



Mindfulness Meditation: How Cultivating Self-Awareness is Key to Reducing Conflict

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Region 5 RPTAC



A Little About Me

- I taught 4th and 5th grade bilingual education for 2 years.
- I got my masters degree in Transpersonal Counseling Psychology from Naropa University in 2003
- Have worked for PEAK (CO PTI/Region 5 TAC) since 2004
- I have a private practice in Golden, CO

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- I am an adjunct faculty member at Naropa University where I teach mindfulness meditation

I am a mom of a 5 year old.



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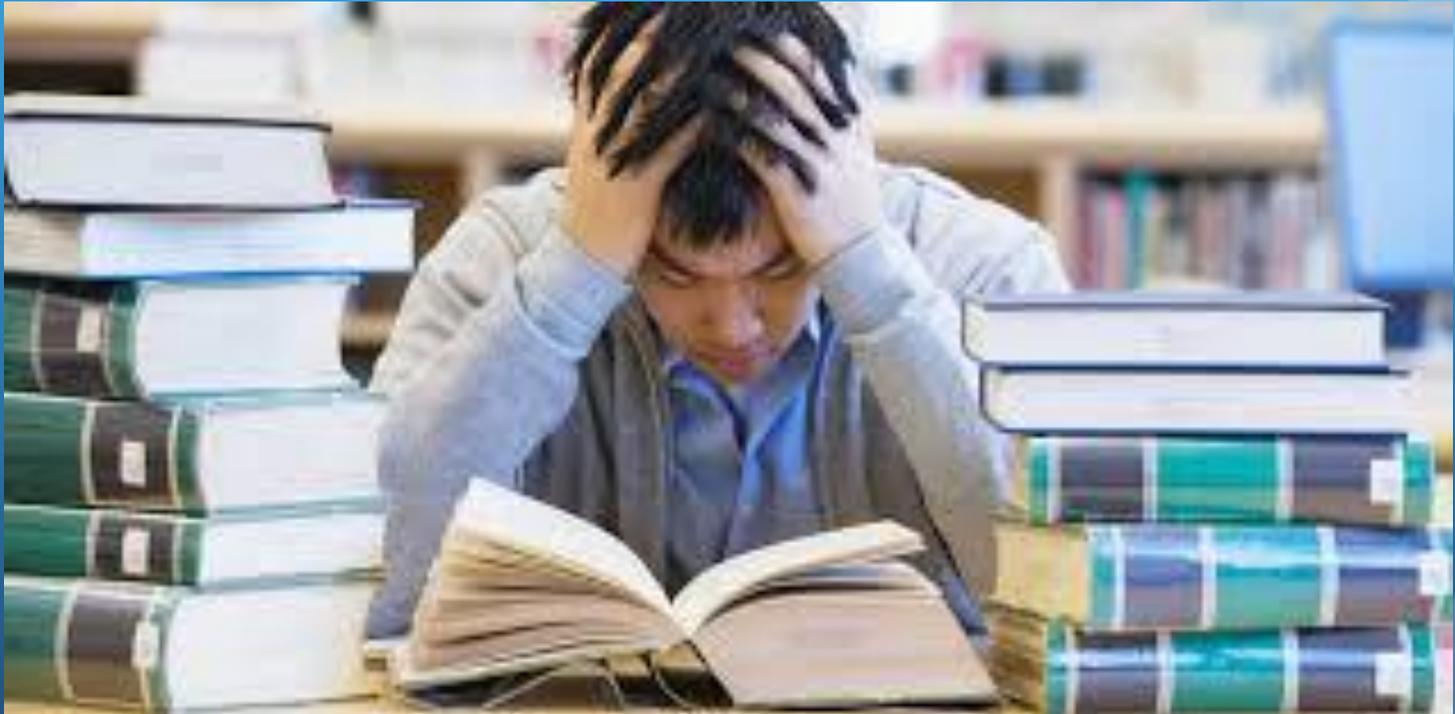
The Problem

There's a lot of conflict at IEP meetings! But that's not actually where the problem starts.

Where does it start? Break into groups, write down your ideas.



