a picture book for children and adults alike. It introduces the powerful practice of mindfulness in a fun and exciting way. [Find it here.](#)



INTRODUCTION TO MINDFULNESS

LESSON 1 VIDEO

TEACHER PROMPT

Students, please bring your attention to me and make sure you are comfortable where you are sitting. Today we will be exploring something called mindfulness. As we take care of our body physically, it's also important to take care of our minds; it can really help those struggling with focus, self-compassion and big emotions like anxiety and depression.

- Mindfulness is unlike other subjects that we learn about. There will not be assessments and there are no right or wrong answers.
- It's not about trying to make ourselves better, rather it's about getting to know ourselves better, so see if you can stay curious to your own experience whatever happens.
- Today you will be watching a video. There will be two exercises or mini practices in them which you can follow along.



INTRODUCTION TO MINDFULNESS

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Name two to three benefits of mindfulness that you think might be helpful to you.
2. What are some of the things you discovered through the practice? This could be sounds you heard, the unpleasantness or pleasantness of getting still in your body, or anything else about your experience. Share your honest experiences, even if they were unpleasant.

DAILY CHALLENGE

Sit every day for one minute and just listen to the sounds you can hear.

DAILY CHALLENGE PROMPT

To practice anchoring to sounds, we will be setting a timer for one minute. To start, get into your mindful body position (or another comfortable position lying down or standing up). If it is comfortable for you, close your eyes and listen to all the different sounds you notice. Notice sounds that are far away and close by. Notice sounds that are constant, like the humming of the air system, and sounds that come and go, like people walking through the hall. Eventually, your attention may wander off to your thoughts (like “how much time is left?”) or something else - that is perfectly okay. Every time we notice our attention has drifted and we return to listening we are getting better at being mindful. It is like doing a bicep curl for our brain!

Sitting in a mindful body position can feel difficult at first as our bodies are used to moving and fidgeting throughout the day. To get more comfortable sitting in this position, we will practice and set an intention to be curious about what it feels like to sit still. Notice urges like wanting to open your eyes, curl your toes, or adjust your position. Instead of reacting to these urges, notice them for a moment, then try to return to stillness - be kind to yourself and remember that it takes practice to maintain stillness.

LESSON 2: SLOWING DOWN & BREATHING

LESSON 2 TOPICS

- Slowing down
- Mindfulness with breath

LESSON 2 OBJECTIVES

- Students should be able to practice mindfully slowing down and mindful breathing.

CONCEPT OVERVIEWS

BEGINNER'S MIND PERSPECTIVE

This is the perspective we have when some experience is new to us. We feel naturally curious and absorbed in the new information presented by the experience. When we feel curious, our brain anticipates a reward. Curiosity and a beginner's mind perspective encourage students to find something extraordinary in the ordinary moments of their lives, helping them to overcome boredom and increase flexibility.

MINDFULNESS WITH BREATH

Breath, like sound, is another anchor that can be used to strengthen awareness. With breath, we focus on the sensations of breathing in the abdomen, chest, or at the nose. Students are invited to be curious and find an "anchor point" where they can most easily notice their breath. Students can also count their breaths (up to four or at most, ten). Alternatively, they might use the words "breathing in, breathing out" as they notice the sensations of breathing.

LESSON PLAN

TEACHING TIPS

PRACTICE REMINDERS

- Sitting still may sound relatively easy, but it takes practice.
- It is important to emphasize that mindfulness is not about getting rid of thoughts or getting angry with ourselves for having thoughts during meditation. We are changing our relationship to our thoughts, being kind, open, and curious toward ourselves instead of judgmental.
- When practicing mindful breathing, remind students that it is a practice that takes time to learn. Let them know that it does not matter how many times their attention wanders away. The practice is about building awareness. If they notice just one thought or one breath, they are practicing mindfulness. The practice is also about developing a kinder relationship with ourselves. We can be kind every time we notice a thought (such as “this doesn’t work for me”) or a distraction. Invite students to say to themselves “that’s okay, I’ll just come back to my breath now” or some other kind response.
- If students are fidgety or seem unfocused, allow them to move and practice in their own way. It may not look like they are doing anything, but creating space for these practices is like planting seeds of possibility for students to discover some aspects of the practices that resonate with them.



SLOWING DOWN & BREATHING

LESSON 2 VIDEO

TEACHER PROMPT

Students, please bring your attention to me and make sure you are comfortable where you are sitting. Today we will be watching a video. There will be two mini practices to try today, so please follow along. We will be going over:

- Looking around the space from a beginner's mind perspective
- Focusing on breath



SLOWING DOWN & BREATHING

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Where are some places where you would like to try observing with a beginner's mind perspective?
2. Where was it easiest to notice your breath in your body? Was it your belly, chest, nose, or somewhere else? Why do you think you noticed your breath in this place?

DAILY CHALLENGE

For one minute every day, sit and pay attention to your breath and where you feel it in your body.

DAILY CHALLENGE PROMPT

Let's all try this new practice by silencing ourselves, slowing down, and breathing. We will set a timer for one minute. Focus on your breath wherever you feel the sensation the easiest. If you notice your mind wandering, with a curious and kind attitude come back and focus on your breath. One minute of focusing on your breath per day can help you with focusing in general and with feeling more confident in yourself.

DIVE DEEPER (OPTIONAL)

Let's try slowing down on purpose. Try walking around with the intention of being grateful for all the little things you notice. You may discover an appreciation for things you normally take for granted like running water, a solid house, or furniture to rest on. Try this "mindful seeing" in different environments like the grocery store and parks. Practice this when you feel bored, like when you are waiting in line at the store.

LESSON 3: ANCHORS & BODY

LESSON 3 TOPICS

- Anchors
- Body scan

LESSON 3 OBJECTIVES

- Students should be able to identify different anchors they can use including their body, senses, and movement
- Students should know how to practice a body scan

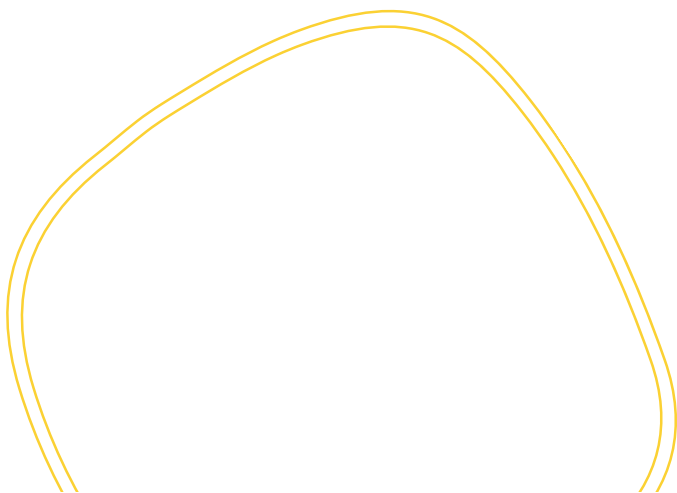
CONCEPT OVERVIEWS

ANCHORS

We talk to students about how we can anchor our attention to different aspects of the present moment with either body sensations or our five senses. Anchoring allows students to return to the present moment when thoughts drift toward the past or the future, driven by difficult emotions.

