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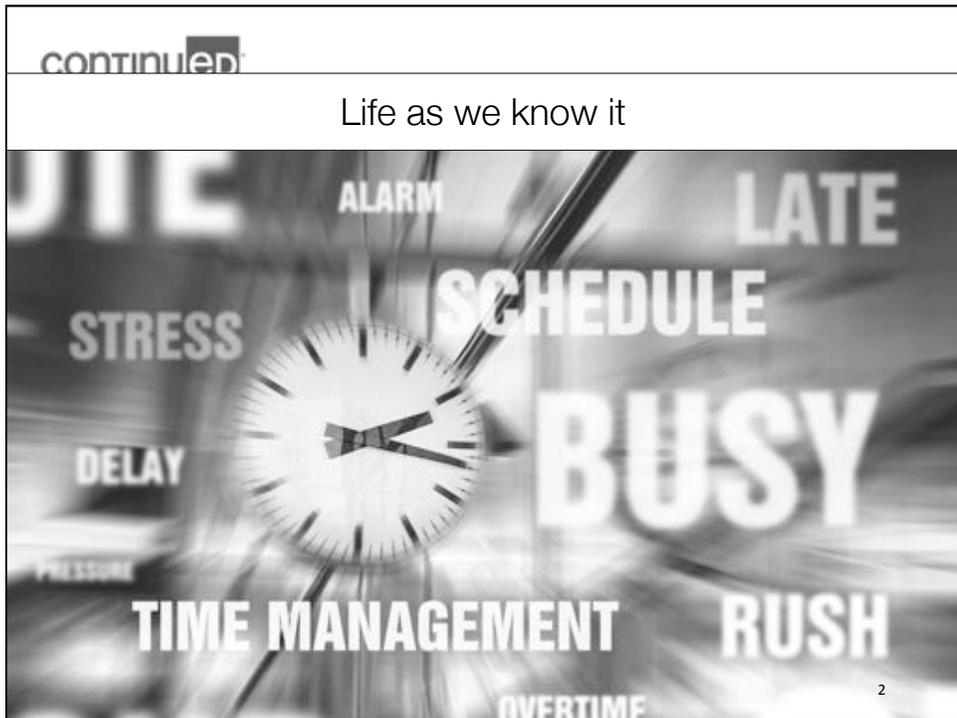
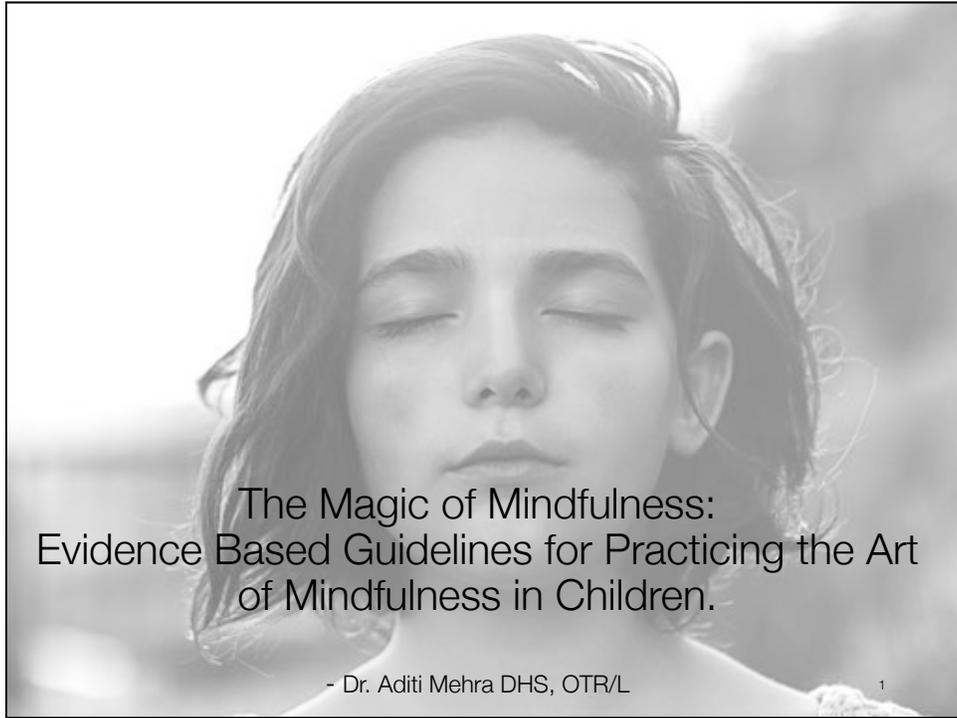
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Learning Outcomes

1. Discuss key principles of mindfulness and the research-based benefits for children, adolescents, and adults.
2. Discuss the link between mindfulness practices to evidence based patient and therapist well-being initiatives in occupational therapy.
3. Identify specific mindfulness activities and practices catering to teaching children using a multisensory approach.

