EFFECTS OF MINDFULNESS INTERVENTION ON ANXIETY AND ATTENTION IN STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of mindfulness on attention and anxiety in students with disabilities. The study utilized mindfulness exercises from *Sitting Still Like a Frog: Mindfulness exercises for kids (and their parents)* by Eline Snel. These exercises were designed to be used with youth ages 5-12, and eight youth age 12 participated in the study. The practice of the exercise took place five-ten minutes during the students regularly scheduled school day over an eight-week period. The lessons gave students knowledge, skills, and practice that helped them increase their focus and overall resilience. The study followed a Pre-Experimental one-group pretest-posttest design. Participants completed the Mindfulness Attention Awareness Scale for Adolescents [MAAS-A], and the Spence Children’s Anxiety Scale [SCAS] to measure the pre and postintervention result of mindful attention and anxiety. The results were analyzed examining central tendency and a t-Test was completed. By comparing pre- and post-intervention data and examining the differences, these tools showed how mindfulness interventions affect adolescent students with disabilities.
Chapter 1- Introduction

Mindfulness training has been used as a successful intervention to assist people with and without disabilities both in and out of the educational setting (Crescentini, Capurso, Furlan, & Fabbro, 2016; Kaviani, 2011; Sotardi, 2016). Students in today’s classroom encounter several challenges, which include anxiety and attention issues (Geng 2011; Spencer, Biederman, & Mick 2007). One way students can cope with anxiety and attention in school is to use mindfulness (Zenner, Herrnleben-Kurz, & Walach, 2014).

Mindfulness was originally an eastern tradition and Buddhist psychology that was developed by assorted techniques (Kabat-Zinn, 1994; Zenner et al., 2014). In 1979, the birth of Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction [MBSR] marked a time when mindfulness meditation became integrated into mainstream medicine and science and became a resource for clinical research (Brown, Ryan, & Creswell, 2007; Zenner et al., 2014).

Importance of the Issue

The use of mindfulness in clinical research is growing (Tan, 2016). Since its inception, mindfulness has been found to have many positive effects on several different populations. Mindfulness can be a tool to help people understand, tolerate, and deal with emotions in healthy ways (Kabat-Zinn, 1994). Mindful decisions, such as pausing and making a choice to react positively, can be used as a tool to assist in altering poor habits. One study, by Donald, Atkins, Parker, Christie, and Ryan (2016), found mindful focus on the present moment can facilitate an adaptive response to daily stressors. Another study found that mindfulness could be used to alleviate stress by improving emotional regulation, and this led to an increase in positive mood and ability to handle stress (Remmers, Topoloinski, & Koole, 2016).
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Recently, mindfulness has emerged into the educational setting (Tan, 2016). The use of mindfulness with students provides educators with an additional tool to help students achieve academic success (Zenner et al., 2014). Peer-reviewed literature has shown mindfulness training may be beneficial for individuals with intellectual disabilities (Adkins, Singh, Winton, McKeegan, & Singh, 2010, Burke, Chan, & Neece, 2017), students in an urban setting (Mendelson, Greenberg et al, 2010), students with emotional behavioral disabilities (Malow & Austin, 2016) and the general student population (Britton, et al., 2014; Schonert-Reichl, et al, 2015). The positive effects of mindfulness on these populations make it worthwhile to examine the effect it may have on individuals with anxiety and attention issues.

Definitions and Background Information

General education classrooms are becoming more inclusive of students with learning, behavioral, and other differences. There is an increased chance that every teacher will, at some point in their career, encounter students with attention issues or the diagnosis of an attention disorder (Geng, 2011). For the purposes of this paper, attention can be defined as a cognitive system necessity for many forms of learning, as well as for regulating one’s thoughts, emotions, and actions (Shruti, Amishi, Anastasia, Richa, & Narayanan, 2011). Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is one specific diagnosed attention issue, examined by Geng (2011). ADHD affects children around the globe throughout all socioeconomic, cultural, and racial backgrounds and individuals of all intelligence levels (Geng, 2011). ADHD is a behavioral condition that makes focusing on everyday requests and routines challenging (Spencer, Biederman, & Mick, 2007). Common symptoms observed in the classroom can include frequent shifting of activities, impulsivity, difficulty organizing, low levels of frustration, distractibility, and daydreaming. Students exhibiting these symptoms may have more difficulties in school, and
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in completing homework (Geng, 2011; Spencer et al., 2007). Geng (2011), recognized the effects
of attention issues within youth, “ADHD students face a difficult learning life due to lack of
concentration and the inability to self-regulate their behaviors” (p. 27). These classroom
behaviors are recognized by teachers who acknowledge that a student’s attention issues can
change classroom dynamics (Mulholland, Cumming, & Jung, 2015).

Just as students are coping with attention issues, some students are dealing with anxiety.
Anxiety is defined by the Merriam-Webster dictionary (2005) as, “An abnormal and
overwhelming sense of apprehension and fear often marked by physical signs such as tension,
sweating, and increased pulse rate, by doubt concerning the reality and nature of a threat, and by
self-doubt about one’s capacity to cope with it.” It has been identified as the most prevalent
mental health condition (Bystritsky, Khalsa, Cameron, & Schiffman, 2013).

The anxiety students face may be coming from the stress, frustration, and fatigue in the
everyday learning process; pressure to transition and master the curricula quickly; negative social
interaction with other students; or the burden of high stakes testing (Sotardi, 2016; Whitaker,
Lowe, & Lee, 2007). Anxiety can manifest in different forms, including stress-induced transient
anxiety, and anxiety disorders (separation anxiety disorder, social anxiety disorder, selective
mutism, specific phobias, panic disorder, agoraphobia, and generalized anxiety disorder)
(Craske, & Stein., 2016). Physical symptoms of stress include increased heart rate, increased
perspiration, a feeling of apprehension, and the heightened sense of inadequacy (Whitaker el al.,
2007). Similar, to attention issues, anxiety is often treated with medication (Bystritcky et al.,
2013). Another option used is cognitive-behavioral interventions, while alternative methods are
being explored for treatment of anxiety such as mindfulness (Bystritcky et al., 2013). Further
information regarding each of these topics can be found in Chapter 2.
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Research Question

This study utilized mindfulness exercises from *Sitting Still Like a Frog: Mindfulness exercises for kids (and their parents)* by Eline Snel. These exercises were designed to be used with youth ages 5-12. The practice of the exercise took place for five to ten minutes during the students regularly scheduled school day over an eight-week period. The lessons gave students knowledge, skills, and practices that will help them increase their focus and overall resilience. Participants in the study completed two surveys one day prior to the study to produce a base line measure of their mindful attention and anxiety. Again, the students completed the surveys one day after the eight weeks of intervention. The data from the pretest and posttest surveys were compared using a two tailed t-test. This field study sought to answer the question how mindfulness the impacts attention and anxiety in students with disabilities. More detailed information regarding the subjects, setting, and methodology can be found in Chapter 3. The data collected showed all the students had an increase in mindfulness attention awareness, while all but one had a decrease in their general anxiety. Further detailed information on the analyzes of the data expressing how both the SCAS and the MAAS-A show statistically significant results that reject the null hypothesis can be found in Chapter 4. The outcomes from the SCAS and MAAS-A, *Sitting Still Like a Frog* was found to be beneficial in improving the focus of these student while giving them a tool to cope with anxiety, and more detailed information and discussion of results can be found in Chapter 5.
Chapter 2- Literature Review

Background

Mindfulness can be a tool to help people understand, tolerate, and deal with emotions in healthy ways (Kabat-Zinn, 1994). It was developed by assorted techniques and began as an eastern tradition with roots in Buddhist psychology (Kabat-Zinn, 1994; Zenner et al., 2014). The year 1979 marked the birth of Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction [MBSR], and mindfulness meditation became a tool used in mainstream medicine and science (Brown, Ryan, & Creswell, 2007; Zenner et al., 2014).

With its growing popularity, Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction [MBSR] formed the foundation for other mindfulness interventions including Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT; Segal, Williams, & Teasdale, 2002), Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT; Hayes, Strosahl, & Wilson, 1999), and Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT; Turner, 1996). These four intervention approaches, MBSR, MBCT, ACT, and DBT, although stemming from Buddhist traditions, are secular in nature (Brown et al., 2007). All four intervention models incorporate the use of labeling or noting of feelings to bring awareness of thoughts, emotions, and desires without fixating on them or acting on them (Brown et al., 2007). All four also use techniques to encourage an attitude of acceptance of life events and experiences. They are used clinically with the belief that mindfulness will bring insight into psychological and behavioral sources of suffering and will assist in alleviating that suffering and enhance overall well-being (Brown et al., 2007).

The use of MBCT focuses on people practicing mindful meditation to bring attention back to the present, and to recognize and disengage from a depressive mindset (Segal, Williams, & Teasdale, 2002). Teasdale et al., (2000) found MBCT significantly reduced the risk of
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depression relapse when comparing participants receiving treatment as usual and a group receiving MBCT. Kaviani (2011), indicated that MBCT was successful in reducing the depression and anxiety for a group of 45 adults while no change was noted in the control group. Also, MBCT has been found as a positive tool for relieving insomnia symptoms by reducing worry associated with sleep problems in a study examining patients with anxiety disorders (Yook, et al., 2008) MBCT was developed as a strategy and is most commonly used with people struggling with depression and to help prevent depressive episodes (Eisendrath, Chartier, & McLane, 2011; Segal, Williams, & Teasdale, 2002).