BODY SCAN

Through the body scan practice, we teach students how to be aware of internal body sensations such as pressure and tingling with curiosity and openness. We start by inviting students to squeeze and release their muscles before starting the body scan which helps relax their bodies.



LESSON PLAN

TEACHING TIPS

PRACTICE REMINDERS

- Body scans can be practiced seated or lying down.
- If students say that they cannot feel any sensations when practicing body scans you can ask them to make fists with their hands and squeeze and release their fists, noticing what they feel such as heat, tightness, and relaxation when they release. Also, remind them that even though they might not notice sensations today, it is a relaxing activity that can help them fall asleep.
- Some students may say that they felt self-conscious or awkward. Remind them that this is normal and something to just notice while they continue to practice curiosity.
- When we have big emotions like worry, it's easy to get lost in distressing thoughts about how things might turn out or imagine the worst that could happen. Paying attention to the body sensations that we feel when big emotions arise helps the emotions to pass more quickly so we can think clearly and make decisions that we feel good about.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCE

TIKTOK

[This short video goes over the concept of "thought surfing" and how practice it](#)



ANCHORS & BODY

LESSON 3 VIDEO

TEACHER PROMPT

This week, we introduce you to the body scan which is a way of paying attention to the sensations we can feel happening in our bodies. We will be practicing with anchors. Anchors are aspects of our present-moment experience that we can bring our attention back to when it wanders off to thoughts about the past or the future. Let's watch the video and try it out!



ANCHORS & BODY

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. What sensations did you notice during the body scan?
2. Why do we use anchors?

DAILY CHALLENGE

Sit every day for one minute and attend to the sensations in your body - what you feel, this is a body scan.

DAILY CHALLENGE PROMPT

Before we start the body scan, we can squeeze and release our muscles to help them relax. You can start by squeezing and releasing your toes and hands. Then you can shrug your shoulders up toward your ears, squeeze your face muscles, and take a deep breath. As you exhale, release all of the tension and notice how you feel. As you “scan” through your body, notice what you can feel in your feet—the pressure and warmth of your socks or shoes. Continue scanning throughout your body, noticing your legs, abdomen, and chest. Maybe you can feel your heartbeat or notice grumbling in your stomach. Continue to scan your arms and hands and then your back, neck, and face. Just stay curious about sensations that stand out to you.

LESSON 4: MINDFUL STANDING & WALKING

LESSON 4 TOPICS

- Mindful standing and walking

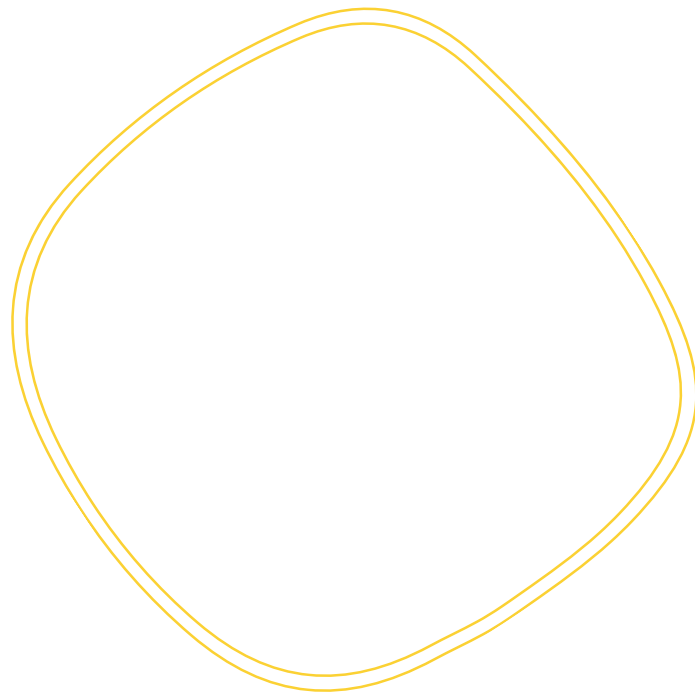
LESSON 4 OBJECTIVES

- Students should be able to walk mindfully
- Students should know the benefits of slowing down on purpose

CONCEPT OVERVIEWS

MINDFUL STANDING & WALKING

Students can also practice mindfulness while standing and walking. We let them know that slowing down on purpose can help them regulate their emotions when they feel distressed or rushed.



LESSON PLAN

TEACHING TIPS

PRACTICE REMINDERS

- As an activity before or during a lesson, ask students to do one thing they do every day but in slow motion. This could be tying their shoe, sitting and standing, drinking a glass of water, or eating something. Invite students to get curious about what they notice when they slow things down.
- With mindful eating, invite students to notice the textures, flavors, and sensations that they may never have noticed before
- Some students may say that they felt self-conscious or awkward. Remind them that this is normal and something to just notice while they continue to practice curiosity.
- When we have big emotions like worry, it's easy to get lost in distressing thoughts about how things might turn out or imagine the worst that could happen. Paying attention to the body sensations that we feel when big emotions arise helps the emotions to pass more quickly so we can think clearly and make decisions that we feel good about.



MINDFUL STANDING AND WALKING

LESSON 4 VIDEO

TEACHER PROMPT

When we move slowly on purpose, we help to slow down our busy minds and help to settle difficult emotions. Stress and difficult feelings like loneliness can make it hard for us to concentrate and sort through all of our thoughts about what to do. Slowing down lets us see our thoughts in slow motion. This helps us make wise decisions with greater ease. Today we will be going over:

- Anchoring our attention as we stand.
- Anchoring our attention as we walk.



MINDFUL STANDING AND WALKING

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. When do you think it would be helpful to move slowly on purpose?
2. Where is one place you would like to try mindful walking?

DAILY CHALLENGE

For one minute every day, try mindful walking or mindful standing. You can set a timer to practice mindful walking for one to three minutes, or you can choose a cue to practice such as when you walk from your room to the kitchen or from the car to the front door.

DAILY CHALLENGE PROMPT

Start in a standing position and, if it's comfortable, close your eyes so you can feel your feet making contact with the ground. Slowly start to shift your weight side to side, noticing sensations in your feet and legs. Now you can try mindful walking. We will walk around the room (or gym, field, etc.) This practice is done with your eyes open so you don't run into anything. If you like you could synchronize your breath with your steps, exhaling as you step forward, but it is not necessary to do so. You can be mindful of just attending to the sensations in your feet and lower legs as you walk; lifting your heel, swinging your foot, stepping down, shifting the weight, etc. When you've taken four or five steps, pause, take a breath, and turn around.

LESSON 5: WORKING WITH DIFFICULT EMOTIONS

LESSON 5 TOPICS

- Working with difficult emotions
- R.A.I.N. practice
- S.T.O.P. practice

LESSON 5 OBJECTIVES

- Students should understand how emotions, body sensations, and thoughts are connected
- Students should know how to use the steps outlined in R.A.I.N. to help them regulate their emotions
- Students should know when to use the S.T.O.P. practice to help them regulate emotions and ground themselves in the present moment

CONCEPT OVERVIEWS

WORKING WITH DIFFICULT EMOTIONS

We can see emotions as energy in motion. This means that emotions make us want to react and take action quickly. It also means that we can feel the energy of emotion in our bodies, noticing sensations such as heat, pressure, tingling, and coolness. The hormones and chemical surges in our body in response to emotions are short-lived (roughly only 90 seconds long), but they may be prolonged by the thoughts that we keep thinking about them. Rumination, for example, can exaggerate and bring back an emotion that has already passed. By using the techniques outlined in R.A.I.N. and S.T.O.P., students can learn to observe instead of habitually react when difficult emotions arise.