3

What is mindfulness

“Mindfulness means paying attention in a particular way; On purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally.”

-Jon Kabat-Zinn (1982)

Founder of Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)

4

CONTINUED

Mindfulness Myths

Spiritual or religious

Long periods of passive sitting and navel-gazing

Living only in the present. Never thinking about the past or planning for the future.

Hypnosis

Suppressing emotion

Thinking about nothing

A form of discipline

Being happy ALL THE TIME and loving EVERY SINGLE MINUTE of life.

(*Q1)

5

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State or Practice?

▪ Formal practice



▪ Informal practiced



6

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“Mindfulness is like gym for the mind.”

- strengthens the brain’s grey matter in the prefrontal cortex and hippocampus.
- mind’s ability to focus
- pay attention
- reduce worry



7

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• Effect of mindfulness increases over time

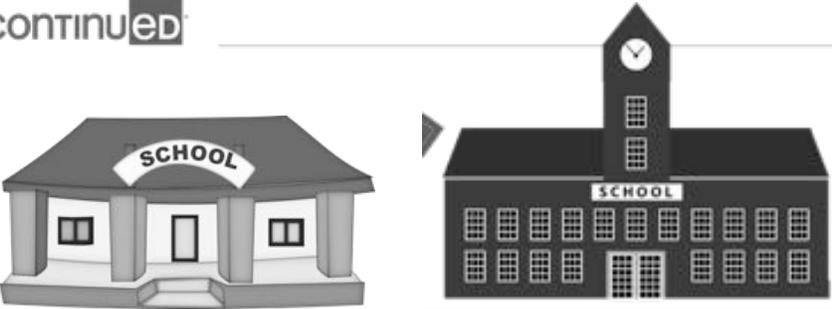


8

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Elementary-Middle School
1 in 7 experience mental health problems

High school
1 in 4 experience mental health problems

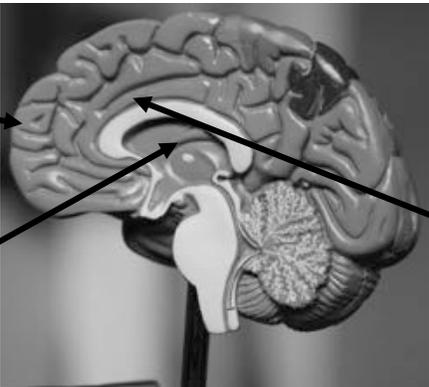
The World Health Organization has projected that depression will become one of the leading health problems worldwide.

9

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What does the Research say?

- practicing mindfulness strengthens areas of the brain that control 'executive function'.



prefrontal cortex thickening

amygdala. Reduced activity

hippocampus thickening

(*Q2, Q3)

10

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Stressed vs. Relaxed brain

- Loss of prefrontal, or higher thinking, regulation.
- Reactions are more primitive/survival parts of brain: emotional thinking, reflexes, fight/flight response.
- Prefrontal cortex more active during relaxation response: leads to improved emotion regulation, self-regulation, wise response vs. reactive/impulsive/fear-driven response.

(*Q4, Q5)

11

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The advantages of Neuroplasticity!

- We have the power to influence our brains.
- Positive thoughts strengthen certain neural circuits and become neural traits.
- Self-Directed Neuroplasticity =
 - Nurture positive states of mind to strengthen and build those neural networks.
- Make Happiness a Habit!

I can
I am able
It is possible
It can be done



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The impact of Mindfulness on academic performance?



Readiness to learn

Social emotional learning

Self- regulation

Decision Making

(*Q6)

13

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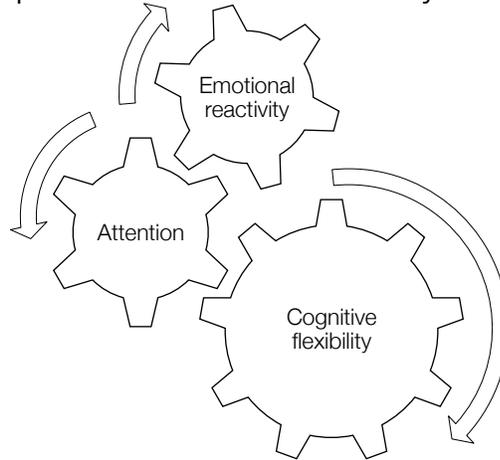
1 in 5 students are disengaged from school



Disengaged students are on average 1-2 yrs. behind their peers.