Everyone is Stressed OUT



Stress & Mindfulness Stats



Stress Epidemic vs. The United States

...and the emerging mindfulness solution

#1
anxious country
in the world



27%
live with anxiety
and depression



78%
of all hospital visits
directly linked to
stress (Harvard)



\$326 billion
annual impact of
stress on economy

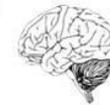


Stress

Mindfulness



#1
clinical tool for
stress, depression
anxiety and pain



#1
training for IQ,
EQ, attention and
stress resilience



452
published research
studies in 2011



1026% growth
in 10 years
becoming leading
field in mind science

modernmeditation.ca





Elizabeth Blackburn



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Elizabeth Blackburn

- 2009 Nobel Laureate in Physiology and Medicine, [Elizabeth Blackburn](#), discovered in a study of that mothers of children with disabilities have shortened telomeres (piece of DNA), shortening their life expectancy by 9 to 12 years.
- [NY Times Article](#)
- [Meditation slows aging](#) and self-care including mindfulness, yoga, and counseling reversed the negative impact on the telomeres.





National Coalition on Personnel Shortages in Special Education and Related Services

“The most recent data from the U.S. Department of Education have in fact shown significant drops in teacher-education enrollment in many states, including in large states like Texas, New York, and California. Many experts chalk up such declines, as well as regional teacher shortages, to the Great Recession and ensuing cutbacks in public spending. Others have charged that poor teacher working conditions, such as low salaries and test-driven school cultures, are nudging existing and potential educators toward other professions, especially with the economy improving... (2015)



If All You Have Is A Hammer



Everything looks like a nail





A New Tool

Mindfulness Meditation





What is Mindfulness?

- *“Mindfulness is moment-to-moment, non-judgmental awareness, cultivated by paying attention. Mindfulness arises naturally from living. It can be strengthened through practice.” ~ Jon Kabat-Zinn*

Mindfulness helps cultivate the state of mind necessary to use NVC.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gWaK2ml_rZw

<http://greatergood.berkeley.edu/topic/mindfulness/definition>





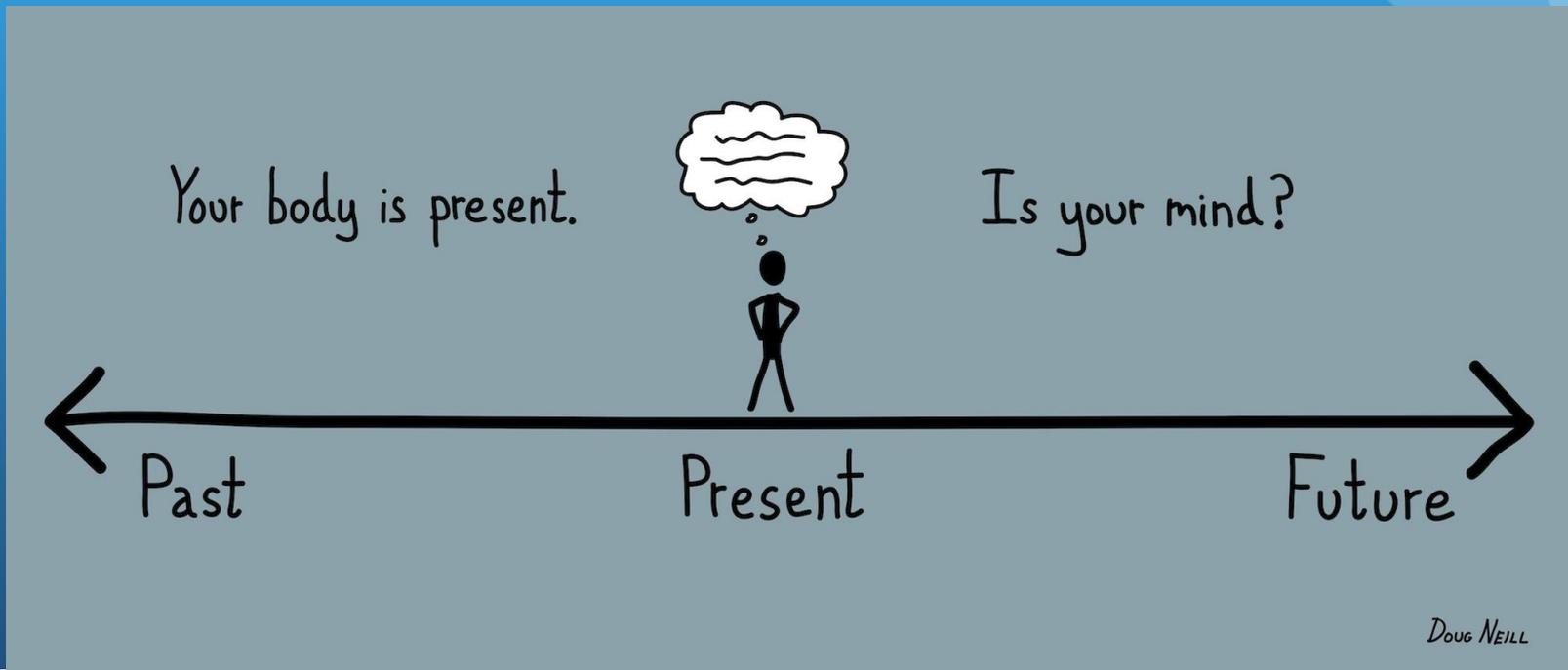
What Does the Research Say?