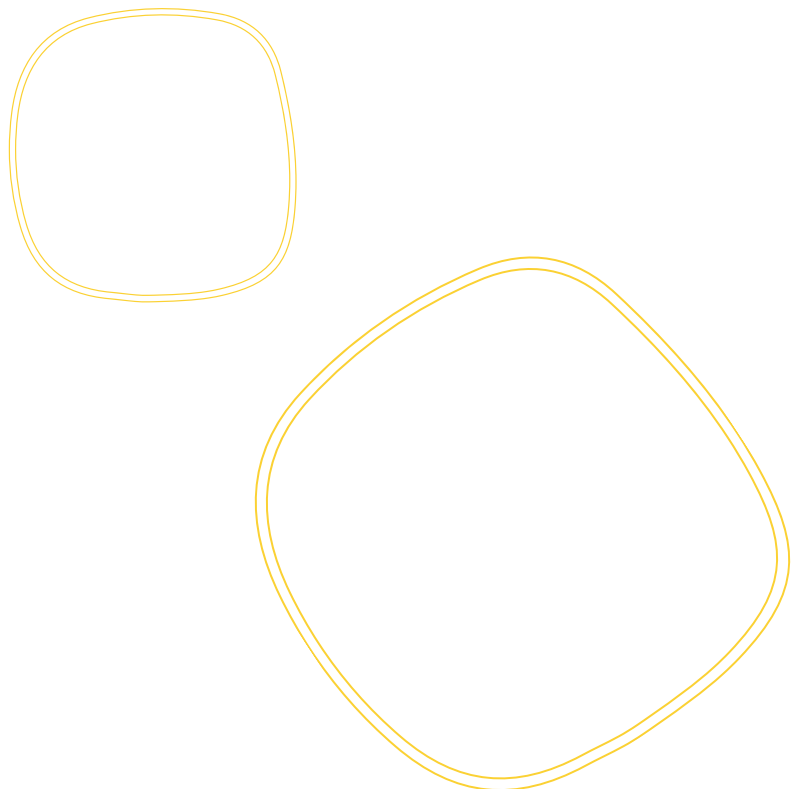
R.A.I.N.

R.A.I.N. is a technique that requires students to pause and notice their inner experience of emotions. “**R**” stands for *recognizing* or naming the emotion(s) that are present. Naming emotions has been shown to reduce their intensity and increase activation of the prefrontal cortex, the brain’s center for executive functioning, decision-making, and self-awareness. “**A**” stands for *allow*, which means to let go of changing or suppressing the emotion and instead allow it to move through you with acceptance. “**I**” stands for *investigate*, which means to scan through the body, noticing sensations like tightness or heat that arise with the emotion. Finally, “**N**” can stand for three concepts: *non-identify*, *nurture*, or *neutral*. Non-identify means letting go of judgment and remembering that emotions are universal. They are temporary experiences moving through us, and they are not who we are. Nurture means to bring compassion and kindness to our inner experience. We can do this by softening our pain and realizing we are not alone. Neutral refers to bringing awareness to our five senses and connecting with the neutral, yet, peaceful aspects of our environment.

CONCEPT OVERVIEWS CONTINUED

S.T.O.P.

S.T.O.P. is an acronym students can use to help them bring their attention to the present moment more often and deal with difficult emotions. “**S**” stands for *stop what you’re doing* to pause. “**T**” stands for *take a deep breath*. “**O**” stands for *observe*. Students can observe in a similar way to the investigate step in R.A.I.N. by noticing internal body sensations and emotions, or they can observe sensations (sounds, sights, tastes, body sensations, and scents) in the present moment. And finally, “**P**” stands for *proceed*. You can invite students to find a cue to practice S.T.O.P. It could be something they do every day, like walking from their home to their car, or when they walk up steps.



LESSON PLAN

TEACHING TIPS

PRACTICE REMINDERS

- Students may be hesitant to talk about difficult feelings. Help create a safe space by letting students share what helps them feel safe with classmates. You might suggest confidentiality, taking turns, not interrupting, and being generous with our assumptions about each other, namely agreeing that we are all trying our best.
- As always, remind students that sharing and practicing are optional and that they always have the option to rest during the practice.
- If you can, devote a generous amount of time for these activities so that you and your students don't feel rushed. Allow for periods of silence so that students can take time to think. You can also set a timer for periods of reflective silence so that students can ponder without pressure to respond quickly and superficially.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCE

FEELINGS AND NEEDS INVENTORY

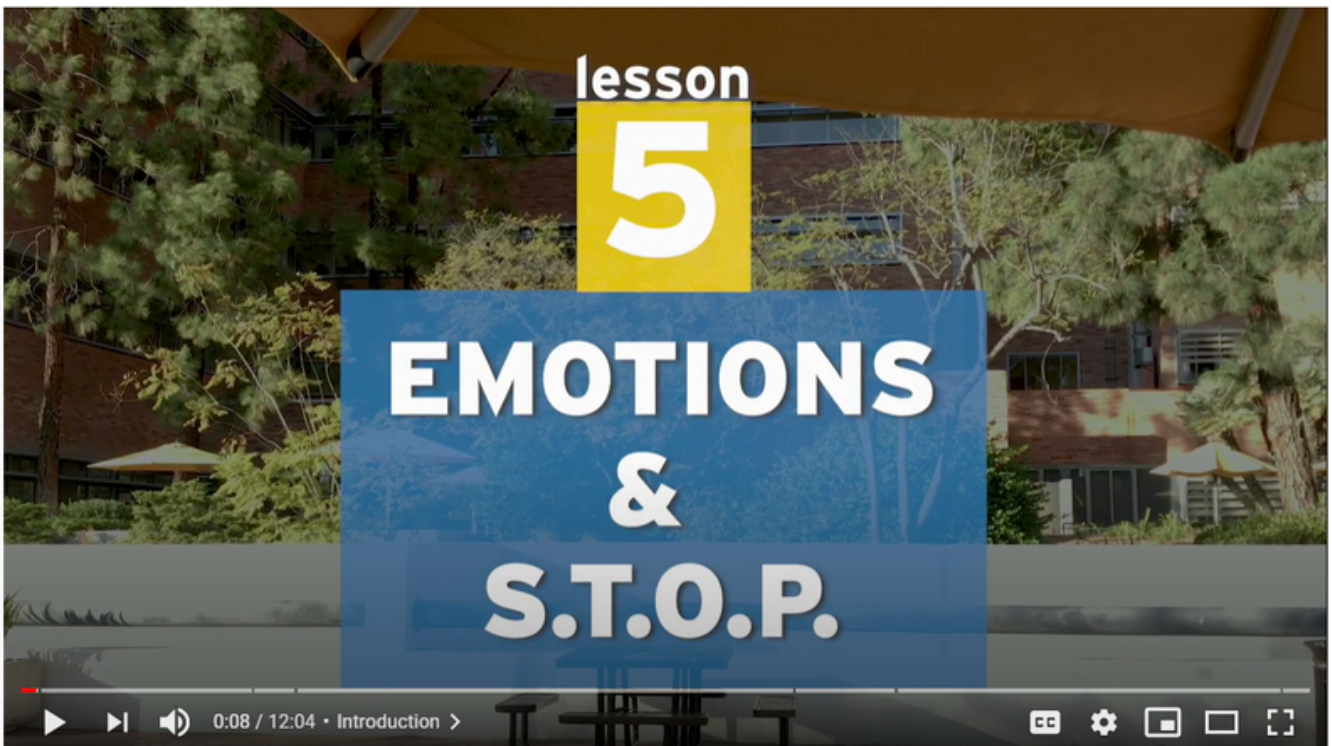
The Feelings and Needs Inventory from the Non-Violent Communication organization can help students practice identifying their feelings and needs. Students can recognize that difficult feelings often reflect needs they have that are not being met. As they learn to identify their needs, they will be better able to communicate them to others. Available in multiple languages.