ACT is another approach to helping individuals cope with depression (A-Tjak et al., 2015). The use of ACT combines acceptance and mindfulness strategies to assist its users to focus on the present and move toward valued behavior (Hayes et al., 1999). A-Tjak et al., (2015) conducted a meta-analysis of the efficacy of ACT by examining 39 randomized controlled trials and found that ACT was effective in treating anxiety disorders, depression, addiction, and somatic health problems. ACT is an established psychological intervention. (A-Tjak et al., 2015).

DBT is a psychotherapy that began as a treatment for individuals with borderline personality disorder (Chapman, 2006). DBT was designed to help individuals increase their emotional and cognitive regulation by identifying and bringing awareness to triggers (Chapman, 2006). Although it was originally used for borderline personality disorder, a meta-analysis conducted by Panos, Jackson, Hasan, Panos, (2014) found in five randomized control trials DBT showed positive results in stabilizing and controlling self-destructive behavior including suicide and self-harm.

The three approaches, MBCT, ACT and DBT use only non-meditative exercises to enhance awareness of thought, emotion, and behavior, while MBSR focuses on meditation.
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MBSR highlights the importance of experiential, meditative practice as a primary path for personal development, whereas MBCT, ACT, and DBT combine the Buddhist traditions of meditation with cognitive behavior therapies and focus on well-being enhancement (Brown et al., 2007; Zenner et al., 2014). For this study, the focus will be MBSR. A MBSR was designed to direct the individual’s thoughts with the goals of self-regulation of awareness, direction of internal and external attention, metacognition, and adoption of a non-judgmental attitude (Bishop et al., 2004).

Interventions utilizing MBSR are formally led with meditation practices such as sitting meditation or physical movement, for example, tai chi or yoga. These methods can help steady the mind and increase the ability to focus and attend (Zenner et al., 2014). MBSR typically consists of an eight-week course with varying amounts of meditation time, some as little as five minutes and some as much as an entire day (Kabat-Zinn, J., 2003; Zenner et al., 2014). There are a number of intervention programs using the MBSR model including MindUP, Soles of the Feet, Mindful Schools, Learning to BREATHE, Still and Quiet Place, Taming the Adolescent Mind, and Sitting Still Like a Frog (Nadler, R., Cordy, M., Stengel, J., Segal, Z., & Hayden, E., 2017; Tan, 2016; Zenner et al., 2014). These MBRS programs could be used at a tool for teachers.

Mindfulness as a tool for attention issues

Some teachers believe they are knowledgeable about attention issues and can recognize behaviors that indicate a student suffers from an attention disorder (Mulholland et al., 2015). Mulholland et al., (2015) analyzed a group of teachers’ knowledge about ADHD and their attitudes towards students who exhibit behaviors related to attention issues. The study noted teachers often find it irritating and stressful to work with students who have attention issues.
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The impact of the teachers’ attitudes concerning ADHD and other attention issues can have a strong influence on students (Honkasila, Vehkakoski, & Vehmas, 2016). Honkasila et al., (2016) showed, through a qualitative analysis of student interviews, that ADHD behavior management was often viewed negatively. Using 90-minute audio-recorded interviews of 13 adolescent students, the study examined narratives about teachers’ reactive classroom management strategies. The data analysis found five themes of teachers’ reactions and treatment of students with attention issues: disproportionate, traumatizing, neglectful, unfair, and understanding. The findings support that a teacher’s classroom behavior management for students with attention issues was often received negatively and was perceived as ineffective (Honkasila et al., 2016).

Teacher interactions with students dealing with attention issues can be supported with classroom management strategies (Honkasila et al., 2016). There are several resources and interventions that are used to assist students with attention issues. One of the most widely used approaches is medication therapy (Zylowska, et al., 2008). Students with a diagnosed attention issue often use some sort of medication to manage the symptoms with research showing stimulant medications as the most effective treatment (Zylowska et al., 2008). However, some students do not respond to, or only partially respond to medications (Spencer et al., 2007). Also, the side effects of medications can be intolerable to some thereby causing nonpharmaceutical interventions to be sought. Alternative interventions include parental training and awareness and cognitive behavior therapy (Spencer et al., 2007). Geng (2011) reported voice control, short phrases, and repeated instructions as additional and successful verbal strategies to bring a student’s attention back to focus. Gently touching the student, physically pointing out important information were also noted as successful nonverbal interventions (Geng, 2011). A final strategy
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that is relatively new to the educational setting to assist with ADHD symptomatic behavior is mindfulness training (Zenner et al., 2014; Van der Oord, Bogels, & Peijnenburg, 2012; Van de Weijer-Bergsma, Formsma, de Bruin, & Bogels 2012). MBSR has been found to successfully increase an individual’s attention (Van der Oord, Bogels, & Peijnenburg, 2012; Van de Weijer-Bergsma et al., 2012)

There has been research conducted which examines the effect of mindfulness on individuals with diagnosed attention issues. MBSR has been found to successfully increase an individual’s attention (Lo, H. H. M., Wong, S. Y. S., Wong, J. Y. H., Wong, S. W. L., & Yeung, J. W. K., 2016; Van der Oord, Bogels, & Peijnenburg, 2012; Van de Weijer-Bergsma et al., 2012; Zylowska et al., 2008) These studies followed the MBSR format, and included adolescents and youth.

Van der Oord, Bogels, & Peijnenburg, (2012) indicated then when children were taught to apply mindfulness in difficult situations, such as being distracted at school, mindfulness enhanced their attention and awareness and ADHD behavior was reduced. Using an 8-week mindfulness training, this study evaluated the effectiveness of mindfulness in a population of 24 children aged 8-12, and mindful parent training was used with the participants’ parents. The study collected and evaluated data pre and postintervention on the children’s ADHD symptoms, oppositional defiance disorder symptoms, parenting stress, and mindful awareness. The results of this study supported that mindfulness intervention could reduce ADHD symptoms.

Van de Weijer Bergsma et al. (2012) conducted a similar study. The researchers explored the effectiveness of mindfulness training with 10 adolescent children with ADHD coupled with mindful parenting training for their parents. The youth in the study were taught how to increase their attention, awareness, and self-control using mindfulness exercises. The parents also went
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through different mindfulness training designed to assist them in specific areas of parenting a child with ADHD. Data was collected pre and posttest on several areas including behavioral symptoms, executive functioning, mindful awareness, parenting style, fatigue, happiness, parenting stress, and attention. After 8 weeks of the intervention the results were evaluated, and then again in 8 more weeks, and once again 16 weeks postintervention. The results again support that the use of mindfulness could decrease attention disorder symptoms. It was also noted that mindfulness was most effective directly after training and the skills waned with time.

The research of Lo et al. (2016) supported that mindfulness training can improve attention and facilitate cognitive development and cognitive functioning. This study utilized a multicenter, 8-week, randomized control trial. The participants consisted of 120 participants between 5 and 7 years of age. They each displayed inattention and hyperactivity or were diagnosed with an attention disorder. All participants took part in baseline assessments of behavior, ADHD symptoms, and attention. Then 60 children participated in the treatment while sixty were in the waitlist control group. The intervention took place over an 8-week period with postassessments given to both treatment and control groups. The waitlist control group was then given the treatment and data was collected from the control group after completion of the same program. The results of the study indicated that using the mindfulness intervention was a valuable option for treatment of ADHD and indicated that mindfulness could assist children with other clinical problems such as conduct disorder, depression, and anxiety.

Finally, Zylowsa et al. (2008) examined both ADHD symptoms and anxiety and depression in a mixed group of adults and adolescents. An 8-week mindfulness training was provided to the participants with pre and posttests collecting data on self-reported ADHD symptoms, and test performance on tasks measuring attention and cognitive inhibition. The
results support that mindfulness may improve attention; improvements in anxiety and depressive symptoms were also observed in the study.

Mindfulness was an intervention that positively impacted teachers’ ability to assist students with the self-regulation of their behavior (Van der Oord, Bogels, & Peijnenburg, 2012; Van de Weijer-Bergsma et al., 2012). It was identified as an opportunity for the reduction of distractibility, impulsivity, and hyperactivity (Lo et al., 2016; Van der Oord, Bogels, & Peijnenburg, 2012; Van de Weijer Bergsma et al., 2012).

Mindfulness has been used to lessen the symptoms of diagnosed attention issues, ADD and ADHD as well as on individuals without an identified attention issue. MBRS has been found to have positive impacts on general attention as noted by Huppert, & Johnson (2010). People using mindfulness practices report having a deep sense of awareness of the world around them and can focus and remain on task (Van de Weijer Bergsma et al., 2012). In the educational setting, that awareness can be used as a tool to help students remain focused and attentive to the materials being presented.