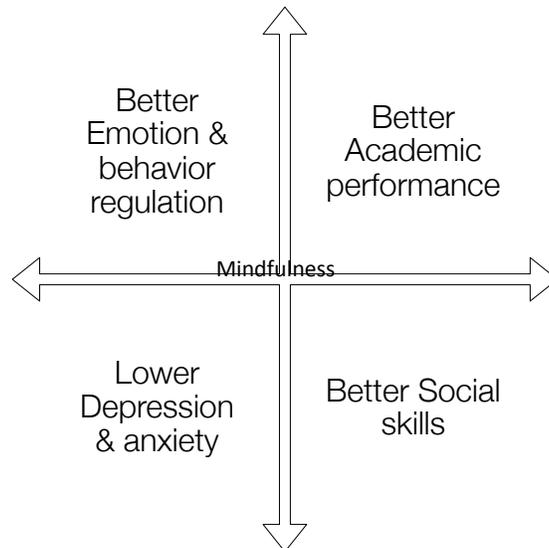
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Mindfulness improves the student's ability to learn.



Meta Cognition

Mindfulness & social emotional learning



90 minutes/ Week



18 mins
Per day
(*Q9)

6%
of the school day

17

continued



Mindfulness complements wellbeing programs

- **Self awareness:** studies have shown that it improves self awareness in young people.
- **Social awareness:** improves social skills in youth.
- **Self Management:** improves self regulation and impulse control, vital for self management.
- **Relationship skills:** listen to their peers, teachers and parents, and less emotionally reactive, they naturally develop better relationships.
- **Decision Making:** The need for immediate gratification is reduced, and the ability to consider long term goals is increased.

18



Scope of Practice for OT

- The occupational profile guides the selection and depth of mindfulness interventions a therapist uses with his or her client, in keeping with a client-centered approach.
- If a client finds mindfulness meditation meaningful, the intervention is itself an occupation, improving occupational performance.
- OTs have a holistic perspective, are trained in psychology and biology, and understand the mind-body-spirit connection.
- OTs address the whole person, and understand contexts that influence the whole person. (Jackman, 2014).

(*Q8)

21

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR MINDFULNESS in OT

- Mindfulness can increase awareness of performance patterns and improve occupational engagement as a prevention measure (AOTA, 2014; Jackman, 2014).
- In a review of studies on mindfulness in a rehabilitation setting, (Hardison & Roll, 2016) noted that different interventions were consistent with the OTPF-III's designations of occupations and activities, education and training, group interventions, and preparatory methods and tasks (AOTA, 2014).

22

Mindfulness for OT practitioners

- Students and clinicians in the allied health profession possess a demanding workload and are susceptible to burnout, which may reduce the ability to attend, concentrate, and make good decisions. (Gura, 2014)

"I was shocked at how busy my mind was ... continuous chattering ... even in the shower I was rehearsing conversations with friends ... now at least I can be alone in the shower!"

(Stew 2011)

23

3 Types of Mindfulness Practices

- **Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction** : Informal practice is defined as maintaining the qualities of mindfulness during routine tasks as well as during practices such as yoga, tai chi, walking meditation, body scans, and mindful eating (Elliot, 2015; McCorquodale, 2013) or Formal meditation practice.
- **General mindfulness**: Examples of these goals included occupational engagement, engagement in therapy, reduced anxiety, awareness of bodily sensations, and nonjudgmental attitude.
- **Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)**
psychological intervention stemming from clinical behavioral analysis and mindfulness principles. The primary goals of ACT were to improve psychological flexibility and engagement in therapy through pain acceptance, and buffering of other psychological experiences. (AOTA, 2014).

(*Q7)

24

Mindfulness in the rehabilitative process

- Children who participated in mindfulness-enhanced therapy improved on at least one component of motor coordination. This therapy also helped parent-child dyads meet their self-directed goals. (Jackman 2014)
- Studies show that mindfulness also offers robust positive influences, including increased self-esteem, acceptance, and positive attitudes toward eating (Kristeller, 2005; Kristeller & Hallett, 1999)
- Improves practitioners' work lives by increasing self-awareness and openness to new ideas, focus, and patience that contribute to enhanced client intervention as well as fostering a more healthy approach to living (Brenner, 2009; Krausner et al., 2009; Rothaupt & Morgan, 2007; Rybak & RussellChapin, 1998).

25

Sensory processing & mindfulness

- Individuals whose sensory processing patterns are characterized by poor awareness experience more mind wandering and distraction in daily life. Occupational therapists should consider mindfulness techniques when treating individuals with sensory processing disorders. – (Hebert. 2016)
- Mindfulness approaches can be taught to children, adolescents, and their parents to improve self-regulation, particularly in response to stress. (Perry-Parish et al., 2017)

26

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General guidelines?

- Should be introduced early years - 3 to 5yrs.
- Middle school/High school students are most vulnerable
- Encourage therapists/teachers to practice alongside students.
- Consistency
- 5-10 minutes mindfulness practice 4-5 days a week

27



Stop.