EMOTIONS & S.T.O.P.

LESSON 5 VIDEO

TEACHER PROMPT

Sometimes when we have big emotions, it can be overwhelming. Today we are going to learn a new way of relating to difficult emotions by being less reactive and more curious and accepting of them.



EMOTIONS & S.T.O.P.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. What's something helpful that you do when difficult feelings arise?
2. Do you think these new tools will be helpful for you? Why or why not?

DAILY CHALLENGE

For two minutes every day, practice one of the following:

- S.T.O.P.
- R.A.I.N.
- Paying attention to your breath, sensations in the body or sounds you can hear

DAILY CHALLENGE PROMPT

Continue to practice resting your attention on an anchor of your choosing, whether it is the sensations of breathing, sensations in your body, or the sounds you can hear. Try to meditate for 2 minutes this week.

If you are feeling a lot of big emotions, you could also try meditating using the R.A.I.N. practice as shown in the video. With your eyes open or closed, recall the steps of R.A.I.N. Start by recognizing the emotions you're feeling now. **Recognizing** our emotions can help them to settle more easily. Next, **accept** or allow the feelings that are present by not avoiding them or trying to push them away. Though they may be uncomfortable, they are temporary and get stronger when we try to suppress them. Then, you can **identify** sensations that you notice in your body. You can start from the top of your head and scan your body for sensations such as tingling, heat, pressure, and tightness. Finally, remember to **not identify** with your emotions by remembering that the way you're feeling is acceptable and not a reflection of who you are or your character. Remember to think of emotions as energy in motion. They are temporary and you are not alone in feeling them.

DAILY CHALLENGE PROMPT CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

EMOTIONS & S.T.O.P.

DAILY CHALLENGE PROMPT CONTINUED

The S.T.O.P. practice helps you to be less reactive and more responsive. You can use it when you need a little calm so that you don't say or do anything you might regret later. You can also choose a cue to practice. The cue can be something you do every day like arriving home or entering the car. Practicing S.T.O.P. a little bit each day will help you to be more present and less preoccupied with worries and self-consciousness. Let's practice right now. **Stop** what you're doing. **Take** a long, slow breath in and out through your nose. Now, **Observe** what is most predominant in your experience. You might notice a pain like a headache, an emotion you're feeling, or a lot of busy thoughts. Maybe no one particular thing stands out. You can then just use your senses to observe what's around you, noticing your environment. Notice any scents in the air, tastes in your mouth, and sensations of air or clothing against your skin. Finally, take a few moments to notice sounds in your environment with your eyes open or closed. Once you've checked in with your five senses, you can **Proceed** with more presence.

LESSON 6: LOVING KINDNESS

LESSON 6 TOPICS

- Loving kindness meditation

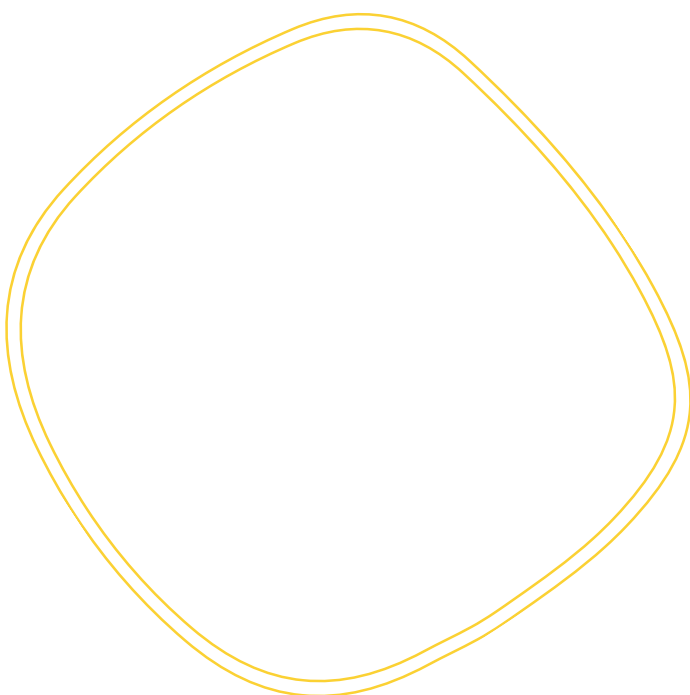
LESSON 6 OBJECTIVES

- Students should understand how emotions, body sensations, and thoughts are connected
- Students should be able to understand the benefits of the loving-kindness practice

CONCEPT OVERVIEWS

LOVING KINDNESS MEDITATION

This type of meditation invites students to bring to mind a person or animal that they like or love and to send them kind wishes. This practice helps students to feel connected with loved ones that they may miss and may inspire them to reach out to them and express their love or gratitude. It can help cultivate a sense of appreciation, open-heartedness, kindness, and a positive mindset. In the practice, we repeat phrases while imagining that we are sending them to our loved ones. Students can also send these kind wishes to themselves. We offer three general wishes (happiness, health, and peacefulness), but students can feel free to send whatever wishes feel natural and genuine to them. This practice can help students fall asleep at night, cultivate compassion and promote general relaxation and ease.



LESSON PLAN

TEACHING TIPS

PRACTICE REMINDERS

- Students may be hesitant to talk about difficult feelings. Invite students to communicate what they need to feel safe to share or remind them of some guidelines previously discussed. Some generally helpful rules are: confidentiality, taking turns and not interrupting, and being generous with our assumptions about each other, namely agreeing that we are all trying our best.
- As always, remind students that sharing and practicing are optional and that they always have the option to rest during the practice.
- If you can, devote a generous amount of time for these activities so that you and your students don't feel rushed. Allow for periods of silence so that students can take time to think. You can also set a timer for periods of reflective silence so that students can ponder without pressure to respond quickly and superficially.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCE

ARTICLE

[Open Hearts Build Lives: Positive Emotions, Induced Through Loving-Kindness Meditation, Build Consequential Personal Resources](#)

LOVING KINDNESS MEDITATION

LESSON 6 VIDEO

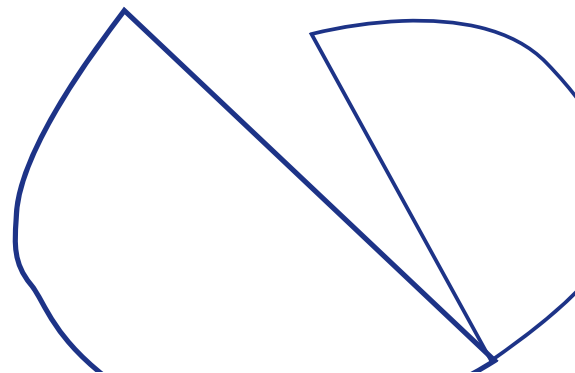
TEACHER PROMPT

Today we will be practicing something new, *loving kindness meditation*. This meditation focuses on feelings of love and connection. Let's watch the video to learn the benefits of this practice and then try it ourselves with a guided walkthrough.