**Mindfulness as a tool for anxiety**

Mindfulness has been used as a means for people to cope with anxiety since the inception of MBSR (Kabat-Zinn, 2003). It has been a tool proven to combat anxiety successfully (Burke et al., 2017; Costello, & Lawler, 2014, Malow, & Austin, 2016). One possible cause of stress and anxiety for a student is test-taking (Malow, & Austin, 2016; Putwain, 2008). Students with high levels of test anxiety feel tense and worried in assessment situations, and do not perform as well as they could while taking tests (Whitaker et al., 2007). Research has found significant reductions in the levels of test anxiety in participants using MBSR. (Mayorga, De Vries, & Wardle, 2016; Mendelson et al., 2010).
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Malow and Austin (2016) utilized MBSR over a six-week time frame in which 15 students were led through mindfulness exercises for 5-10 minutes each morning. The results of the study indicated that the students had positive outcomes in the sense of mastery of tested subject matter, sense of relatedness to what they were being tested on, emotional reactivity, and a reduction in the overall sense of anxiety.

Mayorga, De Vries, & Wardle (2016) conducted a study with 29 students with similarly positive results related to anxiety. Twenty of the students were in the treatment and guided through 15 minutes of yoga exercises once a week for 15 weeks. The study utilized data collected at the start of the school term, midterm and at the end of the term, using tools that measured mindful attention and anxiety. The results of found no significant change in their mindful attention; however, a reduction in anxiety levels was noted.

Mindfulness as a tool for youth

Teachers in today’s classrooms are expected to be aware of the emotional challenges children face including attention and anxiety, and they are required to have the methods to help students achieve academically while coping with these challenges (Napoli, Krech, & Holley, 2005). One tool is mindfulness. The practice of mindfulness programs in the school setting is relatively new to educational research but is growing in popularity and being received enthusiastically by researchers because of its effectiveness in improving the lives of adults (Broderick & Metz, 2009; Tan, 2016; Zenner et al., 2014). Growing evidence suggests that mindfulness in childhood and adolescence in the school setting could help students regulate emotions and manage stress and anxiety effectively (Broderick, & Metz, 2009).

Intervention following the MBSR format has been used with youth and results of the research documented. One such study conducted by Costello, & Lawler (2014) found using a
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mindfulness script read by teachers to students each school day over a 5-week time frame, decreased in their perceived stress levels. A study conducted by Huppert et al., (2010) over a 4-week period found that the use of a 40-minute mindfulness lesson promoted increased attention of overall well-being. Mendelson et al. (2010) also supported MBSR use with youth. Their study provided mindfulness training to students in the form of yoga moves and guided meditations for 45 minutes 4 days a week for 12 weeks. The study suggested mindfulness helped to reduce negative social interactions with peers and reduced social stress among the participants.

There are programs following the MBSR format utilized by youth. One program is Learning to BREATH. This program was designed for use within the school setting with the goal of helping students understand their thoughts and feelings and to manage negative emotions. The program has a flexible design for either a 6 or 18 session course. The program aims at helping adolescents recognize their personal experiences at the moment of the experience (Malow & Austin, 2016).

A study conducted by Broderick and Metz (2009) found that of the 120 students involved in the study, the students involved in Learning to BREATH compared to the control group had a reduction in negative affect and an increase in feelings of relaxation, self-acceptance, and feelings of calmness. Researchers Beauchemin, Hutchins & Patterson, F (2008) also used Learning to BREATH with a population of youth with learning disabilities. The results indicated that the mindfulness program caused students to have less anxiety, a sense of better social skills, and an improvement in academic performance. Malow and Austin (2016) also utilized Learning to BREATH in their study examining mindfulness use on a population of students with emotional behavioral disabilities. Data comparing pretreatment to
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Posttreatment found that most of the participants had positive results in the reduction of anxiety and an increase in well-being.

Some mindfulness practices have developed into full social and emotional learning curriculums, for example, MindUP. This program is designed to be taught over the course of 15 lessons providing students social, emotional, and mindfulness skills. The research of Schonert-Reichl et al., (2015) found the use of MindUP to be effective in positive social behavior, self-reported well-being, and math achievement.

Another mindfulness program is Soles of the Feet. The program taught participants to divert attention from an emotional situation, thought, or event, to the natural part of their body, the sole of the feet. It was successfully used by Adkins et al. (2010) with a population of adults with intellectual disabilities. The study found the individuals had reduced stress and reduced aggressive outbursts.

A final notable mindfulness program discussed is Sitting Still Like a Frog. The book Sitting Still Like a Frog: Mindfulness exercises for kids (and their parents) by Eline Snel (2013). This curriculum presents exercises that were designed to be used with youth ages 5-12. The exercises last 5 to 10 minutes and are meant to give the participants knowledge, skills, and practices that will help them increase their focus and overall resilience. In a pilot study by Nadler et al. (2017), pre and postdata were collected from two independent samples of youth ages 7-9. The mindfulness practices of “Sitting Still Like a Frog” (Snel, 2013) were used as guided meditations in the study. The self-assessment manikin (SAM) scale was utilized to measure the children’s responses to the mindfulness exercises. The findings of the study supported that self-reported calmness was increased with the use of mindfulness practices.
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Gaps

In has been well documented that mindfulness has successful and positive results in adult populations (Broderick & Metz, 2009; Tan, 2016). Gaps in the literature on mindfulness exist in the areas of practice with youth and practice on individuals with disabilities (Tan, 2016; Zenner et al., 2014).

Another gap concerns the tools used to measure mindfulness. As greater practice of mindfulness begins to emerge, the tool used to measure its effectiveness has come into question; an issue recognized by Crane et al., (2013). There are several surveys and questionnaires used to measure mindfulness attention, however there are few tools to measure the fidelity of how mindfulness is being taught (Crane et al., 2013). The concept of who and how mindfulness is being taught, and its effect on study has been highlighted as a possible area of deficit and growth in the area of mindfulness research (Crane et al., 2013; Tan, 2016; Zenner et al., 2014).

Purpose and Research Question

The purpose of the present research is to answer the question, “To what extent will a mindfulness intervention impact the anxiety and attention of middle school students with disabilities?” By using a mindfulness intervention called “Sitting Still Like a Frog,” students will learn techniques and skills to apply mindfulness to their lives. This will help contribute to research, filling a need for additional information regarding use of mindfulness interventions with middle school students and students with disabilities. Further details of methods used can found in the following chapter.
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Chapter 3- Methodology

Purpose

The purpose of this research was to answer the questions, “To what extent will a mindfulness intervention impact the anxiety and attention of middle school students with disabilities?” By using a mindfulness intervention called, “Sitting Still Like a Frog”, students learned techniques and skills to apply mindfulness to their lives. To gather the necessary data, the researcher utilized a pre-experimental quantitative approach and measure pre- and post-intervention data collected from self-report surveys.

Participants and setting

This study took place in a public-school district in the Northern Midwest region of the United States. Participants were recruited from a local middle school. Within this school 12.2% of the population is identified as having special education needs under IDEA and 42.8% of the students qualify for free and reduced lunch. Fifteen students were recruited as participants. Thirteen male and two female students with ages ranging from 12-13, were invited. Of these students, 11 were Caucasian, 2 were African American, 1 was Hispanic, and 1 was Native American. Each student had an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) due to a diagnosis of emotional behavioral disabilities, specific learning disabilities, autism, or other health impairment. Students invited to participate were enrolled in a class focused on assistance with academic tasks as part of their IEP. It was during this class period the intervention was provided.

Students recruited for this study were enrolled in a Study Strategies class as part of their IEP. Study Strategies is a class designed to assist students with disabilities in a small group or individual setting with completing academic tasks, developing study skills, and habits, and practicing organizational skills needed to be successful in school. Students are guided through
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how to practice test-taking strategies, social skills, and self-regulation. They also are given assistance on current, late, or missing course work in their academic classes during this time.

Recruitment

After obtaining IRB approval, an informative letter was mailed to families of the potential sample explaining the purpose of the study, stating the benefits of participation, and giving a briefing of what the participants would be engaging in should permission be given. Families were contacted via U.S. Postal Service within two weeks of the initial mailing to gain consent for participation and answer any questions. Of the 15 families contacted 8 responded and granted consent. Seven male and one female students with ages ranging from 12-13, were given consent to participate in the study. Of these students, five were Caucasian, one was African American, one was Hispanic, and one was Native American. See appendix A for letter of consent.

After consent was collected, assent to use data obtained was solicited from the students. A school staff member then explained to the participating students the information on the assent form. See appendix B for assent form. The school staff collected assent forms from the students after the explanation and after students had an opportunity to examine the information and grant assent.

Measures

The study followed Pre-experimental design of one-group pretest-posttest. Participants completed the Mindfulness Attention Awareness Scale for Adolescents [MAAS-A], and the Spence Children’s Anxiety Scale [SCAS] to measure the pre and postintervention result of mindful attention and anxiety. The data was analyzed examining central tendency and a t-Test.
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By comparing pre- and-post-intervention data and examining the differences, these tools showed how mindfulness interventions affected adolescent students with disabilities.

Self-report questionnaires were useful tools for understanding nature and relationships of mindfulness and other variables such as attention, anxiety, or stress (Baer et al., 2006). Self-reported questionnaires used for the assessment of mindfulness began to grow with the increase of mindfulness interventions. Mindfulness Attention Scale [MAAS] was originally developed for use with adults from normative and clinical populations (Brown and Ryan, 2003). MAAS was developed with the assistance of Buddhist teachers and trained students of mindfulness, and it has demonstrated high internal consistency, test-retest reliability, and both concurrent and incremental validity (Brown & Ryan, 2003).

