

Mindfulness/Contemplation in Education Initiatives

Programs for Students

Mindful Schools

<http://www.mindfulschools.org/>

We use a simple but powerful technique called mindfulness to teach children how to focus, manage their emotions, handle their stress, and resolve conflicts. Instead of simply telling children to do these things, we show children **how** — through direct experience. It allows children to make wiser decisions *in the heat of the moment*, rather than only in retrospect. Mindfulness develops an “inner compass” — a true lifetime skill that is highly preventive. Understanding one’s own thoughts and feelings can save massive future expenditures to address juvenile delinquency, poor academic performance, stress, mental disorders, etc... In addition, having a mind that is calm, focused, and empathetic allows children to increase their scholastic aptitude, particularly if they experience a high degree of stress outside of school. The skills we learn as children are the ones at which we become best, which is why we begin teaching children in elementary school. All children can benefit from the vital skill of mindfulness, which helps them succeed at school and in life.

Learning to BREATHE

<http://learning2breathe.org/>

Learning to BREATHE is a mindfulness curriculum for adolescents designed for classroom or other settings. The program is tailored to the needs of adolescents in order to help them manage stress, strengthen emotion regulation and attention, and improve well-being.

MindUp

<http://www.thehawnfoundation.org/mindup>

As The Hawn Foundation’s signature educational initiative, MindUP™ is anchored in current research in cognitive neuroscience, evidence-based classroom pedagogy, best-practices mindful education, precepts of social and emotional learning (SEL), and guiding principles of positive psychology. MindUP™ is a family of social, emotional, and attentional self-regulatory strategies and skills developed for cultivating well-being and emotional balance. Among the various MindUP™ skills taught to students, focused attention and nonreactive monitoring of experience from moment to moment display the potential to have a long-term impact on brain function and social and emotional behavior. The SEL framework guiding MindUP™ was developed by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), a research-focused organization whose mission is to “establish social and emotional learning as an essential part of education.” MindUP™ features lessons to improve behavior and learning for children. The lessons fit easily into any schedule and can be implemented with minimal preparation. Classroom management tips and content-based activities are also provided to assist educators in using MindUP™ throughout their classrooms. Our program provides children with emotional and cognitive tools to help them manage emotions and behaviors, reduce stress, sharpen concentration, and increase empathy and optimism.

Inner Resilience

<http://www.innerresilience-tidescenter.org/>

Our Mission is to cultivate the inner lives of students, teachers and schools by integrating social and emotional learning with contemplative practice. The Inner Resilience Program, a project of the Tides Center, was founded in the spring of 2002 in response to the effects of the events of September 11, 2001 on New York City schools. Our aim was to equip school staff and parents with the skills necessary to build back their inner strength, and to model these skills for the children in their care. Initially funded by the American Red Cross and the September 11th fund, we began with a core program of retreats, professional development workshops, bodywork sessions, and yoga classes for school staff, as well as educational workshops for parents. After a while, teachers began to request concrete tools for use in their classrooms — tools that would assist them in teaching their children the essential skills of inner resilience. In 2005, we began to write and pilot a new curriculum for the classroom: Building Resilience from the Inside Out.

Open Circle (K-5)

<http://www.open-circle.org/>

Open Circle is a comprehensive, grade-differentiated social and emotional learning program for grades K-5 children, their teachers, administrators, other school staff, parents and other caregivers. Our mission is to work with school communities to help children become ethical people, contributing citizens and successful learners. By helping schools implement Open Circle, we foster the development of relationships that support safe, caring and respectful learning communities of children and adults.

Responsive Classroom (K-5)

<http://www.responsiveclassroom.org/>

Responsive Classroom is a widely used, research-backed approach to elementary education that increases academic achievement, decreases problem behaviors, improves social skills, and leads to more high-quality instruction.

PassageWorks

<http://passageworks.org/>

The PassageWorks Institute is a non-profit organization that provides K-12 educators with innovative practices and principles that integrate social, emotional and academic learning and assist teachers to bring who they are to how they teach. For over two decades, teachers have used this practical, relationship-centered approach to support students to increase focus and motivation, develop empathy and compassion, and experience a sense of deep connection, meaning and purpose in the classroom.

Programs for Educators

Center for Courage and Renewal

<http://www.couragerenewal.org/>

When we reconnect who we are with what we do, we approach our lives and our work with renewed passion, commitment, and integrity. The Center works to foster personal and professional renewal through retreats and programs that offer the time and space to reflect on life and work. These retreats, called Courage to Teach®, Courage to Lead®, or Circles of Trust®, are led by skilled facilitators and make use of poetry and stories, solitude, reflection, and deep listening.

CARE (Cultivating Awareness & Resilience in Educators) for Teachers

<http://www.care4teachers.org/>

CARE is a unique program designed to help teachers reduce stress and enliven their teaching by promoting awareness, presence, compassion, reflection, and inspiration - the inner resources they need to help students flourish, socially, emotionally, and academically.

SMART-in-Education

<http://www.smart-in-education.org/>

Stress Management and Relaxation Techniques in Education (SMART) is an accredited curriculum for teachers sponsored by IMPACT. The program teaches a range of proven techniques that support concentration, insight, empathy, and emotional awareness. Teachers report that their attendance in the program has had a positive influence in their classrooms. Participants report more positive interactions with students and coworkers as a result of participating in the class.