Research shows that regularly practicing mindfulness can improve well-being, lower stress and lead to improved psychological functioning.





So How Do You Do It?





Basic Mindfulness Meditation Instruction

- 1) Sit in an upright posture. You want a balance between dignity and relaxation.
- 2) Choose an object of meditation (breath, sounds in the environment, body sensation, music, etc.)
- 3) Put your attention on your breath (or other object of meditation). When your mind strays (and it will) label that “thinking” and gently bring your attention back to the breath.





Let's Practice!



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What Did You Notice?





Let's Take a Break!



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What Does the Research Say?

- Body/Health (Improves immune system function)
- Psychological Health (reduces stress, depression, anxiety and creates more positive emotions)
- Improves Memory and Attention Skills
- Parents are happier
- Teachers are less stressed
 - Schools perform better, have less violence





Mindfulness in Schools

- Meditation Transforms Roughest SF Schools

<http://www.sfgate.com/opinion/openforum/article/Meditation-transforms-roughest-San-Francisco-5136942.php>

- Mindfulness In Schools Reduces Symptoms of Depression Among Adolescents

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/03/15/mindfulness-in-schools-re_n_2884436.html

- Mindful Schools

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

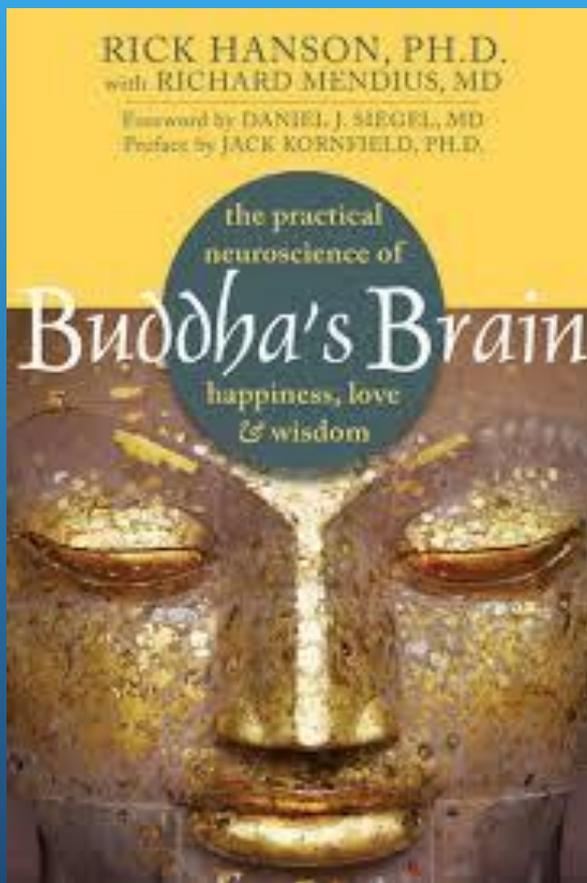
- Fourth and fifth graders who did mindfulness exercises had 15% better math scores than their peers (among other benefits)

