

**Be the Lighthouse:**

**Mindfully Guiding Students  
through the Storm**

**-Dr. Greg Hungerford**

# MY STORY.....

At times, I am a “Hot Mess”.

A life full of emotions & experiences.

With Mindfulness:

- Curiosity & Playfulness
- Authenticity & Presence

# Our Current State

- Challenges of trauma in schools are real.
- High stress impacts our intentions & actions.  
Dysregulation can occur.
- Impacts morale & health.

## **Mindfulness:**

- Stress management and self-care.
- Awareness & noticing.
- Resilience & compassion can co-exist.

## My offering:

1. Why Mindfulness? Benefits.
2. What is Mindfulness?
3. Mindful Self-Awareness & Self-Care
4. Building Trauma-Informed Relationships with Students that “Challenge” Us
5. Mindfully Guiding Students Through the Storm

# Your commitment.....

1. What resonates with you?

2. What are some “next steps” that you can consider per your work around Trauma Informed Care?

- ☐ There will be many moments to reflect & share.
- ☐ Go only as deep as you choose.
- ☐ This is an offering.

REMEMBER- YOU ARE ENOUGH!

# Your STORY.....

Why are you here today?

What are you seeking?

**FOR BUILDING YOUR LIGHTHOUSE.**

To guide your students through the

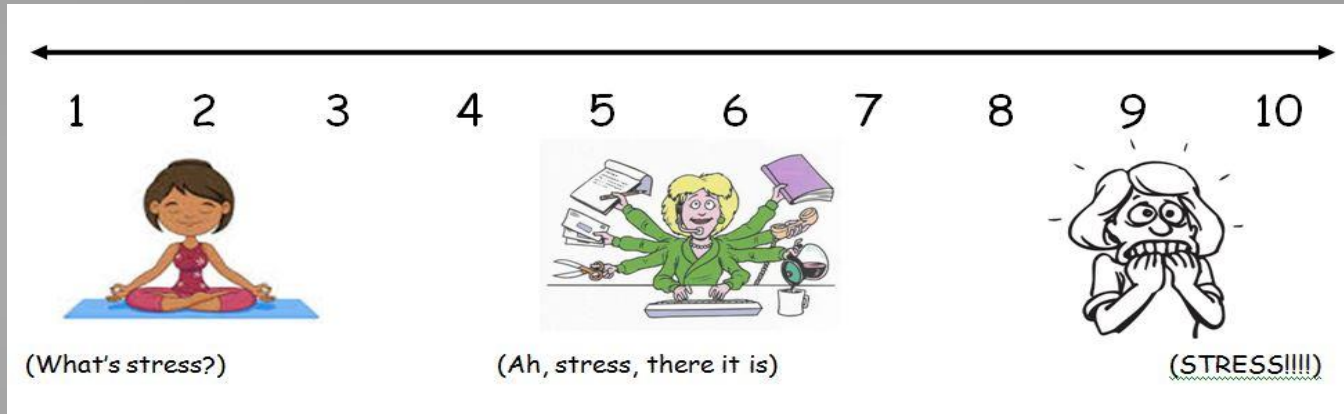




## WHY Mindfulness. HAVE YOU EVER....

- ➡ Said something ....
- ➡ Felt the emotions of irritation, fear, or anger...
- ➡ Felt nervous or anxious...
- ➡ Been in a foul mood ...
- ➡ Felt like you need time to yourself...

-Adapted from Mindful Schools- Mindfulness Curriculum for Adolescents



# What's Your Number?





# Benefits of MINDFULNESS: Research suggests...

## **WE MAY FEEL:**

Happier

Healthier

\*Calmer

---Less anxious

---Less stressed

\*Dr. Sam Himmelstein

## **AND IT IS EASIER FOR US TO:**

Attention/Focus

Emotional Regulation

Adaptability

Compassion

Resilience



[www.mindfulschools.org](http://www.mindfulschools.org)

# Mindful Schools: Benefits

## Calming

“Breathing and other mindfulness practices relax the body and mind, giving access to peace independent of external circumstances.”