An adapted scale was derived from the MAAS to assess a younger population of adolescents; the MAAS-A. The MAAS-A has shown excellent psychometric properties in initial research studies (Brown, West, Loverich, & Biegel, 2011). It is a 14- item scale designed to assess the core characteristic of mindfulness. The core characteristic examined are a receptive state of mind, attention that is informed by a sensitive awareness of what is occurring in the present, and simple observation what is taking place in the present. The items are answered on a six-point scale (1= Almost always; 6 = Almost never) with the higher score giving an indication of higher mindfulness attention (Brown et al., 2011). Examples of items on the questionnaire are “It seems I’m running on automatic, without much awareness of what I’m doing”, and “I tend not to notice feelings of physical tension or discomfort until they really grab my attention.” The MAAS-A is estimated to take 5 minutes or less to complete. It was administered prior to the intervention and again after the 8 weeks of mindfulness intervention. It was scored by computing the mean of the 14 items.
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The Spence Children's Anxiety Scale (SCAS) was used to determine the student's level of anxiety prior to and after the mindfulness intervention. The SCAS was developed to assess the severity of anxiety symptoms broadly in line with the dimensions of anxiety disorder proposed by Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders-IV. Six domains of anxiety will be assessed including generalized anxiety, panic/agoraphobia, social phobia, separation anxiety, obsessive compulsive disorder, and physical injury fears. The instrument consists of 44 items, of which 38 reflect specific symptoms of anxiety and six relate to positive filler items to reduce negative response bias. Participants are asked to rate on a four-point scale involving never (0), sometimes (1), often (2), and always (3) the frequency with which they experience each symptom. The instructions state, “Please put a circle around the work that shows how often each of these things happened to you. There are no right or wrong answers.” Only 38 responses were scored as follows: Never = 0, Sometimes = 1, Often = 2, and Always = 3, with a maximum possible score of 114. The score was calculated by the total sum of the items. The subscale calculation examined the specified anxiety domains by computing individual items scores on the set of items.

Implementation

After consent and assent were collected from parents and participants, students partook in a mindfulness intervention. The first day of the study students began by checking into their Study Strategies class at the end of their school day. The students received the MAAS-A, see appendix C, and SCAS, see appendix D, and they were given instructions on how to complete the questionnaires. To allow for full understanding, participants who had a learning disability in basic reading, reading comprehension, or reading fluency were offered the option of having the questions read out loud. The completion of the two surveys took approximately 15 minutes.
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The next scheduled school day students were introduced to the mindfulness intervention. This included re-explanation, as they received an explanation in their assent form explaining that they will be learning mindfulness activities over the next few weeks that focus on breathing and may help them to succeed in school. The children were then introduced to *Sitting Still Like a Frog*, which is a set of mindfulness exercises for children designed by Eline Snel (2013). Eline Snel is a therapist and certified MBSR trainer who has been working with mindfulness-training exercises for adults and developed the techniques to be used with children and their parents. See appendix E for transcript.

On the first day of the use of the intervention, the classroom teacher stated from Snel (2013),

> Being aware that you are breathing is a very powerful skill. By bringing mindful attention to your breath while you are breathing, you are present in this moment. Not in yesterday or tomorrow, but in the here and now. And now in this moment that matters. You cannot forget to breathe or drop your breath. You breathe for as long as you live. You are breathing right now. Can you feel it? Your breath can tell you a lot of things. It can tell you whether you are tense, calm, or restless; where you are holding your breath or letting it flow freely (p. 19).

Over the following eight weeks at the start of each scheduled Study Strategies class period the students practiced the mindfulness exercises. Starting each Study Strategies class period students engaged in one of the 11 mindfulness exercises from *Sitting Still Like Frog*. The daily sessions began with a centering activity during which each student participant was encouraged to turn away from others with their eyes closed and adopt a relaxed sitting position.
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Over an 8-week time frame, the students engaged in the intervention during their normally scheduled school day. Self-report questionnaires were completed one day prior to the interventions start, and one day after the intervention is completed. The total time frame of research was 8 weeks and 2 days.

**Intervention-Sitting Still Like a Frog**

The exercises from *Sitting Still Like a Frog* can be led by an instructor or an audio recording. The exercises are based on mindfulness-training for adults and developed especially for children and their parents. There are 11 mindfulness exercises detailed in *Sitting Still Like a Frog*. Two of the exercises, “Sitting Still Like a Frog”, and “The Little Frog”, walk participants through an experience of being a frog with a focus on breathing and reserving energy for necessary use. A third exercise, “Attention to the Breath” is designed specifically to focus on breathing, directing, and shifting attention to the breath. Another exercise is called “The Spaghetti Test”. In this exercise participants follow prompts to tense and loosen muscles while focusing on breathing. Three more exercises are titled, “Frist Aid for Unpleasant Feelings”, “A Safe Place”, and “The Conveyor Belt of Worries”. These three focus on breathing while guiding the participant through anxieties. The ninth exercise is called “A Little Boost”, which has a focus on finding a positive outlook when feeling down. The 10th exercise is labeled, “The Secret of the Heart Chamber”; this one revolves around practicing kindness. The final exercise is titled “Sleep Tight”, which is used to prepare the mind and body for going to bed. “Sleep Tight” was not used for this study due to the time of day participants completed the exercises. See Appendix E for transcript of each lesson.
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Analysis of Data

Data was collected from the participants pre- and postintervention. Identifying information on the collection tools was changed to a code. Students were assigned a number. The translation of the code was kept in locked file cabinet and was securely disposed of after the postintervention data was collected. Each scale, MAAS-A and SCAS, was scored utilizing the specific method detailed in the test’s manual and raw scores were converted to T-Scores using the validated and normed tables provided by the test developer. T-Scores for each scale were averaged for both pre and postintervention. A T-test was appropriate to utilize when comparing two means to see if they are statistically different from each other (Bowen, & Bartley, 2014) A paired-sample T-test compared the preintervention data with the postintervention data. The change in results from the two scales determined any gains or losses. If the difference between the scales resulted in an increase in attention and a decrease in anxiety than it could be determined the intervention was beneficial to improve a student’s attention and anxiety issues.

Summary

Utilizing a quantitative method, the researcher explored how the use of a mindfulness intervention effects a group of adolescent students with disabilities. Participants completed the MAAS-A and SCAS surveys pre and postintervention. The data collected was computed and analyzed to find if there were increases or decrease in the subjects’ mindful attention and anxiety. The results of the data could serve as a tool for teachers as they choose possible intervention to use within the classroom, and the results of the study could contribute to previous research on the use of mindfulness with youth and use of mindfulness with people with disabilities. The results can be found in Chapter 4 and a discussion of the results is located in Chapter 5.
Chapter 4- Results

The mindfulness exercises from *Sitting Still Like a Frog: Mindfulness exercises for kids (and their parents)* by Eline Snel (2013) were implemented with a group of middle school students with disabilities. Data was collected to determine, “to what extent will a mindfulness intervention impact the anxiety and attention of middle school students with disabilities?” Eight middle school students with disabilities completed both the pre and posttest administration of two questionnaires about anxiety and mindful attention. The questionnaires were presented one day before and one day after participating in a mindfulness program. The mindfulness program took place over eight weeks during the students’ regularly scheduled class, Study Strategies, which is a class focused on learning positive study habits.

Results

Data collection consisted of participants completing the Spence Children’s Anxiety Scale [SCAS] and the Mindfulness Attention Awareness Scale- Adolescents (MAAS-A) before the intervention was implemented. After eight weeks of using mindfulness exercises, participants completed the scales a second time as a post assessment. Pre and Post Test Scores are shown in Figure 1 and Figure 2.
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Figure 1. Mindfulness Attention Awareness Scale-Adolescents Pre and Post Test Raw Score Comparison

Figure 2. Spence Children’s Anxiety Scale Pre and Post Test Raw Score Comparisons.
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Figure 1 displays each students' paired pre and posttest scores of the MAAS-A. The MAAS-A measures core characteristics of mindfulness in adolescents. All survey scores increased after the intervention showing an increase in mindfulness. Figure 2 exhibits each students' paired pre and posttest scores of the SCACS. The SCACS was used to determine the student's level of anxiety. The results show all but one student had a decrease in their score relating to their level of anxiety.

Each scale was scored utilizing the specified method detailed in the test manual, and raw scores were converted to T-Scores. A paired samples t-test was conducted applying a significance level of $p < 0.05$ to compare the student's SCAS scores pre mindfulness intervention and SCAS scores after the intervention. There was a significant difference in the SCAS scores for pretest ($M = 38.0$, $SD = 16.6$) and posttest SCAS scores ($M = 29.4$, $SD = 16.4$) conditions; $t(7) = 3.8$, $p = 0.0063$. Again, a paired two-tailed t-test was conducted applying a significance level of $p < 0.05$ to compare the score from the MAAS-A scale given pre mindfulness intervention and post mindfulness intervention. There was a significant difference in the scores of the MAAS-A pretest scores ($M = 3.3$, $SD = 0.8$) and MAAS-A posttest scores ($M = 4.4$, $SD = 0.8$) conditions; $t(7) = -4.4$, $p = 0.0038$. The significance found in the data calculated from both sets of surveys rejects a null hypothesis.