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. What makes you feel safe and loved?



LOVING KINDNESS MEDITATION

DAILY CHALLENGE

Think of someone who is easy to appreciate and send them kind wishes for two minutes every day.

DAILY CHALLENGE PROMPT

Loving kindness meditation provides a way of thinking about people we care about and wishing them well. Let's start by getting comfortable where we are seated. Take a few moments to anchor your attention to your breath wherever you feel it most easily in your body. Bring to mind someone you find easy to like or love. It can even be a pet! Imagine this person looking happy. What do they do that makes them feel happy? Imagine them healthy and strong. Finally, imagine them feeling peaceful and at ease. Then, take your time to imagine that they are nearby and that you are sending them these kind wishes, one at a time:

- 1) *May you be happy.*
- 2) *May you be healthy and strong.*
- 3) *May you feel peaceful and at ease.*

Repeat the phrases silently one or two more times, staying connected to the feeling of love and care that you feel for this person or animal. After, you can send the same kind wishes to yourself or imagine that the person or animal is wishing the same for you. When you open your eyes, notice how you feel. Pay attention to places in your body you may notice more easily. This practice can help you fall asleep at night and may even inspire you to reach out to the person you thought about, letting them know you were thinking about them. Sometimes this meditation brings up feelings of longing or sadness, especially if you really miss the person. Let yourself feel whatever feelings arise and be sure to share your experience with someone you feel safe speaking with.

DIVE DEEPER (OPTIONAL)

Have students write a loving kindness note, letter, or poem to themselves, an animal, or someone they want to send kind wishes to. Have them write down as many kind wishes as they can think of, then have them imagine that the person or animal feeling all the wishes that they made. They can share the wishes with the person that they made them to or they can keep it to themselves.

LESSON 7: THOUGHTS

LESSON 7 TOPICS

- Mindfulness of thoughts
- F.L.O.C.K.

LESSON 7 OBJECTIVES

- Students should understand the benefits of observing thoughts instead of reacting to thoughts
- Students should be able to label and count their thoughts
- Students should be able to explain the metaphors of the train, parade, and sky in relation to observing thoughts

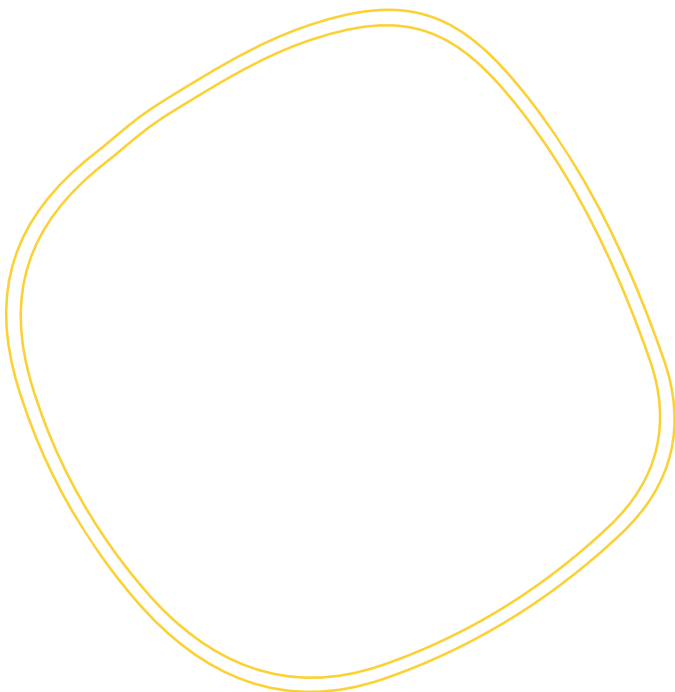
CONCEPT OVERVIEWS

MINDFULNESS OF THOUGHTS

Being mindful of thoughts includes labeling (planning, remembering, judging, etc.), counting, and observing thoughts with curiosity and kindness.

F.L.O.C.K.

Flock is an acronym to help students remember how to be mindful of their thoughts. “**F**” stands for *feeling*, which means noticing the emotions and sensations that arise with thoughts. “**L**” stands for *labeling*, which entails identifying thoughts as judgments, planning, remembering, and other categories. “**O**” stands for *observing*, which means to notice thoughts as if they are clouds moving through a wide-open sky. “**C**” stands for *counting*, as students can count their thoughts as a way of observing them. Finally, “**K**” stands for *kindness*. This encourages students to be kind to themselves as they are practicing.



LESSON PLAN

TEACHING TIPS

PRACTICE REMINDERS

- Provide praise for any noticing of thoughts that students express, no matter how small the efforts seem.
- Students can always return to mindfulness of breath or sounds if they become overwhelmed with the new practice.
- If students are not feeling the lesson, they can always just sit quietly and rest.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCE

TED TALKS

[The secret to changing negative self-talk by renewing your mindset | Bruce Pulver | TEDxFlowerMound](#)



MINDFUL OBSERVATION OF THOUGHTS

LESSON 7 VIDEO

TEACHER PROMPT

This week, we will be working on mindful observations of our thoughts. We will learn a new way to observe our thoughts using a practice called F.L.O.C.K. Let's watch the video and try it out!



MINDFUL OBSERVATION OF THOUGHTS

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. What metaphor for observing thoughts do you like best?
2. Looking back, is there a time that you can think you used mindful thought observation?

DAILY CHALLENGE

For two minutes every day, observe your thoughts. If you get distracted, use breath or sound as your anchor.

DAILY CHALLENGE PROMPT

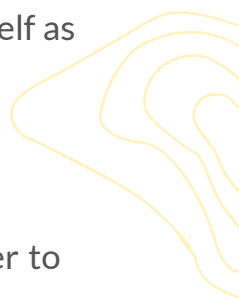
Let us get comfortable where we are seated. We will be setting a timer for two minutes to observe our thoughts in a mindful body position. Anchor your attention to your breath or to sounds in your environment, then use the acronym F.L.O.C.K to help you remember how to be mindful of your thoughts. “F” stands for *feeling*, which means noticing the emotions and sensations that arise with your thoughts. “L” stands for *labeling*, which entails identifying thoughts as judgments, planning, remembering, and other categories. “O” stands for *observing*, which means to notice thoughts as if they were clouds moving through a wide open sky. “C” stands for *counting*, as you can count your thoughts as a way of observing them. Finally, “K” stands for *kindness*. It’s important to be kind to yourself as you are practicing this, as it takes practice.

DIVE DEEPER (OPTIONAL)

Students may find it difficult to challenge negative or self-critical thoughts. In order to move past them, we remind them to ask themselves these four questions:

1. *Is this thought true?*
2. *Is it absolutely true (without exceptions)?*
3. *What does it feel like (emotionally and physically) to have this thought?*
4. *What would it be like if I didn’t have this thought?*

This exercise helps students see that there are often exceptions to these rigid thoughts and it provides them with the possibility of letting these thoughts go in favor of new thoughts that are more positive and accurate.