Retrieved from Mindful Schools site:

<https://www.mindfulschools.org/about-mindfulness/mindfulness-in-education/#benefits>

# Mindfulness & Research

❖ ACTION RESEARCH. YES!

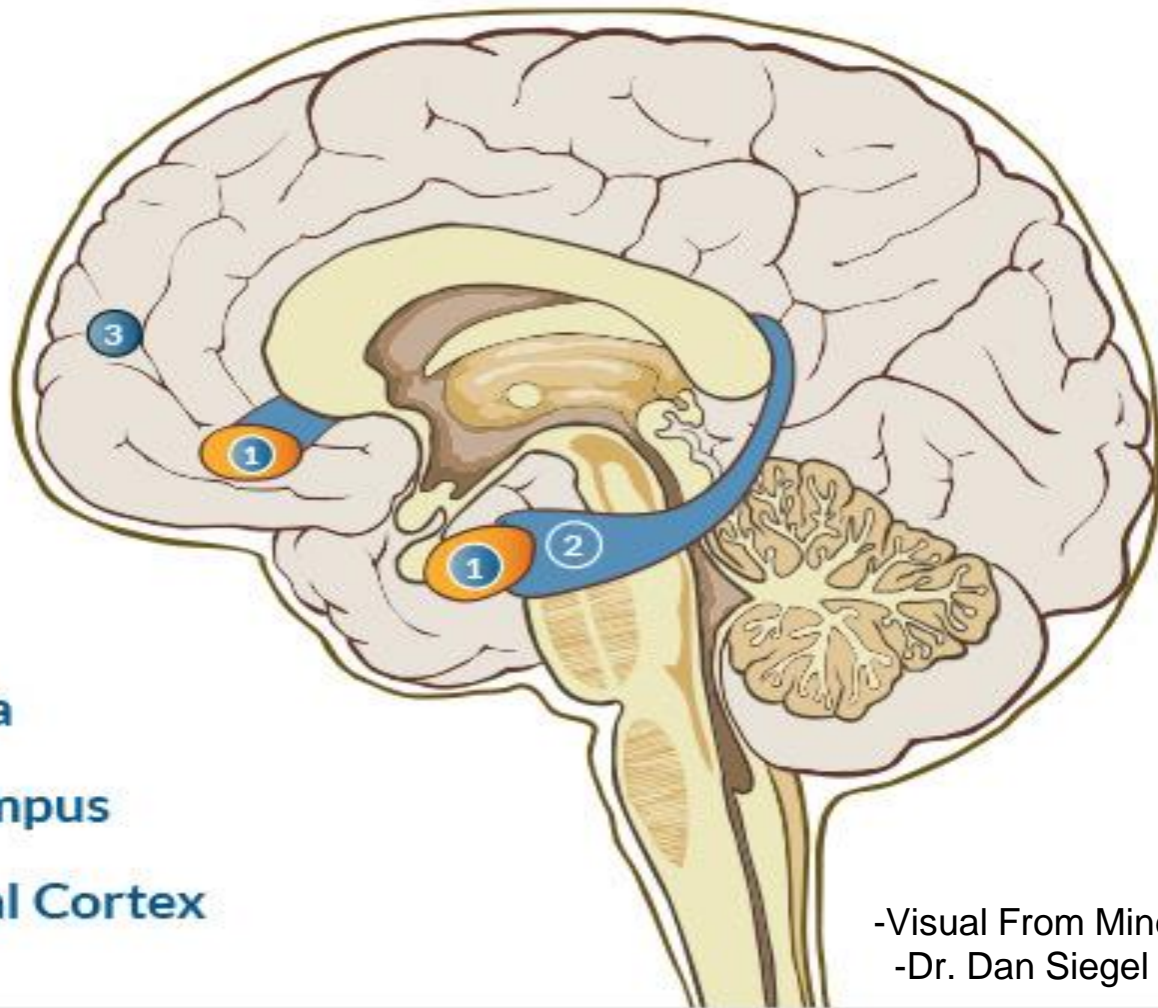
❖ Baseline data

❖ Variables

❑ Dr. Willoughby Britton

❑ Brown University





① Amygdala

② Hippocampus

③ Prefrontal Cortex

-Visual From Mindfulschools.org  
-Dr. Dan Siegel

## Model of Therapeutics- Dr. Bruce Perry

***“In a child who has experienced chronic threats, the result is a brain that exists in a persisting state of fear.”***

Perry, Bruce D. & Hambrick, E. P. (2008). The Neurosequential Model of Therapeutics. In *Reclaiming children and youth*. Fall 2008 volume 17, number 3/43.

# Interoception & Neuroception

Interoception allows us to answer the question, “How do I feel?”. And then take action.

-Mahler, K. (2019). What is Interoception? Retrieved from <https://www.kelly-mahler.com/what-is-interoception/>

*Neuroception is how neural circuits distinguish whether situations or people are safe, dangerous, or life threatening.*

- Dr. Stephen Porges in *The Polyvagal Theory*

# Model of Therapeutics- Dr. Bruce Perry

Dissociation & Hypervigilance can become core adaptations for the child who has experienced trauma.

- ➡ These reactions become entrenched over time.
- ➡ Maladaptive & HIGHLY influential preconscious memories form & shape a child's feelings, thoughts, and actions.
- ➡ Repetitive interventions are vital to supporting the student.