Summary

The data showed all the students had an increase in mindfulness attention awareness, while all but one had a decrease in their general anxiety. After analyzing the data both the SCAS and the MAAS-A show statistically significant results that reject the null hypothesis.
Chapter 5- Discussion

The purpose of this study was to answer the research question “to what extent will a mindfulness intervention impact the anxiety and attention of middle school students with disabilities?” This study took place in a middle school in a northern, mid-west state. Participants in the study were eight students all with an individualized education program (IEP) due to a diagnosed disability. Baseline data was collected from each student regarding their anxiety and mindful attention. Students then participated in 8 weeks of a mindfulness intervention during their regularly scheduled Study Strategies class. After 8 weeks, data was collected again. Results were shown in Chapter 4 and further implication of those results are discussed below.

Discussion

Use of mindfulness in school can be an effective tool in helping students succeed (Zenner et al., 2014). The results of this investigation demonstrated a positive impact on students with a significant increase in students’ self-reported mindful attention ($p = 0.0038$), as measured by MAAS-A, as well as a decrease in students’ self-reported anxiety ($p = 0.0063$), as measured by SCAS. These results are consistent with the findings of Beauchemin, Hutchins, & Patterson, (2008) and Malow and Austin (2016) in their use of the program Learning to BREATHE with students who had disabilities. As indicated be the students’ scores in this study, Sitting Still Like a Frog successfully reduced the anxiety of the students exposed to mindfulness practices.

Honkasila, Vehkakoski, and Vehmas (2016) recognized there is a need for classroom management strategies for students with attention issues. Sitting Still Like a Frog is a mindfulness intervention that can be added to a teacher’s toolbox of classroom management strategies. The exercises in Sitting Still Like a Frog were short in length with none lasting longer
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than 10 minutes, which is in line with Kabat-Zinn’s (2003) findings that mindfulness interventions can have beneficial impacts with as little as 5 minutes, again making it a quick and easy tool for teachers to utilize.

Limitations and strengths

There were limitations to this study. One was the pool used to conduct the study was only 8 students. Also, the small sample size consisted mostly of subjects who were male Caucasians. A small sample made it difficult to find significant relationships from that data as statistical tests normally require a larger sample size to ensure a representative distribution of the population and to be considered representative of groups of people to whom results will be generalized. The results of this study indicated significant changes in the students’ mindful attention and anxiety; however, consideration of the small sample should be taken, and it should be noted that a larger sample population may have different results. The similarity of the subjects’ ethnicity and gender may also have caused bias in the results of the self-report surveys. Again, a larger more diverse sample population may have resulted in different outcomes.

There was also the limitation with the use of self-reported surveys. Self-reported surveys are perceptual, and each participant has different experience and background knowledge which can influence their answers (Baer, Smith, & Allen, 2004). The validity of the data could be affected as participants may exaggerate, under-report, or misremember the material covered by the survey (Baer, Smith, & Allen, 2004; Brown & Ryan, 2003). In addition, participants in the survey each have a disability, which may have affected the research and the findings in the study. Students in the study had a variety of disabilities including reading and math disabilities, emotional behavioral disabilities, and other health impairments due to diagnosed attention issues. Measures were taken during the data collecting process to accommodate individuals’ needs, for
Effects of Mindfulness Intervention

Example, having the questions read out loud the group, but it remains unknown if the individual disabilities of the participants impacted the results. Although the study was intended to specifically examine a population with disabilities, the noted positive impacts of the study cannot be clearly linked to the participants having a disability.

Another limitation to consider in this study was the novice status of the researcher. The formulation of the research objective may have lacked the focus of an experienced researcher. The lack of experience in primary data collection may have impacted the study, including; knowledge and use of different data collection measures, the mathematical analysis and interpretation of data, and depth in knowledge needed for a full discussion of results.

Another drawback was the use of pre-experimental design. Pre-experimental design is subject to many threats in validity (Meltzoft, & Cooper, 2018). This study did not have a control or comparison group. Without something to compare the data to, it was difficult to assess the significance of the observed change in the data. The change could have been the result of historical changes unrelated to the treatment, maturation of the participants, or anything else time related (Meltzoft, & Cooper, 2018).

The study also had strengths. One was the quantitative design of the study. A quantitative study provided reliable and repeatable information and allowed the focus to be on testing the hypothesis. The quantitative research design allowed the data to be analyzed through statistical analysis, and the use of the statistical methods created more reliable results. Also, the analyzed data of this quantitative study was easily expressed in understandable numbers and tables. The numerical data obtained through quantitative research facilitates comparison between other populations or groups.
Another strength was the utilization of the validated surveys, SCAS and MAAS-A. The MAAS-A is a scale adapted for an adolescent population, which fit well with this study on students in that specific age range. The SCAS is also a scale designed to be used with youth, and it was fitting to be used with this study. These scales allowed for relatively quick data collection and responses to the surveys were tabulated in a short timeframe.

Final strengths of the study were related to the participants. The participants of the study were students who had a disability. The results of the study can add to the research on effective strategies to use with that population. In addition, the research was ethically considerate to the participants. Individuals had the right to freely decide to participate in the research study without fear of coercion and with full knowledge of what was being investigated. Participants remained anonymous, and the anonymity reduced the risk of false results by allowing participants to answers survey questions openly and honestly without concern for positive or negative reactions to responses.

Implications for practitioners and future research

There are several implications for practitioners and future research. Future research should focus on mindfulness exercises within the educational setting with a larger population of students. Replicating this study with a larger population of students with disabilities would provide better generalization and more valid results. Replicating this study with populations of both disabled and non-disabled students could allow opportunities to examine whether mindful exercises impact the populations differently. Again, using the recommendation of utilizing a larger population, it would be interesting to see the results providing this mindfulness
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intervention to an entire school population and then measuring the outcomes for both students and staff.

Further, it may be worthwhile to see if and how mindfulness impacts specific special education diagnoses. A long-term study could investigate the relation of incorporating mindfulness into an IEP, for example allocating time for specially designed instruction in mindfulness exercises, and then measuring the student’s growth and achievement.

Based on the measurable outcomes derived from the SCAS and MAAS-A, *Sitting Still Like a Frog* was beneficial in improving the focus of these student while giving them a tool to cope with anxiety. Although this investigation utilized students with diagnosed disabilities, this is a program that could also be beneficial to all students.
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Appendix

Appendix A- Consent Letter
Dear Parent or Guardian and Student,

[Teacher Name] is a teacher at [School Name] and she is your child’s Study Strategies teacher. She is currently conducting research through [Research Institution] on the effects of a mindfulness intervention as part of a master’s course requirement.

She will be conducting this research by using data gathered in class. Your student will be learning to focus attention using Sitting Still Like a Frog, a mindfulness intervention. The mindfulness practice will take 5-10 minutes each scheduled school day over an 8-week period and would be taking place regardless of the study. Students will listen to audio exercises that guide them through breathing techniques they can use to focus and help calm themselves. Two surveys will be given to your student asking questions about their feelings of anxiety and mindful attention before using Sitting Still Like a Frog, and again after. The surveys will take about 15 minutes to complete each time they are given. The data collected would be used in the study. Your student’s name will be paired with code used on the surveys to keep the information being collected anonymous. The name and code pairing key will be kept in a secure location only accessible to the researchers to ensure confidentiality.

We would appreciate your participation in this project because it will help us determine if mindfulness is an effective intervention to use in the classroom. We are asking your permission to include the information collected from your child in the research report. Your child will be protected from any disclosure, as their name, the name of the school, and the name of the city in which this data is collected will not be used in thereport. No information will be released in any way that could identify the student. We do not anticipate any medical or social risk to your child by allowing us to use this data. Information gathered in this study may benefit your child and other children through the development of new teaching strategies or materials based on this information.

Your consent to allow your children to participate is voluntary. If at any time during this study, you change your mind you may withdraw from this study by contacting [Contact Information].

Should you have any questions, please contact:

[Contact Information] and [Contact Information]

Should you have complaints or concerns, please contact:

Chair, Institutional Review Board
For Protection of Human Participants
c/oOffice of Grants and Faculty Development

Although the chairperson may ask you for your name, all complaints are kept in confidence.

I have received an explanation of the study and agree to participate. I understand that participation in this study is strictly voluntary.

STUDENT’S PRINTED NAME

SIGNATURE

DATE

PARENT’S PRINTED NAME

SIGNATURE

DATE
EFFECTS OF MINDFULNESS INTERVENTION
Title of Research Study: Effects of Mindfulness on Adolescents with Disabilities.

Principal Investigator: [Name] will be conducting the research while supervised by [Name].

Why am I being asked to take part in this research study?

A research study is usually done to find a better way to treat people, or to understand how things work. You are being asked to take part in this research study because you are an adolescent with a disability.

What should I know about a research study?

You will be learning to focus attention using Sitting Still Like a Frog, a mindfulness intervention. You will listen to 5-10 minute audio exercises that guide you through breathing techniques you can use to focus and help calm yourself. Two surveys will be given asking questions about your feelings of anxiety and mindful attention before using Sitting Still Like a Frog, and again after. The data collected would be used in the study. You do not have to be in this study if you do not want to do so. It is up to you if you want your survey scores to be used to find out if a mindfulness intervention is helpful to students with disabilities. You can choose not to take part now and change your mind later if you want. Your decision will not be held against you. You can ask all the questions you want before you decide.