Take a breath.

Observe your thoughts and feelings.

Pause. Proceed mindfully.

28

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Let's give it try....

29

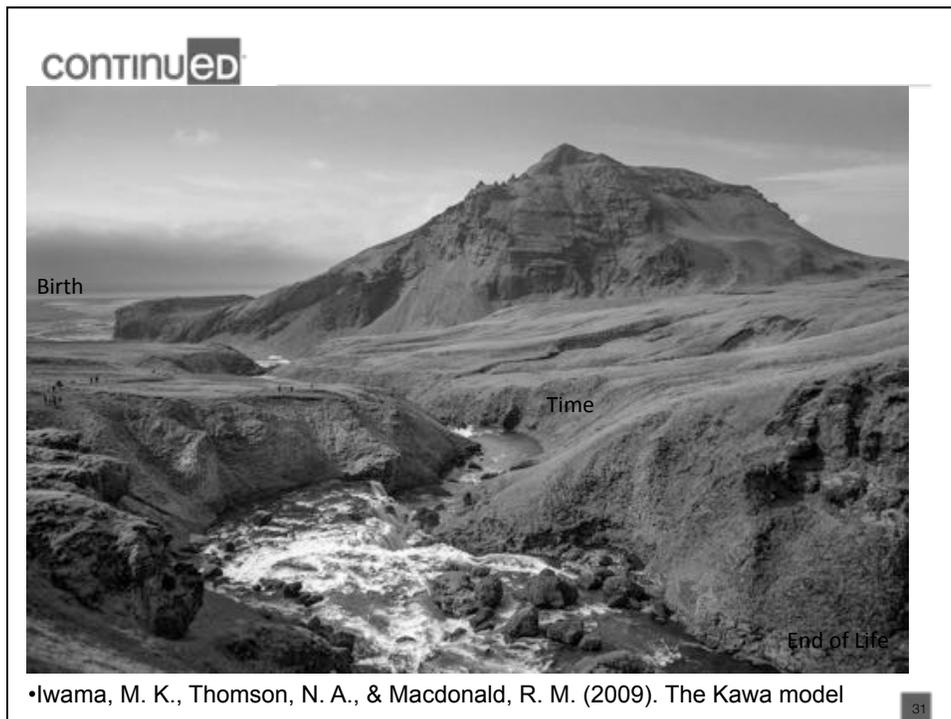
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Explaining Mindfulness to youth

- **The Mindful Jar:** teaches children how strong emotions can take hold, and how to find peace when these strong emotions feel overwhelming.
- **Cartoons/TV shows**
- **Check your personal weather report**
- **Model the behavior**

30

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Mindful activities for younger children

1. Mindful Posing: The Superman or The Wonder Woman
2. Spidey Senses.
3. Safari
4. Blowing bubbles.
5. Pinwheels.
6. Playing with balloons.
7. Texture bag.
8. Blindfolded
9. Slow motion Simon Says
10. Eat a raisin
11. Switch on/ off
12. Use images
13. Use Story-Telling, Music and Art

32

Mindfulness Listening

- There is an app for that!

(*Q10)



33

Body Scan Meditation

- Links mind with body
- Increases ability to track body sensations
- Grounding attention
- Increases body awareness
- Trains mind to tolerate sensations

34

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Every Breath you take....



35

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Mindfulness games & worksheets

- Pennies Game
- Water in a spoon race
- Mindful or unmindful worksheets
- Totem the feel good game, Self-Esteem Game for Team Building, Family Bonding, Counseling and Therapy
- The Mindfulness Therapy Games: Social Skills Game That Teaches Mindfulness for Kids, Teens and Adults | Effective for Self Care, Communication Skills

36

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Minfulness curricula

- The “Wellness Works in Schools” course is one such class, which has been shown to result in increased self-regulation and executive function (Garey, 2017).
- The Hawn Foundation’s MindUP curriculum is also a useful tool for teaching mindfulness to children (Garey, 2017).
- “MonkeyMind and Me: A Mindfulness Course for Children.”

37

To Learn More...

- *Full Catastrophe Living* by Jon Kabat-Zinn
- *Search Inside Yourself* by Chade-Meng Tan
- *Finding the Space to Lead* by Janice Marturano
- *The Mayo Clinic Guide to Stress-Free Living*
- *10% Happier* by Dan Harris
- *A Mindful Nation* by Congressman Tim Ryan
- *Mindfulness: An Eight-Week Plan for Finding Peace in a Frantic World* by Mark Penman and Danny Williams

38

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Mindfulness is not a synonym for relaxation.

Relaxation is the side effect of Mindfulness.

39

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40

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41

Questions



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42