If you are viewing this course as a recorded course after the live webinar, you can use the scroll bar at the bottom of the player window to pause and navigate the course.

This handout is for reference only. Non-essential images have been removed for your convenience. Any links included in the handout are current at the time of the live webinar, but are subject to change and may not be current at a later date.

No part of the materials available through the continued.com site may be copied, photocopied, reproduced, translated or reduced to any electronic medium or machine-readable form, in whole or in part, without prior written consent of continued.com, LLC. Any other reproduction in any form without such written permission is prohibited. All materials contained on this site are protected by United States copyright law and may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, displayed, published or broadcast without the prior written permission of continued.com, LLC. Users must not access or use for any commercial purposes any part of the site or any services or materials available through the site.
Technical issues with the Recording?

- Clear browser cache using [these instructions](#)
- Switch to another browser
- Use a hardwired Internet connection
- Restart your computer/device

Still having issues?

- Call 866-782-9924 (M-F, 8 AM-8 PM ET)
- Email customerservice@OccupationalTherapy.com
The Magic of Mindfulness: Evidence Based Guidelines for Practicing the Art of Mindfulness in Children.

- Dr. Aditi Mehra DHS, OTR/L

Life as we know it
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.

What is mindfulness

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

~Jon Kabat-Zinn (1982)
Founder of Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)
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.

State or Practice?

- Formal practice
- Informal practiced
“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

Effect of mindfulness increases over time
The World Health Organization has projected that depression will become one of the leading health problems worldwide.

Elementary-Middle School
1 in 7 experience mental health problems

High school
1 in 4 experience mental health problems

What does the Research say?

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

  prefrontal cortex

  amygdala.

  hippocampus

  (*Q2, Q3)
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)

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
The impact of Mindfulness on academic performance?

1 in 5 students are disengaged from school

Disengaged students are on average 1-2 yrs. behind their peers.
Mindfulness improves the student’s ability to learn.

Meta Cognition

Mindfulness & social emotional learning

Better Emotion & behavior regulation

Better Academic performance

Lower Depression & anxiety

Better Social skills
90 minutes/Week

18 mins Per day
6% of the school day

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.
A parallel exists between mindfulness practices and the occupational process of doing, being, and becoming (Stroh-Gingrich, 2012; Wilcock, 1999).
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).

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).
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)

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)**: A 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).
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 & Russell-Chapin, 1998).

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)
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

STOP

Stop.
Take a breath.
Observe your thoughts and feelings.
Pause. Proceed mindfully.
Let’s give it try....

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**
1. Mindful Posing: The Superman or The Wonder Woman
2. Spidey Senses.
3. Safari
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

Mindful activities for younger children
Mindfulness Listening

- There is an app for that!

Body Scan Meditation

- Links mind with body
- Increases ability to track body sensations
- Grounding attention
- Increases body awareness
- Trains mind to tolerate sensations
Every Breath you take....

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
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.”

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
Mindfulness is not a synonym for relaxation.

Relaxation is the side effect of Mindfulness.

References


References


Questions

Email: draditi@fitilearnersil.com