Why is this research being done?

This study is trying to find out more about the effects of mindfulness, and if it is a useful tool to use in schools with students with disabilities.

How long will the research last?

Two surveys will be given to asking questions your feelings of anxiety and mindful attention before using Sitting Still Like a Frog, and again after. The surveys will take about 15 minutes to complete each time.

What happens if I say "Yes, I want to be in this research"?

If it is okay with you and you agree to join this study, you will be asked to fill out some surveys about how you feel and how you think.

Is there any way being in this study could be bad for me?

There is nothing bad that will happen to you, although you may feel uncomfortable with some of the questions that I will ask. You can skip any questions you do not want to answer, and you can stop at any time.

What happens to the information collected for the research?

The information collected from you will be reviewed by the researchers. The researchers will make sure your personal information is only seen by people who have permission to review the information.

Who can I talk to?

If you have questions, concerns, or complaints, about the research, talk to the research team [Name] or [Name]. This research has been reviewed and approved by an Institutional Review Board ("IRB"). You may talk to them if: your questions or concerns are not being answered by the research team; you want to talk to someone besides the research team; or you have questions about your rights as a research participant.

Signature Block for Child Assent

Signature of child

Date

Printed name of child

Printed name of person obtaining assent

Date
Appendix C- Mindfulness Attention Awareness Scale- Adolescents

Day-to-Day Experiences

Instructions: Below is a collection of statements about your everyday experience. Using the 1-6 scale below, please indicate how frequently or infrequently you currently have each experience. Please answer according to what really reflects your experience rather than what you think your experience should be.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Almost Always</td>
<td>Very Frequently</td>
<td>Somewhat Frequently</td>
<td>Somewhat Infrequently</td>
<td>Very Infrequently</td>
<td>Almost Never</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I could be experiencing some emotion and not be conscious (unaware) of it until sometime later.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I break or spill things because of carelessness, not paying attention, or thinking of something else.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I find it difficult to stay focused on what’s happening in the present (in the moment).</td>
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<tr>
<td>I tend to walk quickly to get where I’m going without paying attention to what I experience (see and do) along the way.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I tend not to notice feelings of physical tension (pressure/stress) or discomfort until they really grab my attention.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I forget a person’s name almost as soon as I’ve been told it for the first time.</td>
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<tr>
<td>It seems I am “running on automatic,” (doing things right way</td>
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</table>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>without thinking about them) without much awareness of what I’m doing.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I rush through activities without being really attentive (paying attention) to them.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I get so focused on the goal I want to achieve that I lose touch with what I’m doing right now to get there.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do jobs or tasks automatically (right away), without being aware of what I'm doing.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I find myself listening to someone with one ear, doing something else at the same time.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I find myself preoccupied (thinking about something all the time) with the future or the past.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I find myself doing things without paying attention.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>I snack without being aware that I’m eating.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>6</td>
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</table>
## Appendix D - Spence Children's Anxiety Scale

### SPENCE CHILDREN'S ANXIETY SCALE

**Your Name:**

**Date:**

**PLEASE PUT A CIRCLE AROUND THE WORD THAT SHOWS HOW OFTEN EACH OF THESE THINGS HAPPEN TO YOU. THERE ARE NO RIGHT OR WRONG ANSWERS.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I worry about things:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am scared of the dark:</td>
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<tr>
<td>When I have a problem, I get a funny feeling in my stomach:</td>
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<tr>
<td>I feel afraid:</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would feel afraid of being on my own at home:</td>
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<tr>
<td>I feel scared when I have to take a test:</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel afraid if I have to use public toilets or bathrooms:</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I worry about being away from my parents:</td>
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<tr>
<td>I feel afraid that I will make a fool of myself in front of people:</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I worry that I will do badly at my school work:</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am popular amongst other kids my own age:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I worry that something awful will happen to someone in my family:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I suddenly feel as if I can't breathe when there is no reason for this.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have to keep checking that I have done things right (like the switch is off, or the door is locked):</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Often</td>
<td>Always</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel scared if I have to sleep on my own:</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Often</td>
<td>Always</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have trouble going to school in the mornings because I feel nervous or afraid:</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Often</td>
<td>Always</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am good at sports:</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Often</td>
<td>Always</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am scared of dogs:</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Often</td>
<td>Always</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can't seem to get bad or silly thoughts out of my head:</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Often</td>
<td>Always</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When I have a problem, my heart beats really fast:</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Often</td>
<td>Always</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I suddenly start to tremble or shake when there is no reason for this:</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Often</td>
<td>Always</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I worry that something bad will happen to me:</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Often</td>
<td>Always</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am scared of going to the doctors or dentists:</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Often</td>
<td>Always</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When I have a problem, I feel shaky:</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Often</td>
<td>Always</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am scared of being in high places or lifts (elevators):</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Often</td>
<td>Always</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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26. I am a good person. Never
27. I have to think of special thoughts to stop bad things from happening (like numbers or words) Never
28. I feel scared if I have to travel in the car, or on a bus or a train Never
29. I worry what other people think of me Never
30. I am afraid of being in crowded places (like shopping centres, the movies, buses, busy playgrounds) Never
31. I feel happy Never
32. All of a sudden I feel really scared for no reason at all Never
33. I am scared of insects or spiders Never
34. I suddenly become dizzy or faint when there is no reason for this Never
35. I feel afraid if I have to talk in front of my class Never
36. My heart suddenly starts to beat too quickly for no reason Never
37. I worry that I will suddenly get a scared feeling when there is nothing to be afraid of Never
38. I like myself Never
39. I am afraid of being in small closed places, like tunnels or small rooms. Never
40. I have to do some things over and over again (like washing my hands, cleaning or putting things in a certain order) Never
41. I get bothered by bad or silly thoughts or pictures in my mind Never
42. I have to do some things in just the right way to stop bad things happening Never
43. I am proud of my school work Never
44. I would feel scared if I had to stay away from home overnight Never
45. Is there something else that you are really afraid of? YES, NO

Please write down what it is

How often are you afraid of this thing? Never

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Exercise #1 Sitting Still Like a Frog

This exercise teaches you to sit with the attention of a frog. Stopping whatever you are doing in order to focus and observe is the beginning of every mindfulness exercise. It helps you find out what you are thinking, feeling and doing. Stopping and observing are things you can learn from a frog. A frog jumps, stops, and sits really still while observing everything that's going on around him. When you sit like a frog, you only move when you really have to. When a frog is hungry it moves to eat, and when it's startled it moves a little because it's startled. Sometimes it moves just a single eye because a raindrop has dropped on it or a single leg to shift its position. But it doesn't waste energy on doing things it doesn't have to do. The frog sits still. Very still. And when it breathes its frog belly rises a little then falls again. It is alert and still. Attentive. A frog isn't easily distracted. It is aware of all the commotion around him, but it doesn't react. It sits still with mindful attention. It doesn't jump at every chance although it's capable of enormous leaps. This way the frog doesn't get tired. It doesn't do things for no reason. It doesn't get carried away with mad ideas. It can stop, jump, and being still. You too can learn to sit still like a frog. So now I would like to ask you to sit comfortably on a chair or on a cushion, straighten your back so it’s relaxed and if you'd like you can and close your eyes or lower your eyelids as much as you're happy with. Take your time to sit up straight and relaxed. Your feet on the floor. Your back straight and your shoulders down. You can leave your hands in your lap. Now imagine you’re a frog somewhere on the edge of a large pond. Of course, you're not a real frog but you have something a frog has too. the ability to sit still and what you need to sit still is attention and calmness. The attention that stops you from jumping up and run away from what you are doing right now and the calmness to stay seated. So, take you time to focus your attention and sit still just like a frog. Your arms and legs are still. Your bottom and your belly are still. Your legs, your neck are still. Your entire body is still and calm. Mindful and calm. Still and attentive. And when you are sitting all still and calm you will notice all kinds of things. Maybe you'll notice that some small part of your body is always moving. A finger, a leg, your eyelids or something else and that's fine. The point of this exercise is not that you are not allowed to move, but that you'll notice that some part of you is still moving. So, what are you noticing right now? When you notice some small movements here and there, you'll start to notice that with each breath some part of your body also moves. Why don't you direct your attention to the tip of your nose? There where the air goes into your nose and comes out again. What do you feel? Being aware that you’re breathing is a special experience that can help you relax. Maybe you’re also aware of the breath in your throat, in your chest, or perhaps even father down in your belly. You can put your hands on your belly and feel it move when you breathe. It is kind of fun to be so tuned into your breathing. It tells you all kinds of things. It tells you whether your breathing is regular or irregular. You’ll also notice the brief pauses just after you breathe in and just after you breathe out. Maybe you can tune into this brief pause after each breath. You don’t have to change the way you breathe. Just breathe normally and just notice how special those brief pauses are after each breath in and again after each breath out. And there’s another special thing if your breathing becomes a bit calmer and deeper. After while you’ll notice that your body becomes a bit calmer and more relaxed perhaps. And your thoughts are calming down as well. Breathing brings clam. So, breathe in and breathe out again. Every time you breathe in your belly rises a little and every time you breathe out it falls a little. Have a look. Direct your attention to it. To the gentle movement of the breath in your belly. It feels good to tune into your breathing. It feels
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good to calm down. And breathing doesn't require any special effort. Your body breathes all by itself. Observe the movement of your breath a little while longer. It rises, and it falls. It rises, and it falls. The air goes in and out again. Attention and breathing they calm you right down at this moment and again at this moment. Can you feel it? You can learn a lot from a frog. You can learn to not react to everything you think, hear, and see. You can learn you don't have to react unless you really have to on purpose rather than on impulse. Sitting still with the mindful attention of a frog. Practice and you'll get better at remembering things. You'll notice a lot more. I wish you lots of moments of mindful attention today and lots of fun.