## Model of Therapeutics- Dr. Bruce Perry

***“An example of a repetitive intervention is positive, nurturing interactions with trustworthy peers, teachers, and caregivers, especially for neglected children who have not had enough neural stimulation to develop the capacity to bond with others.”***

Perry, Bruce D. & Hambrick, E. P. (2008). The Neurosequential Model of Therapeutics. In *Reclaiming children and youth*. Fall 2008 volume 17, number 3/43.



## Model of Therapeutics- Dr. Bruce Perry

“Ideally the care of the maltreated child must extend to every influential person the child encounters.”

Perry, Bruce D. & Hambrick, E. P. (2008). The Neurosequential Model of Therapeutics. In *Reclaiming children and youth*. Fall 2008 volume 17, number 3/43.

Mindful Schools

**“The Nervous System  
is the Intervention.”**

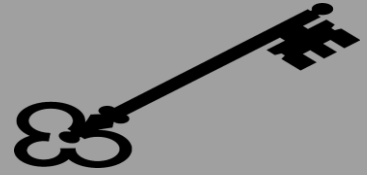


# Mindfulness

- ❖ Core Practices for Adults
  - ❖ Adults who are regulated.
- ❖ Offering for Students
  - ❖ Students with tools for life.



Key word/phrase



What one or two  
words...or a phrase  
comes to mind about  
what you are thinking?



## What is Mindfulness...

EVENT (Activate) >>>  
EMOTION >>>  
THOUGHT >>>  
ACTION/WORDS

In between each, we have “space” to notice without judgement.

And BE SKILLFUL and WISE.

# Let's Practice. GO EASY.... On yourself...

## CONSIDER YOUR TRAUMA LENS/EXPERIENCES

1. What happens at work that is **difficult**?
2. What does this struggle **look** like and **sound** like? **Feel** like?
3. What is your **usual** reaction?
4. What could you do as an **alternative**?

Start small. Learn the skill...and then move to next step. **(ATTENTION SIGNAL)**

## Mindfulness...Let's Practice.

First, there is an **EVENT** that activates our brain and nervous system.

(Ex-Student makes a rude comment.)

How About you? Think/reflect.

## For your consideration.....Labeling/Naming

❑ You can initiate awareness and noticing.

