



**Creating Healthy Schools  
and Communities**

# Wellness Wednesdays Virtual Training Series

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**A Mindfulness Minute**

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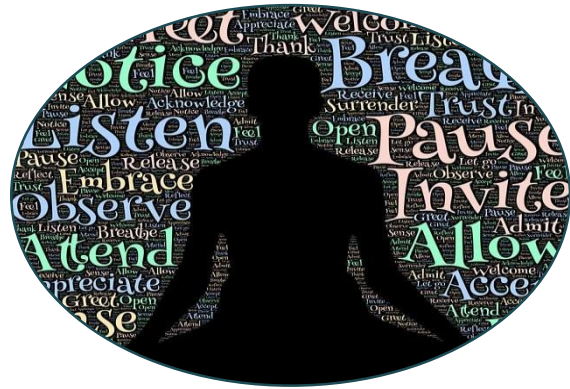
# A Moment of Mindfulness

Let's take a moment to be mindful ourselves!



# A Moment of Mindfulness

What is Mindfulness & the Mindful Minute?



Example Exercises & Leading a Mindful Minute



How to Implement in Your Classroom



# What is Mindfulness?

**Mindfulness** is the ability to be present and aware of our surroundings and what we are doing without judgement. When practiced regularly, mindfulness can promote learning, growing, healing, and even transforming.

Mindfulness has roots in Buddhism, as well as Indian religious and philosophical traditions, but has continued to evolve into a secular practice to help with concentration, learning, and other features.

Mindfulness is a quality that every human being already possesses, you just have to learn how to access it.

Mindfulness can be practiced by anyone, anywhere.

# Why is Mindfulness Useful for You & Your Students?

Stronger self regulation skills

Improvements in socializing with peers

Lower levels of hyperactivity

Decreased frequency and severity of post-traumatic symptoms

Lower rates and severity of depression

Increasing attention and focus

Improving behavior in the classroom

Reducing test anxiety

Lower stress levels



# What is a Mindful Minute?

A mindful minute focuses on taking a short amount of time (1-3 minutes) to do a short exercise intended to make you more aware of yourself and your surroundings.

We'll go through 2 additional examples today adapted from a [pilot program from Portland State](#).

**There is no right way to do a mindful minute.** It will look different as you find what works best for your students, situation, and environment.

# Leading a Mindful Minute:

It's important that when you lead a Mindful Minute, it is trauma informed.

An important part of that is allowing students to choose when and how they engage with the exercises.

- Students don't have to participate if they don't want to or don't feel comfortable. **Instead**, those that choose not to participate should sit quietly and respectfully to allow for others to participate.
- Students don't have to close their eyes if they are asked to during the exercise. **Instead**, they can focus on a distant part of the room like a far wall, corner, or the ceiling.

# Exercise 1 – Mindful Breathing

This is the exercise that we went through when we began.

Uses breathing patterns to be more consciously aware of your body and its surroundings, breath, and capacity to relax. When our breathing becomes slower and more rhythmic, our muscles relax, and when our muscles relax, our mind relaxes.

Works especially well in an Elementary / Primary setting

Focuses on simple, physical aspect of mindfulness that lets them focus and be more attentive to their physical self.





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# Exercise 2 – Body Scan

During body scan, you focus your attention on each part of your body, moving from your head to your toes. In each area of your body, you search for tension, then focus on releasing that tension outward. The idea is to increase awareness of our body's tension and learn to relax it.

Works well in an Elementary / Middle School setting

Still focuses on the physical aspect of mindfulness but requires a slightly more complex self-awareness.



# Barriers to a Mindful Minute:

## Time Investment

- While you might lose a minute to the exercise, you end up having a return on investment in instruction time gained.

## Keeping students quiet for the exercises

- Be genuine – when you care, your students will follow your lead.
- If interruptions are happening, take a moment to call them out during the exercise, and privately address them with disruptive students later.

## Feeling Awkward

- Be authentic in your investment in the exercises. Your investment will encourage your students to become invested themselves.



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# Exercise 3 – Gratitude

Focuses on taking time to let go of the difficulties and challenges that can bog us down, and instead replace it with acknowledgement of the positive things that we might take for granted in the scope of our day to day lives.

Works especially well with middle / high school students

This exercise takes advantage of a more introspective approach to mindfulness, which is more effective with older students as they develop cognitively.



# Adding a Mindful Minute to Your Day

## Elementary School

- Use the structured schedule to make mindfulness a part of your classroom routine.
  - Before starting the day
  - After social and/or physical activity (lunch, recess, phys ed, etc.)
- Taking the time to lead students through the exercises each time gives them the ability to learn when and how to use these skills in the future.
- Being sincere about mindfulness and the importance of the exercises will be reflected by your students.

# Adding a Mindful Minute to Your Day

## Middle / High School

As students grow older and mature, allowing them to have agency in introducing these activities to your day is a great way to get them to feel more comfortable with the exercises.

- As a part of the morning announcements
- Before starting class
- Before a stressful event (test or presentation)
- As a part of conflict resolution
- Encouraging students to lead an exercise

As students mature, allowing them to become comfortable with that why and how to use a mindfulness minute is especially important.

# Adding a Mindful Minute to Your School

While it might feel more difficult, the best case for making these exercises most effective is making it a culture shift in your school, not just classroom.

- Add an exercise as part of the morning announcements
- Create a dedicated space for students to take mindfulness breaks
- Take a moment of mindfulness before disciplinary action
- Identifying resources for students and staff to learn more about what mindfulness is and how to use it

Making Mindfulness a part of your school can help establish a culture of empathy, acceptance, and self-care a norm for students, faculty, and community members alike.



# More Resources For Your Mindful Minute

**Transforming Education -**

<https://transformingeducation.org/resources/mindfulness-in-the-classroom-learning-from-a-school-based-mindfulness-intervention-through-the-boston-charter-research-collaborative/>

**Dr. Jon Kabat-Zinn -** <https://jonkabat-zinn.com/>

**Pure Edge -** <https://pureedgeinc.org/>

**Child Mind Institute -** <https://childmind.org/article/mindfulness-in-the-classroom/>

**Western Governors University -** <https://www.wgu.edu/blog/mindfulness-classroom2010.html>

**American University School of Education -**

<https://soeonline.american.edu/blog/mindfulness-in-the-classroom/>