Exercise #2 The little frog

In this exercise I would like to teach you to sit still like a frog. All you need to do is find a place to sit with your back straight, your legs either crossed or stretched out, and your attention focused on yourself. Frogs can jump really far and croak really loud, but they can also sit very still and do nothing. Frogs may also find it difficult to sit still at first. Their arms want to move. Their legs want to move. But the more you practice the better you'll get. Then, then you'll enjoy doing nothing at all except to sit still, as still as a frog. If you'd like you can close your eyes or half close them. Just do whatever feels good to you. Now just like the frog you are sitting still. As still as you possibly can but to be still you need attention. Attention and calmness. Your legs are still. Your arms are still. Your bottom is still. Even your head is still and calm. And while you're sitting here maybe you notice that some part of you is always moving. Your eyes maybe, your finger, or maybe it is your bottom that can't stop wiggling and that is absolutely fine. It's not that you're not allowed to move but that you notice that you are always moving. You know what else is always moving no matter how still you are? It's the breath. The breath in your belly. Put your hands on your belly and feel it moving up and down while you are breathing. You can feel it move up a bit then down a bit. Can you feel it? Tuning into your breathing calms you down, and just like the frog you are sitting still. As still as you possibly can. See if you can stay tuned into your breath a little while longer. That's it you are doing great. Tuning into your breathing can be very helpful. When you've fallen for example or when you're angry or when you're tired or when you just want to relax for a bit. Maybe you want to practice sitting still like a frog again tomorrow. Who knows. When you hear the bells in a moment you can get up and get on with your day. I hope you have lots of fun today.

Exercise #3 Attention to the Breath

The best way to practice mindful attention is by focusing on the breath. Why? Because your breath is always with you. You can't forget it or drop it or leave it at home. Like a loyal friend it is always with you. You can learn a lot from your breath like how you're feeling for instance or how calm or restless you are on the inside. In this exercise you will learn to direct your mindful attention to your breathing, and to notice when you are lost in thought or distracted by other noises. As soon as you are aware of this you can shift your attention back to your breathing again and again. That's how to train your attention muscle and the more you practice the better and stronger it will become. Concentration requires practice, so I'd like to ask you to stop everything you are doing right now and sit still on a cushion or chair. Straighten your back so your body is both erect and relaxed. Take your time to sit up straight and comfortably. Then you
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can close your eyes. With your eyes closed you will be more aware of your breathing. And now I'd like to ask you to shift your attention away from your outside world into your inner world into your body and to cast a curious eye over your breathing. What is happening to your breathing right now? What’s it telling you? All you need to do is observe. It nothing else. Like a guard outside the castle gates who watches everybody going in and coming out again. The same with your breath. Your breath flows in and then out again. How does it feel? You may notice air going in and coming out again at the tip of your nose. And what do you notice when you direct your attention there to the tip of your nose? Perhaps you feel those currents of air going in and coming out again. Is the air cold or warm? Does the air coming out feel the same as the air going in. Are you aware of the air going in through your nose and coming out again again and again? And now that you are tuned into your breathing, I'd like to ask you harness the attention of a frog and take a few deeper breaths. Without forcing anything draw in a few deeper breaths. What happens when you draw a deeper breath in? And what happens when you breathe out more deeply. There is no need to force anything or do anything special. Just take a little more breath into your belly without straining. Allow more air to follow into your belly and slowly out again. Your breath is very calm and is slowing down becoming more deeper and more regular. Keep breathing deeply and regularly. How does it feel inside your body? Perhaps you are claiming down too just like your breathing. And once you’re a bit calmer you may be able to concentrate better. Slowly and spontaneously you are breathing. And slowly and spontaneously your body relaxes. Your breathing is becoming very deep and regular. But sometimes, sometimes the opposite happens are you are aware of becoming restless. There are too many things on your mind. Too many frustrations and you realize you simply can't tune into your breathing. This will happen plenty of times and it’s okay. It’s difficult to concentrate when you are worried about something. Your mind keeps wandering and your breathing changes. Maybe it becomes a bit shorter and shallower. Maybe you'll notice when you start thinking about something difficult or frustrating that your breathing becomes shorter and shallower. And you're worrying or thinking about things that you find horrible or scary you may find your attention jumping like a group of frogs all over the place from one thought to the next. It’s okay if you notice this. It is good to be aware of the speed of which it happens. Because as soon as you realize your attention is being carried away by your thoughts you can bring your attention back. Back to the clam movement inside your abdomen. Sometimes you can do it and sometimes you can't. But keep practicing and it’ll get better. Each time it’ll get better like when you play sports or play music. As soon are you realize your attention is no longer on your breath but somewhere else entirely you bring your attention back to your breathing. Back to your belly. And when your attention is back you will be aware again of breathing in and out, in and out. Quite effortlessly. And every time you notice you are thinking of something else you simply notice it and then bring your attention back. Back to the movement of the breath in your belly. There are not thoughts in your belly only the breath. Calm ever present breath. By learning to shift your attention and to aim it like a flashlight where you want it to be you learn to be in the present moment. Concentration requires practice and practice makes perfect. Good luck today.

Exercise #4 The Spaghetti Test

This exercise teaches you to completely relax your body. Relax it like a string of spaghetti. Relaxation is important. It helps you calm your body. You can do the exercise sitting in a chair or laying on the floor or on a mat. It's up to you to choose a place at home where you can sit or
lie comfortably completely focused on yourself, on yourself and your body. As soon as you hear the bells, we'll start the exercise. Sitting or lying here like this you can notice that you are sitting her or lying here. What strikes you at this moment? Maybe you're aware of your legs or your arms. Maybe your notice your head is tired from working or thinking. Maybe you notice all that much and that is okay too. Now I'd like to ask you to squeeze your eyes shut. Tightly shut as if you're staring straight at the sun. Keep your eyes shut and clench your jaw. Press your lips together and tighten all your facial muscles. And then then you let go of all the tension. Let it all go. Your eyes relax. Your jaw relaxes. Your mouth, your lips and cheeks go completely soft. All soft and friendly. Feel it? And then when your face is completely relaxed you clench your fists. Make your fists as hard and as strong as you possible can. Your hand feels the tension and so do your arms. Go on feel it. Your muscles are growing big and strong. And maybe you'll notice that your holding your breath now. And as soon as you noticed that you loosen the tension in your arms. Go on loosen it. Loosen up your muscle. Loosen up your hands and fingers even your finger is completely relaxed. Soft. all the tension is gone. And when your arms and hands are completely relaxed you can shift your attention to your belly. Now I’d like you to pull it in until it's completely flat and tight as a board. Go on pull it tight. And as soon as you realize you are holding your breath again relax your belly with a sigh. Your belly relaxes and goes soft. Maybe a little softer still. And when it's really soft you'll be more aware of your breathing and the gentle movement as you breathe in and breathe out out again. Can you feel it? Gently your belly moves up and down. Gently up and gently down again. And how are your legs doing right now? To relax your legs, you might begin by scrunching up your toes and pressing your knees together. Press them tightly together. Tighten the muscles in your legs and your toes. Feel the tension. And then then you let go again. Let go of the tension. Your legs are soft and flexible again. Your knees unlocked your toes relaxed. Your whole body is relaxed. Stay where you are relaxed. Right where you are. Maybe you'd like to tune into your breath the breath that energizes your whole body. There is no need to get up right away. there is no need to do anything. You did the spaghetti test really well and you can do it any time you like. Just before a test or a written exam or before another difficult moment or whenever you feel like it. When you hear the bells, you can pick up where you left off. I hope you have a lovely day today.

Exercise #5 The Pause Button

Sometimes you need a break a few minutes to yourself. Whew. You've got so much on your mind. Time for a breather to find out what is going on inside, so you can continue with whatever you were doing in the outside world. So, stop whatever you were doing. Stop forcing yourself to do things or to have expectations of yourself to do so. Put on the breaks and take some to time to feel how you are doing right now. How does it feel inside? Are you feeling good or not? You'll notice if you are feeling good or not. There is no need to change the feeling just notice how you are feeling. Direction your attention to it. Some very friendly attention to it. This is not about whether your feelings are right or wrong. it's about bringing attention to how you are doing right now. Some very friendly attention. And then then you can direct the same friendly attention to your breathing. What do you notice when you don’t try to control your breathing and just breathe normally? You may notice your breathing is deep and relaxed or maybe it's swallow and rapid. What can you say about the movement of your breath in this moment? Without judging if it's right or wrong I'd like you to observe the depth and level of your breathing. “Once you’ve done that you can move to the final part of your time out. You can shift your attention to all those
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places in your body where you feel something. Achy places, calm place anxious places. And those warm places. And then you stretch a bit and continue what you were doing before. With a single push on your pause button you can give yourself a breather. And once you’ve managed to catch your breath you are good to go again. It’s like charging, recharging your battery.