❑ BRAIN SWITCH

- **USEFUL/NOT USEFUL**
- **Types of Thoughts-** Fear, Anger, Frustration, Sadness
- **Sensations in Mind/Body-** Hot, Stomach, Head, Heat



# Mindfulness...Let's Practice.

Next, an **EMOTION** arises within us.

It builds up in our body/nervous system and in the brain.

(Ex-Anger or frustration towards this student)

How About you? Think/reflect.

## For your consideration...Grounding & Orientation (OUT)

- ✓ Focus on physical attributes of environment/setting.
- ✓ This can be colors, shapes, objects, sounds, and touch.
- ✓ Roam your eyes across the horizon....

# Mindfulness...Let's Practice.

A conscious or unconscious **THOUGHT** then results.

(Ex- "What the.....How dare that student!")

How About you? Think/reflect.

# For your consideration...Deep Breathing.

- ❖ Attuning your nervous system.
- ❖ “Those things that happen when you are stressed, such as increased heart rate, fast breathing, and high blood pressure, all decrease as you breathe deeply to relax.”

## LET'S Practice- Three Tier Breath

# Mindfulness...Let's Practice.

From this thought, we quite often move into **WORDS/ACTIONS**.

(Ex-We may lash out, shut down or reprimand the student in anger or frustration.)

How About you? Think/reflect.

# Are You Aware?

How do your non-verbals and emotions impact what students may think about your intentions?

How does your tone and volume towards students impact their response to your directions/comments?

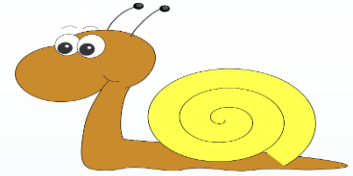
For your consideration...LOW



## LOW

- ➡ Lower the volume and pitch of your voice
- ➡ Keep a matter of fact tone regardless of the situation
- ➡ Speak in short sentences without a lot of questions

# For your consideration...SLOW



## **SLOW**

- ➡ Slow down your rate of speech and make sure to pause between sentences
- ➡ Slow down your body movements
- ➡ Slow down your “agenda” and take your time



# For your consideration...LOW & SLOW

## Remember Your KEY WORD(s)/Skills

- ➡ Be Authentic
- ➡ Listen
- ➡ Be Kind to Yourself
- ➡ Safety, Felt Connections,  
& Managing Emotions

-Dr. Howard Bath



**Put out the Fire.  
Not Fuel It. PLEASE.**

# How Mindfulness Helps

*Without  
Mindfulness*

Stimulus



Reaction

*With  
Mindfulness*

Stimulus



Mindfulness



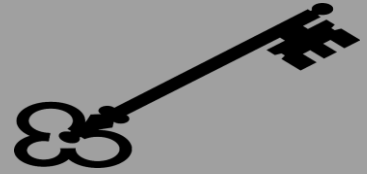
Response

**Mindfulness** creates space...

...replacing **impulsive reactions** with **thoughtful responses**.



# Key word/phrase



What one or two  
words...or a phrase  
comes to mind about what  
you are thinking?



# SELF-AWARENESS TO SELF-CARE

We can begin to simply notice/be aware.

We can then employ mindfulness to make “changes” as needed.



# Celebrations- What's Going Well?

Mindfulness is about noticing what is going well in our lives & our work in schools. We do our best to be:

Grateful

Thankful

For the BIG and SMALL stuff.

Reflect....



# SOAKING UP THE GOOD - Dr. Rick Hanson

Negativity Bias

- \* Heartfulness
- \* Noticing the “positives”.

AND Soak it up! Let's Practice....

(Eyes Open or Closed-Take It Easy)





# Self-Care is Linked to Self-Awareness

Are you taking care of yourself ?