LESSON 8: SELF-COMPASSION

LESSON 8 TOPICS

- Second arrow
- Cultivating positive emotions
- Friendly wishes practice

LESSON 8 OBJECTIVES

- Students should be able to explain how they can prevent the “second arrow”
- Students should be able to understand the friendly wishes practice

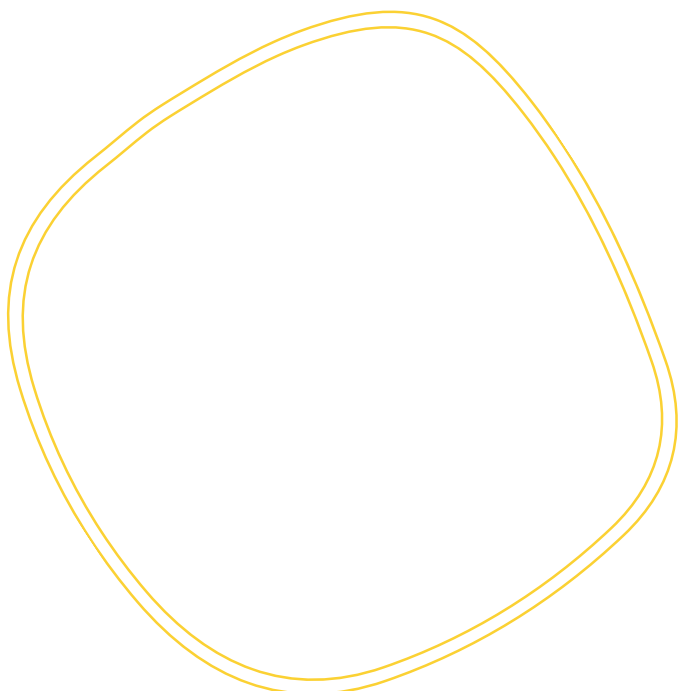
CONCEPT OVERVIEWS

SECOND ARROW

This is a metaphor that describes how we can prevent further frustration and reactivity when things don't go our way. Students learn that the first arrows are unfortunate things that happen to us in life that we cannot control (disappointments, accidents, relationship endings, etc.). What we can control is how we respond to the pain caused by these events. We can prevent the second arrow or further pain by softening our initial discomfort and bringing compassion to our experience. Compassion is more effective for easing our pain than judging or assessing our pain.

CULTIVATING POSITIVE EMOTIONS: FRIENDLY WISHES TO OURSELVES

This is a practice that is similar to the loving kindness practice from last week. This week, however, we focus on self-compassion and sending friendly wishes to ourselves.



LESSON PLAN

TEACHING TIPS

PRACTICE REMINDERS

- Provide praise for any noticing of thoughts that students express, no matter how small the efforts seem.
- If it's difficult for students to think of their positive qualities, remind them that this practice is hard and continue to stay in the practice as they move to the next step.
- Students can always return to mindfulness of breath or sounds if they become overwhelmed with the new practice.
- If students are not feeling the lesson, they can always just sit quietly and rest.
- We can think about our reactions to a negative event (first arrow), as a second arrow. You can practice preventing the second arrow when something frustrating or disappointing happens. For example, if you get a grade that you weren't expecting and you are surprised, take a moment to pause and notice how your body and mind are reacting to the news. Allow the unpleasant feelings to be there just as they are as you observe the thoughts running through your mind. This will help prevent reactive and judgmental thoughts from controlling your actions and help you to make choices about what to do next that you feel good about.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCE

VALUES ACTIVITY WORKSHEET

This worksheet lists 50 values that students can use to help guide their self-compassion practice.

SELF-COMPASSION AND ARROWS

LESSON 8 VIDEO

TEACHER PROMPT

In lesson 6, we practiced sending friendly wishes to others. This week, we are going to cultivate positive emotions by using a self-compassion practice on ourselves. We will also learn about the "second arrow" and how to prevent it. Let us bring our attention to the video and try it out!



SELF-COMPASSION AND ARROWS

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Talk about an arrow you encountered recently. What's a helpful thought to prevent a second arrow in this scenario?
2. Share one or two of your strengths and how you make use of them.
3. Who is someone you find easy to like or love? What do you like/love about them?

DAILY CHALLENGE

Every day for two minutes, practice cultivating positive emotions by using the loving kindness practice.

DAILY CHALLENGE PROMPT CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

SELF-COMPASSION AND ARROWS

DAILY CHALLENGE PROMPT

Before we practice sending friendly wishes, let's get comfortable in our space. Start by thinking of someone you find easy to care about. It can be a real person in your life or someone fictional, like a character you connect with. Pay attention to pleasant feelings of warmth and ease that you sense in your body as you think about this person feeling happy and peaceful. Next, bring to mind a few loveable qualities that you have. You can think of a time you've been generous or helpful. You can even think of the efforts you put into doing your school work or getting up when you'd rather stay asleep. Next, repeat friendly wishes to yourself, genuinely wishing yourself well. You can use the following friendly wishes or create ones of your own:

May I be happy

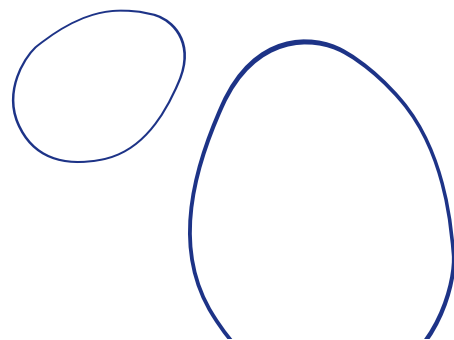
May I be peaceful

May I be safe

Stay connected to the feelings of ease and warmth that these wishes tend to generate in our bodies and minds, savoring the pleasant sensations for a few seconds longer than you're used to. When you are ready, you can open your eyes and continue your day with more ease.

DIVE DEEPER (OPTIONAL)

At the beginning or end of each day for one week, invite students to take out a piece of paper and write down three things that they appreciate about themselves. Ask them to reflect on how this affects their self-talk. They may notice that their thoughts become more positive.



LESSON 9: GRATITUDE

LESSON 9 TOPICS

- Gratitude

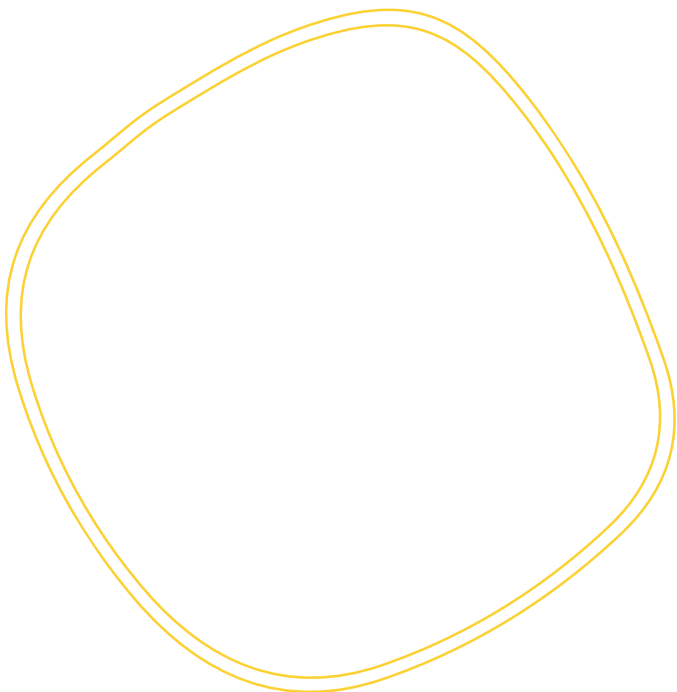
LESSON 9 OBJECTIVES

- Students should know the benefits of gratitude and how to practice it

CONCEPT OVERVIEWS

GRATITUDE

Practicing gratitude decreases our negativity bias or our tendency to be on the lookout for danger, threats, and a general sense of lack. Thinking of things we are grateful for increases our happiness and our general health.