Cultivating Emotional Balance

<http://cultivatingemotionalbalance.org/>

Cultivating Emotional Balance is a research project, which arose from a dialogue between biobehavioral scientists studying emotion and the Dalai Lama, Buddhist monks, and scholars at the Mind and Life Institute in Dharamsala, India in March of 2000. In response to this request, Dr. Paul Ekman and Dr. B. Alan Wallace, developed a training program that integrated Buddhist contemplative practices with Western techniques for dealing with negative emotional experiences. The training's purpose is to reduce emotional responses that are destructive to self and others and enhance compassion and empathy.

Mindful Education Institute

<http://www.mindfuleducationinstitute.com/>

Launched in 2011 by the [Mind Body Awareness Project](#), The Mindful Education Institute (MEI) is a year-long teacher training designed to support you in becoming a skilled and creative mindfulness educator. MEI draws together preeminent teachers to offer you the most comprehensive and dynamic mindfulness in education training available. With three residential retreats and weekly online meetings, the training is a launching pad for participants to become experts and innovators in developing their programs.

Mindful Inquiry Certificate Program for Educators

<http://www.mindfulinquiry.org/certificate/>

Certificate Program participants take three graduate level courses over the course of a calendar year. Each course consists of both a face-to-face study retreat and an online course of study in order to strengthen both the learning community and the group dynamics of the cohort. Additionally, the combination of face-to-face and online study helps focus the participants on the integration of mindfulness practice and theory in their work as educators and in everyday life.

Naropa University's MA in Contemplative Education

<http://www.naropa.edu/conted/>

Associations/Networks

Mindfulness in Education Network

<http://mindfuled.org>

The purpose of our network is to facilitate communication among all educators, parents, students and others interested in promoting contemplative practice (mindfulness) in educational settings. MiEN has a Web site, sponsors conferences on mindfulness in education, and maintains a listserv with over 600 participants, ranging from early childhood educators to adult educators. Participants on MiEN's listserv are invited to share ways in which they use mindfulness practice with students and teachers and how the practice enhances their role as teacher. They are also encouraged to raise areas of concern, for which others might be able to suggest mindful approaches. Interested people may join MiEN's listserv by sending a blank message to: MiEN-subscribe@yahoo.com

Association for Mindfulness in Education

<http://www.mindfuleducation.org/>

The Association for Mindfulness in Education is a collaborative association of organizations and individuals working together to provide support for mindfulness training as a component of K-12 education. Research over the past few decades has found that mindfulness training develops: - *attention and concentration*, - *social-emotional awareness*, - *body awareness and coordination*, - *interpersonal skills*. As such, mindfulness is a foundation for education; mindfulness provides the optimal conditions for learning and teaching and also supports all pedagogical approaches.

Center for Contemplative Mind in Society

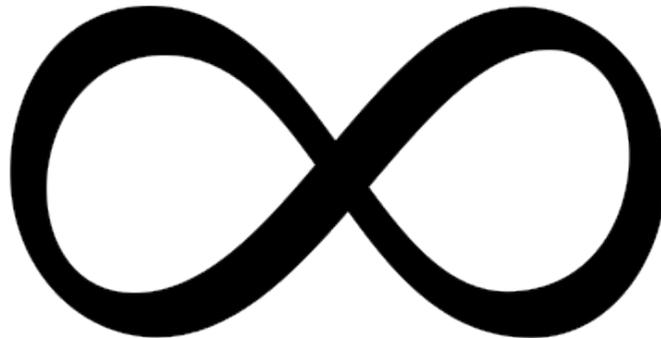
<http://www.contemplativemind.org/>

The Center for Contemplative Mind in Society works to integrate contemplative awareness and contemporary life in order to help create a more just, compassionate, reflective, and sustainable society. Contemplative practices, including prayer, meditation, yoga, and many contemplative arts, help individuals regain balance and calm in the midst of challenging circumstances. This state of calm centeredness provides effective stress reduction and can also help address issues of meaning, values, and spirit. Contemplative practices can help people develop greater empathy and communication skills, improve focus and concentration, reduce stress and enhance creativity. In time, with sustained commitment, they cultivate insight, wise discernment, and a loving and compassionate approach to life. While personal transformation does not guarantee the transformation of social institutions, the Center is grounded in the belief that contemplative awareness can assist individuals and groups in identifying the root causes of social problems and finding creative approaches to eliminating them.

Garrison Institute Initiative on Contemplative and Education

<http://www.garrisoninstitute.org>

The Garrison Institute's Initiative on Contemplation and Education (ICE) works to develop the field of contemplative teaching and learning for K-12 educators and classrooms. It supports the field's growth and evolution by introducing evidence-based contemplative methods to educators. These methods help improve student academic performance, reduce teacher burnout and create healthy school environments. ICE hosts high-level forums that facilitate dialogue among educators, scientists, funders and policy makers, about the development and implementation of contemplative-based teacher trainings, classroom pilot programs, publications and other resources for educators, researchers, teachers and schools.



Authors/Books to Read

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Poets/Novelists

Wendell Berry
Emily Dickinson
Emerson
John Fox
Naomi Shihab Nye
John O'Donohue
Mary Oliver

Marge Piercy
Rachel Naomi Remen
Rilke
Rumi
Thoreau
Whitman
David Whyte