The BIG 3:

Eating   Sleeping   Exercise

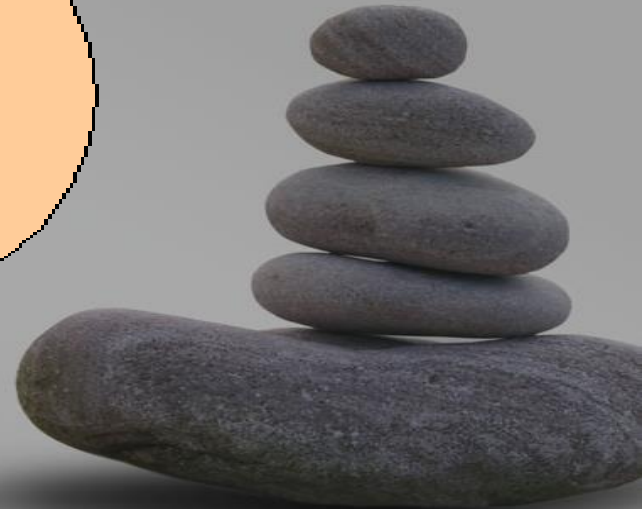
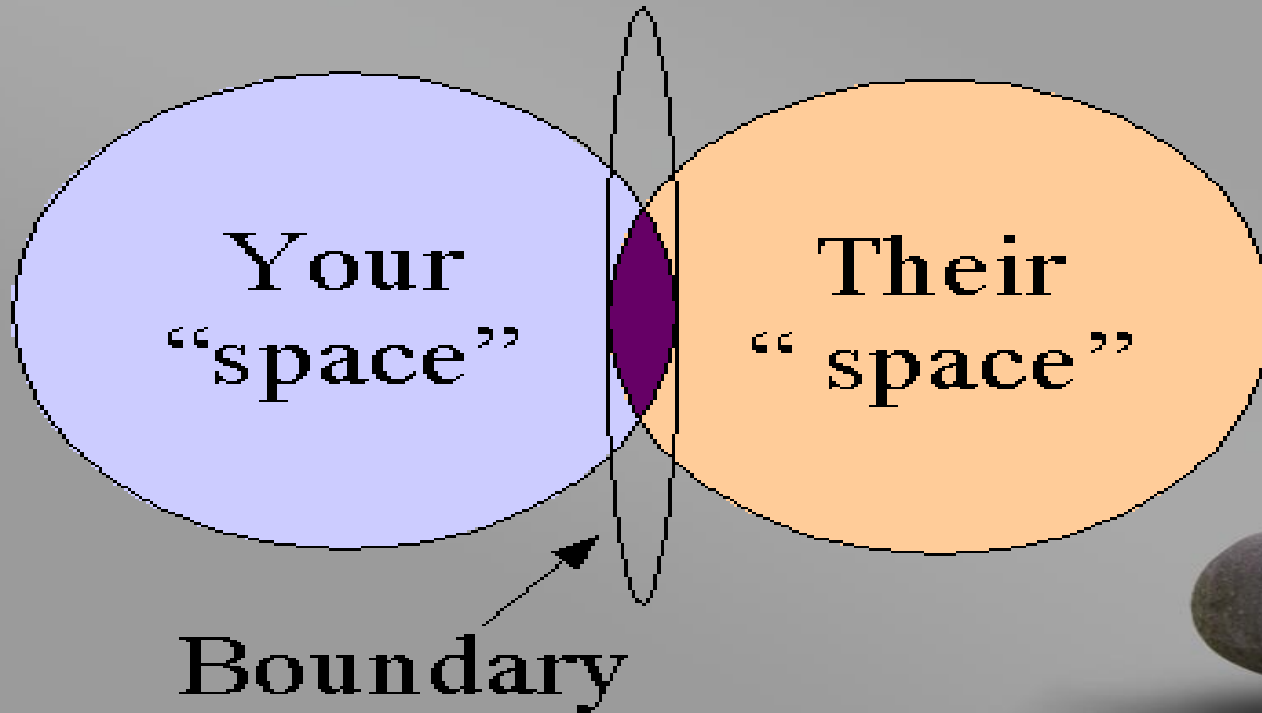
KEY factors that we can control.

Supports our ability to regulate our  
brain and body (nervous system).