LESSON PLAN

TEACHING TIPS

PRACTICE REMINDERS

- Remind students that they can feel grateful for anything. There is nothing too small to feel grateful for and they can let go of any judgment toward what they feel grateful for.
- It's important to emphasize that mindfulness is not about getting rid of thoughts or getting angry with ourselves for having thoughts during meditation. We are changing our relationship to our thoughts, being kind, open, and curious toward ourselves instead of judgmental.
- As always, remind students that sharing and practicing are optional and that they always have the option to rest during the practice.
- Some students may say that they felt self-conscious or awkward. Remind them that this is normal and something to just notice while they continue to practice curiosity.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCE

TRAUMA TOOLKIT FOR EDUCATORS

Provides school administrators, teachers, staff, and concerned parents with basic information about working with traumatized children in the school system.

GRATITUDE

LESSON 9 VIDEO

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

Today we are going to learn a new practice - *gratitude*. You have probably heard this word before. Today we will reflect on what we are grateful for. There is nothing too small or too big to feel grateful for.



GRATITUDE

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Tell me about a person you feel especially grateful for and why. What qualities of theirs do you appreciate?
2. Which of your actions and efforts do you appreciate?

DAILY CHALLENGE

Every day for three minutes, practice using gratitude as an anchor.

DAILY CHALLENGE PROMPT

Let us get comfortable in our place. Bring to mind the first three things you think about when you ask yourself, “what am I grateful for?” Now think of a specific person you enjoy having in your life. What qualities do they have that you appreciate? Now think about your neighborhood. What are some things you appreciate about it? Now bring to mind your own efforts. What did you do today that you feel grateful about? Maybe you feel grateful that you woke up and took care of some tasks or that you were patient with someone. Just take a few moments to notice how you feel as you spend time thinking of aspects of your life for which you are grateful. Maybe you feel calmer or happier, less stressed perhaps. This is a practice you can do at any time. It is especially helpful when you’re feeling negative or cranky.

LESSON 10: MINDFULNESS REVIEW

LESSON 10 TOPIC

Review of all past mindfulness topics

LESSON 10 OBJECTIVES

- Students should know the benefits of gratitude and how to practice it
- Students should know how to anchor to sounds and the body
- Students should know how to practice loving-kindness meditation

LESSON PLAN

TEACHING TIPS

PRACTICE REMINDERS

- It's important to emphasize that mindfulness is not about getting rid of thoughts or getting angry with ourselves for having thoughts during meditation. We are changing our relationship to our thoughts, being kind, open, and curious toward ourselves instead of judgmental.
- As always, remind students that sharing and practicing are optional and that they always have the option to rest during the practice.
- Some students may say that they felt self-conscious or awkward. Remind them that this is normal and something to just notice while they continue to practice curiosity.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCE

TEEN LINE

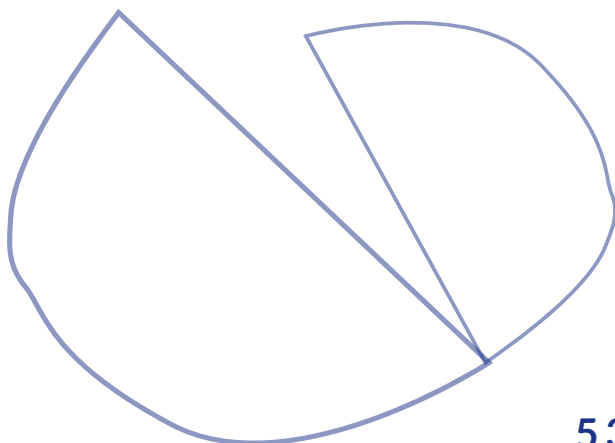
TEEN LINE is a non-profit, community based organization that provides emotional support to youth. Their mission to provide peer-based education and support before problems become a crisis, using a national hotline, community outreach, and online support.

MINDFULNESS TOPICS REVIEW

LESSON 10 VIDEO

TEACHER PROMPT

Put aside any distractions so that you can be fully present with today's activity. Today we are going to review three main practices from the course. These include anchoring to sounds and body sensations and practicing loving kindness.



MINDFULNESS TOPICS REVIEW

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. What has been your favorite mindfulness practice?
2. How can mindfulness help you in your life?

DAILY CHALLENGE

Choose your favorite mindful awareness practice and share how it has helped you with a classmate, friend, or family member. If it feels inspiring, you can remember to practice in that way whenever you like.

DAILY CHALLENGE PROMPT

We will be going over the different practices that we have learned in the last few weeks. Start by closing your eyes or leaving them open and resting your gaze on a spot in front of you. Take a minute or two to listen to sounds all around you. Notice sounds that are close by and sounds that are farther away. When your attention drifts to thoughts or feelings, gently note them, then go back to listening to sounds. Now, pay attention to how your body is feeling overall. Do you feel tired, restless, or maybe relaxed? At your own pace, begin to notice body sensations in your feet, your legs, your abdomen, chest, neck, and throat. Notice your arms and hands, your back, and your head. Then notice any sensations you feel across your forehead, your cheeks, and around your eyes. Notice how your body may feel different after scanning through it. Finally, we will practice loving kindness toward ourselves. Bring to mind a positive quality that you have. This could be your kindness, patience, willingness to work hard or something else. When you feel ready, take a nice slow stretch and open your eyes.

DIVE DEEPER (OPTIONAL)

Have students share their thoughts about the mindful awareness practices that they have learned over the course of this education unit. Did they enjoy learning about mindfulness, did they find it useful? Was there anything that they disliked? Encourage open dialogue and share your experiences as well.

LIST OF MINDFUL AWARENESS PRACTICES

ANCHORING

We talk to students about how we can anchor our attention to different aspects of the present moment including body sensations and our five senses. Anchoring allows students to return to the present moment when thoughts drift toward the past or the future, driven by difficult emotions.

MINDFUL BREATHING

Mindful breathing means we are breathing naturally and paying attention to the sensations of our breathing in our abdominal area, our chest, or at our nose. Anchoring to sensations of breath promotes concentration, ease, and focus

MINDFUL LISTENING

Mindful listening invites us to experience what it is like to pay attention to sounds in the environment as an anchor for our attention. It gives us the opportunity to pay attention on purpose, engaging executive functioning to choose what we attend to.

MINDFUL STANDING & WALKING

Mindfulness can be practiced while standing and walking. It can feel grounding to check in to the body, and attending to sensations while it is moving may be an easier practice for some. Slowing down on purpose can help regulate emotions when we feel distressed or rushed.