Regularly breathing ensure that your battery doesn’t run down. Have a great day.

Exercise #6: First Aid for Unpleasant Feelings.

There Are times when you are really frustrated or really upset. Your sad or angry, nervous or something else. In those cases, it can help to sit down and focus on your breath. Pausing in this way is always helpful. That’s why I’d like to ask you to stop what you’re doing and pay attention to how you’re feeling at the moment. And not matter how you’re feeling don’t try and push it away. Don’t try and make it better or think you are stupid for feeling this way. Let’s see if you can bring your most loving attention to this feeling. The kind of attention you’d get from your best friend. Sometimes it helps to put your feeling into words. To say for example, I’m feeling really sad or scared insecure or angry. Sometimes you simply feeling rotten, but you can’t put a name to the feeling. So just try to get a sense of how you’re feeling right now. There’s’ bound to be a place that you don’t feel good. You may feel anger or sadness. Why not direct your attention to that place? Your most loving attention. Like you would to a friend. And once you know how you are feeling right now you can direct your attention to your breathing. When your angry or sad or feeling miserable somehow you can often tell by your breathing. So, what is your breath telling you right now. Maybe you realize you keep thinking of something and you are distracted by certain thoughts or sounds. If so, you can shift your attention back to breathing as it is at this moment. Just as it is. Don’t change a thing. And now that you are completing tuned into your breathing you can shift the bright light of your attention from your breathing to your whole body. Just feel what is inside your body. There is no need to get rid of anything or to think it’s stupid to feel the way that you do. Just feel what you’re feeling. Maybe you’re feeling rotten and you’re aware of some tension in your body, in your shoulders or neck or your belly or stomach. Go on feel them. Don’t worry it will pass it always does. Maybe you’re really tired or frustrated. By the way there is no need to be afraid of these feeling. Everybody has them. Pleasant and unpleasant feelings. Feeling of fear and sadness. It’s important to know you don’t have to push away your feelings. Open the door wide and let them in. Unpleasant feelings are a fact of life as are pleasant ones. Quietly and curiously you observe all the different feeling inside your body. You and your body are strong and resilient. You’re flexible and firm like a young tree. Vulnerable and tough at the same time. You won’t be knocked down that easily. Even unpleasant feelings pass. Perhaps they already have. Just allow yourself to feel whatever you are feeling. And after taking a slow deep breath in and out just continue with whatever you were doing before. Perhaps with great confidence.

Exercise #7- A Safe Place

Sometimes it’s nice to have a safe place all to yourself. A place where you can’t be disturbed and place where you can be yourself. To go to this place, I’d like you to lie down on the floor on a blanket or on a bed with a pillow under your head. And as your lying there you can direction your attention to your body. There is no need to think just direct the bright light of your attention
to your body and notice how it feels. Maybe you can feel your head lying on the pillow as well as your neck and shoulders. Maybe you can feel your back on the floor or on the bed and your arms relaxed beside your body. Just let yourself lie here without doing anything and when you realize you are still thinking—there is no reason to run after your thoughts. Just let them pass like the clouds. Your whole body is calming down and you don’t have to do anything. Or think of anyone or go anywhere. Just find the peace and quiet inside yourself. When you’re feeling relaxed you can travel in your mind where you feel completing safe. It can be a place you’ve been before or where you’d like to go, or place that suddenly pops into your head. Somewhere you’ve been on vacation or the home of someone you like visiting. This place may simply pop into your mind. A place that is peaceful and beautiful. Where you feel good and safe. It’s a place where you are loved and perfect just the way you are. Why not go to this place in your mind and feel how nice and safe it is. What can you see? What's around you? Maybe you’re seeing beautiful colors or animals or other children. What do you notice? There is no need to think of anything or do anything or take care of anyone. Just be with yourself in this safe place where it’s beautiful and warm. Things are good here nothing needs changing, you can always come back to this place whenever you need. It is always nearby. Wish yourself all the safety and happiness in the world. In the warm glow of your heart you can see yourself the way you are. Beautiful and sweeting and just perfect. It’s safe and good. And remember you can always come back to this place, to this safe place. You can stay a bit longer and then when you hear the sound of the bells you can take this warm safe feeling from the inside to the outside world wherever you are. This safe place is always within reach all you need to do is direct your attention to it. See here it is.

Exercise #8 The Conveyor Belt of Worries.

Are there times when you can’t stop worrying and your thoughts keep churning? Thoughts can be difficult. They interfere in everything and they think they know it all. This exercise teaches you how to move out of your head and into your body and to focus on a place your thoughts can’t reach. Lie or sit down comfortably. Close or half close your eyes and think about today. What happened to you today? Maybe you notice your thoughts are going into overdrive, maybe you’re a little worried about something or you’re thinking you were right about something. So right. Or maybe you’ve got completely different thoughts. Sad thoughts. Or exciting ideas about what you’d like to do. Why don’t you listen to all those thoughts for a moment? Maybe you can look at all those thoughts passing by from a distance. Observe them with a curious mind. What are you thinking of right now? When you are completely quiet you can hear the stream of thoughts from beginning to end like a kind of story teller inside your head. They appear linger a while and flow downstream again like leaves in a river and they are out of sight and replaced by different thoughts. Maybe you can hear what they are about or maybe not. Are they about today? Yesterday? A memory? or about tomorrow about something you must not forget. You don’t have to do everything your thoughts tell you to. Thoughts are just thoughts, they don’t know everything. If that head full of thoughts is wearing you down, you can lower your attention like a spider on a thread from your head down to your belly. They when you’ve moved from your head down to your belly you can rest your hands on your belly and be in that place where your hands feel your belly. There. Far from your head right on your belly. That is where you feel the gentle rise and fall of your breathing. Up and down your belly goes. Up it goes and down again. Up and down. Can you feel the gentle movement of your belly of the breath? There is no need to do anything. There are no thoughts in your belly only the breath and silence. Stay with the
breath in the belly for a while. Feel it move up and down again. Can you feel it? The breath moves all by itself. And deep down in the belly all is quite there are no worried, deep down in your belly all is peaceful there are no argument. Deep down in the belly is the breath, attention and the breath. And a powerful calm.

Exercise #9 A Little Boost

I'd like to invite you to sit up straight relax your shoulders and put your hands in your lap. And if you want you can close your eyes. Now direct your attention to your breathing. Being aware that you're breathing is always special. This mindful awareness brings you right here to where you are sitting now to this place in this room. Where the air flows in and out of your body nonstop. Without any special effort. That in and of itself is cause for celebration. The breath is always with you at all times. Maybe you can tell where you are are feeling the breath right now. Can you tell? In your nose. Your chest. Or a bit deeper in your belly. And notice that while your breathing your chest and belly keep rising and falling raising and falling. Now I'd like you think about to moment a short time again or today when someone what kind or sweet to you for no reason. You didn't do anything. A kind word and hand taking yours a smile. Or dog or cat that was happy so see you. A wonderful moment like that. Recall this moment and notice this when you think back to it. Open your heart to this feeling of happiness as it spreads to the farthest reaches of your body. Let this feeling completely fill so you know what it feels like. It's good to be kind it gives you a boost. It's simple and anyone can do it. It spreads warmth and light and opens your heart to others. Stay close to this wonderful feeling for a while and recall it throughout the day. Maybe you'll notice it brings a smile to your face.

Exercise #10 The Secret of the Hearst Chamber

Why don't you take a few minutes to sit down comfortably on a chair or a stool? And while you're sitting here you can shift your attention to your heart. Some people like to place their hands on their heart to feel it beating or you can leave them where they are. And now that you're tuned into your heart you may notice something special. It doesn't just beat day in and day out. But without having to think about it your heart can also give love for no reason to anyone you like. And it can receive love provided you open the door to your heart. But when that door is open pain and loneliness can slip in too. Sometimes you get hurt or you hurt other. This happen to everyone from time to time. And your heart can be touched deeply touched by sadness or joy. But it never really breaks because deep down in your heart that gets few visitors there's' something special. Something that is always here. Why don't you come and have look? Pictures heart like a beautiful chamber with a large solid door. Now imagine you're in front of that door and you decide to enter that chamber of your heart. Take a look around. You are welcome here. You see beautiful warm colors. All is quite at the moment. There Is a couch where you can lie down and a table that is bathed in a soft light. Then suddenly, suddenly you spot a small chest. This chest is made of dark wood and embellished with gold. It's standing in dark corner so it's not very conspicuous. You go over. The Moment you lift the lid you see something you've never seen before. It's a treasure. A real treasure. Like a radiant sun it illuminates the whole room. And much more beyond that. You can see it quite clearly. It's the precious treasury of your own heart. Indestructible, beautiful, and strong. Once you know it in
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this way you may discover there is more room in your heart for other people. And also, for yourself. Stay here awhile reading in a warm glow of your own heart. Secure in knowing that you can find way to deal with whatever may come up in your life. In the deepest of ways, you are okay now. It's safe here and everything is fine right in this moment.