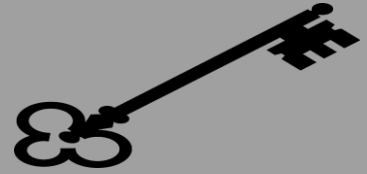




# Set Your Boundaries....



# Key word/phrase



What one or two  
words...or a phrase  
comes to mind about what  
you are thinking?



# Building Trauma-Informed Relationships with Students that “Challenge” Us.

“Children must have at least one person who believes in them. It could be a counselor, a teacher, a preacher, a friend. It could be you. You never know when a little love, a little support will plant a small seed of hope.”

– Marian Wright Edelman

# Mindful Exercise



- Reflect on your current state of mind or belief around how to **create and nurture** fulfilling student relationships.
- 1. What emotions and/or actions do you engage in that **draw** students to you?
- 2. What emotions and/or actions do you engage in that perhaps **alienate** you from building positive student relationships?

# Mindful Listening

Think about a conversation you had recently with a student who is struggling...

- Were you really listening?
- Were you thinking of what you were going to say next?
- Were you authentically present?

**QUICK SHARE: WHAT** does listening mean to you?

**What** has to happen with your **mind** and **body** to really listen?

# Mindfulness and Trauma

THE MOMENT YOU WALK INTO THE SCHOOL AND THE CLASSROOM



# Mindfulness and Trauma

Your internal chatter impacts your thoughts, moods and actions/words.



# Mindfulness and Trauma

We can choose to be present & set aside our story/ego.





# Skillful Awareness and Mindful Actions/Words

We can be:

- patient instead of demanding.
- kind instead of angry.
- playful or humorous instead of sarcastic.

■ Students need us to be consistent and fair in our actions.

TRUST and SAFETY ARE KEY.



# What Are Your Intentions?

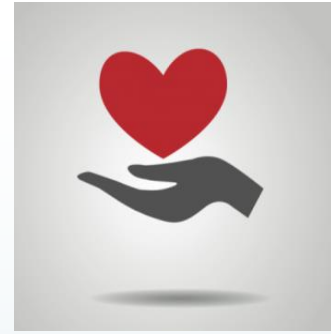


## SO....Check in VERSUS Checking out.

Mindful awareness allows us to check in with our internal state. We can then:

- ❖ Be intentional about the values we are trying to model during difficult situations.
- ❖ Tell students in our own way that we are concerned about them.
- ❖ Let them know when they are stepping over the line and still humanize them while doing so. **This is caring.**

# Consistency and Caring: Our invitation



- ☐ Share in a direct and decent manner.
- ☐ These verbal & non-verbal messages can come from the heart.
- ☐ We let students know that we can support them during difficult moments. We do so in different ways.

# High-Performance Staff & Student Relationships

“Teachers who forge **high-performance** relationships care for their students while simultaneously pressing them to excel....

These teachers provide their students with strong guidance (both academically and behaviourally), while also nurturing personal responsibility and self-regulation.”

*What Everyone Needs to Know About High-Performance, Teacher Student Relationships.* (n.d.) Retrieved from <http://www.evidencebasedteaching.org.au/crash-course-evidence-based-teaching/teacher-student-relationships/>

# Putting Coins in the Relationship Bank



With patience and authenticity, our sharing and relationship building takes “hold”. We:

- “catch” students doing the right thing.
- spend time just getting to know students without conditions.
- notice their hobbies, interests, and passions.

We do so without judgement. **And.....**

With LOVE. And More LOVE!



# Your commitment.....

1. What is resonating with you?
2. What are some “next steps” that you are considering?



# Mindfully Guiding Students Through the Storm





THANK YOU!!!!

**This Work YOU DO is NOT easy.**

**BUT it is SO IMPORTANT.**

**YOU DO MAKE A DIFFERENCE.**

REMEMBER- YOU ARE ENOUGH!

## PRESENTATION BY.....

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