<http://time.com/3682311/mindfulness-math/>





The Buddha Brain

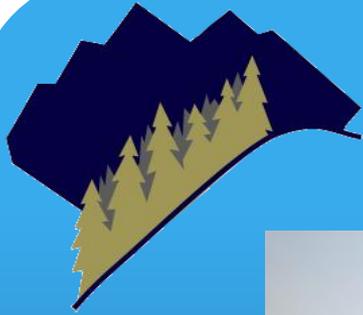




Infusing Mindfulness into the School Culture



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Parents

- Bi-monthly group, mindfulness and NVC



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Staff

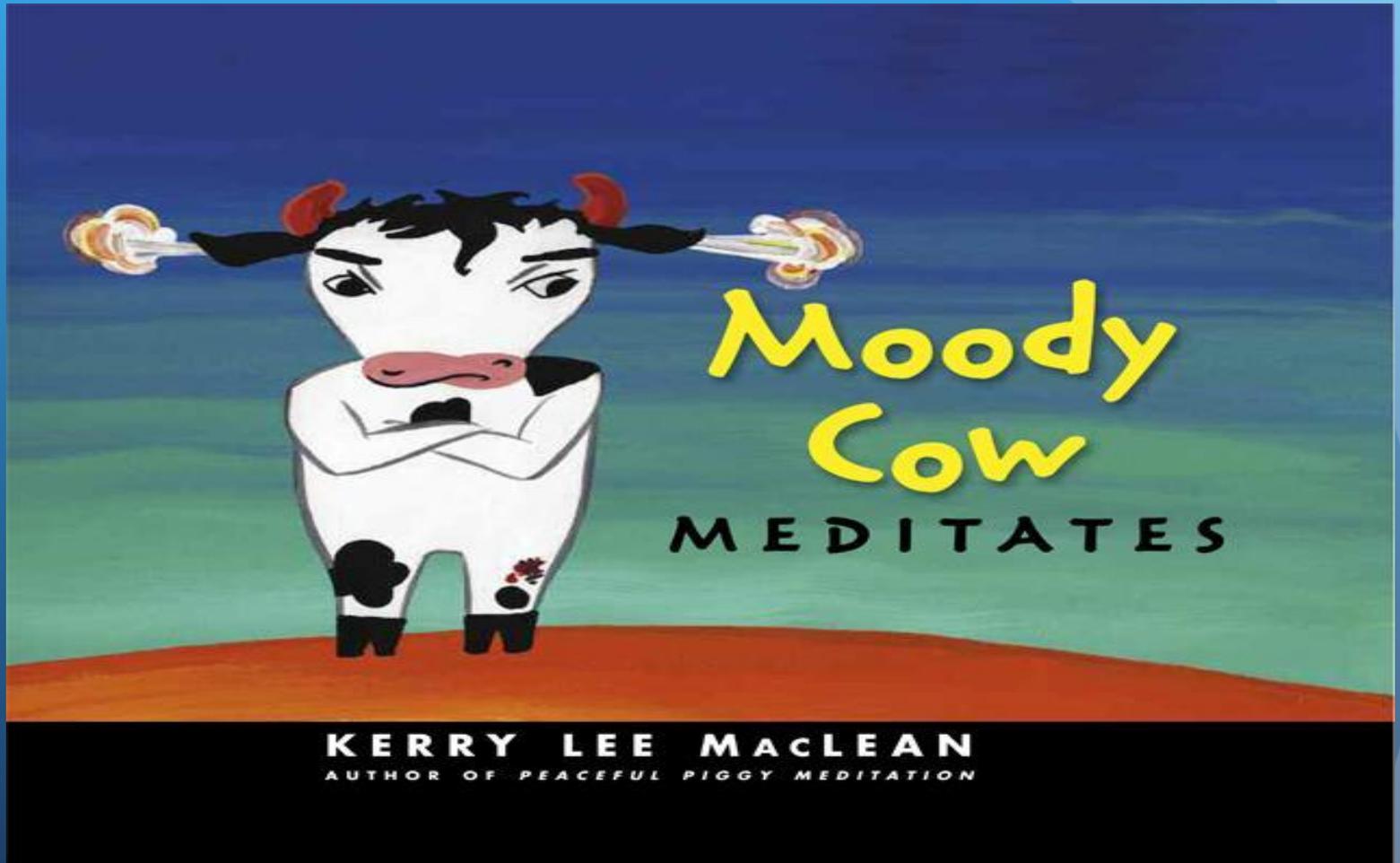
- Presenting mindfulness at staff meetings (15 minute guided meditation)
- Survey Monkey to determine interest

Goal: Offered weekly mindfulness session for all school employees





Kindergarten Students





Middle School Students

- Introduction and guided meditation instruction (30 min per group of 20)
- Mindfulness with horses (my office)
- Watching short movie clip- judgments vs. observations
- Reading from a book- note observations and judgments

Acting out scenes from a play





High School Students

Break into groups. What are your ideas?





Pairing Mindfulness and Non-Violent Communication

What is NVC?

Marshall Rosenberg

- 1) Observation
- 2) Feelings
- 3) Needs
- 4) Requests





Without Mindfulness

It's going to be VERY hard to change the way we communicate and how we deal with conflict.





It Takes Self-Awareness!



Infusing Mindfulness & NVC Into Parent Centers





What are Your Ideas?

How might mindfulness help your school reduce conflict in IEP meetings?



Questions?



**KEEP
CALM
AND
ASK
QUESTIONS**





*Mindfulness gives you time.
Time gives you choices.
Choices, skillfully made, lead
to freedom. You don't have to
be swept away by your
feeling. You can respond with
wisdom and kindness rather
than habit and reactivity.*

~ Bhante Henepola Gunaratana ~

OkDay.com