BODY SCAN

Through the body scan practice, we teach students how to be aware of internal body sensations such as pressure and tingling with curiosity and openness. We start by inviting students to squeeze and release their muscles before starting the body scan which helps relax their bodies.

LOVING KINDNESS MEDITATION

This type of meditation invites us to bring to mind a person or animal that we appreciate and to send them kind wishes. In the practice we recall the things we appreciate about our loved one, imagine them happy and then silently repeat phrases to send them. We can also send these kind wishes to ourselves. We offer three general wishes (happiness, health, and peacefulness), but feel free to send whatever wishes feel natural and genuine. This practice can help cultivate a positive mindset, can aid with falling asleep at night and promote general relaxation and ease.

LIST OF MINDFUL AWARENESS PRACTICES

CONTINUED

MINDFULNESS WITH THOUGHTS (FLOCK ACRONYM)

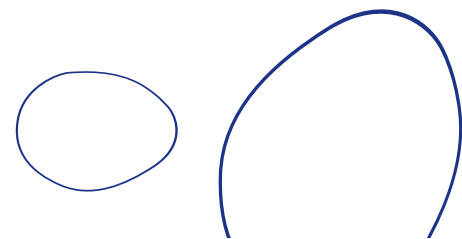
Flock is an acronym to help students remember how to be mindful of their thoughts. “**F**” stands for *feeling*, which means noticing the emotions and sensations that arise with thoughts. “**L**” stands for *labeling*, which entails identifying thoughts as judgments, planning, remembering, and other categories. “**O**” stands for *observing*, which means to notice thoughts as if they are clouds moving through a wide-open sky. “**C**” stands for *counting*, as students can count their thoughts as a way of observing them. Finally, “**K**” stands for *kindness*. This encourages students to be kind to themselves as they are practicing.

MINDFULNESS WITH EMOTIONS (RAIN ACRONYM)

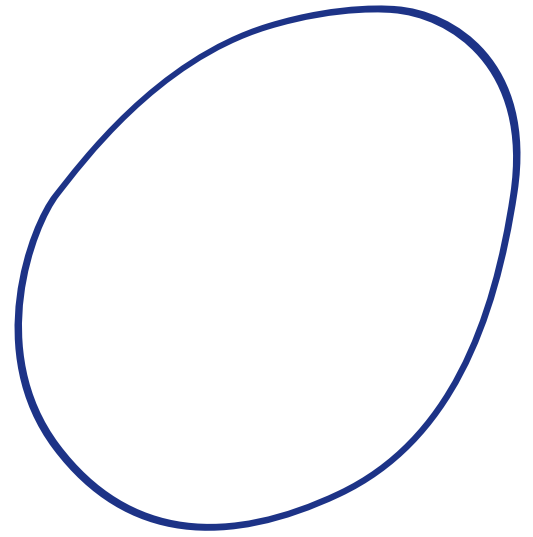
R.A.I.N. is a technique that requires students to pause and notice their inner experience of emotions. “**R**” stands for recognizing or naming the emotion(s) that are present. Naming emotions has been shown to reduce their intensity and increase activation of the prefrontal cortex, the brain’s center for executive functioning, decision-making, and self-awareness. “**A**” stands for allow, which means to let go of changing or suppressing the emotion and instead allow it to move through you with acceptance. “**I**” stands for investigate, which means to scan through the body, noticing sensations like tightness or heat that arise with the emotion. Finally, “**N**” can stand for three concepts: non-identify, nurture, or neutral. Non-identify means to let go of judgement and remember that emotions are universal. They are temporary experiences moving through us, and they are not who we are. Nurture means to bring compassion and kindness to our inner experience. We can do this by softening toward our pain and realizing we are not alone. Neutral refers to bringing awareness to our five senses and connecting with the neutral, yet, peaceful aspects of our environment.

MINDFULNESS IN DAILY LIFE (STOP ACRONYM)

S.T.O.P. is an acronym students can use to help them bring their attention to the present moment more often and deal with difficult emotions. “**S**” stands for *stop what you’re doing* to pause. “**T**” stands for *take a deep breath*. “**O**” stands for *observe*. Students can observe in a similar way to the investigate step in R.A.I.N. by noticing internal body sensations and emotions, or they can observe sensations (sounds, sights, tastes, skin sensations, and scents) in the present moment. And finally, “**P**” stands for *proceed*. You can invite students to find a cue to practice S.T.O.P. It could be something they do every day, like walking from their home to their car, or when they walk up steps.



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



DROP IN MEDITATION

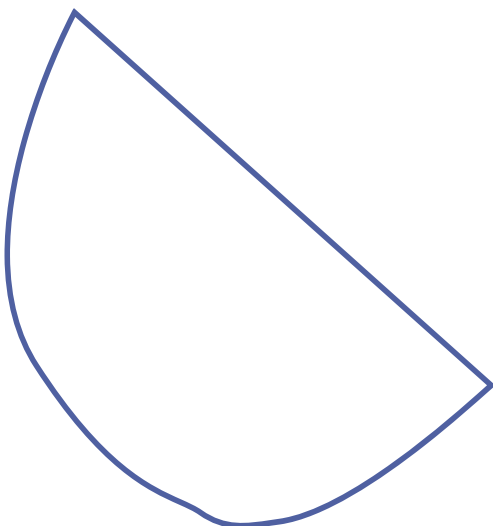
Join MARC teachers in Weekly Virtual Meditation Drop-In Sessions. These 30-minute sessions will offer an online community of meditation support and teachings. No need to register, come as you are.

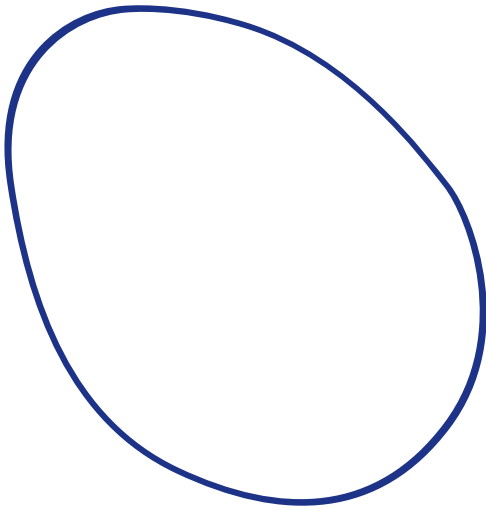
ARTICLE

Mindfulness-based interventions in schools—a systematic review and meta-analysis

TRAUMA TOOLKIT FOR EDUCATORS

Provides school administrators, teachers, staff, and concerned parents with basic information about working with traumatized children in the school system.





ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

TEEN LINE

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UCLA MARC

The Mindful Awareness Research Center (MARC) is a partner of the Norman Cousins Center for Psychoneuroimmunology within the Jane and Terry Semel Institute for Neuroscience and Human Behavior at UCLA.

Visit their website for more resources.

THE LIFELINE AND 988

988 has been designated as the new three-digit dialing code that will route callers to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. When people call, text, or chat 988, they will be connected to trained counselors that are part of the existing Lifeline network. These trained counselors will listen, understand how their problems are affecting them, provide support, and connect them to resources if necessary.

Visit their website for more resources.

