

## Fostering a Habit of Mindfulness in Gifted Students

AAGT Annual Conference  
February 7, 2020  
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### This I Know to be True

- Gifted students often feel misunderstood by parents, teachers and peers
- Gifted students often do not feel validated or valued by parents, teachers and peers
- Teachers often feel misunderstood by parents, students and peers
- Teachers often do not feel validated or valued by parents, students and peers

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## Stressssssful!



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## Core Practice

- Sit upright and comfortably, feet flat on floor
- Rest hands in laps
- Close your eyes or look down at your hands
- When you hear the sound, focus and listen as long as you can
- When the sound has faded, focus on every breath as you take it in and let it out
- Listen to the sound a second time as long as you can, still breathing calmly
- When you can't hear the sound any longer, slowly open your eyes, but remain quiet and still

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## *Be the Change You Wish to See in the World*

Chandi

- Students are at the mercy of teachers to provide opportunities for students to thrive in all areas of their lives
- Practicing mindful awareness can help teachers and students cultivate habits such as resilience, patience, emotional regulation, flexible problem solving & non-judgmental awareness

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## Mindfulness

- The **practice** of being in the present moment with openness, curiosity, and a clear focus of attention
- Being present in the moment without your ego deciding if you like the moment or not
- Taking a step back, releasing judgment- going to the balcony for the view
- Eventually you can laugh or weep over your little self-created dramas without being overly identified by them- it is emotional freedom!

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## Challenges for Gifted

- **Stress/Anxiety**- anything that threatens to disrupt homeostasis
- **Over Excitabilities/Intensity**- receiving world's stimulus more intensely and having trouble filtering that stimulus
- **Asynchronous Development**- related to the discrepancy in the development of advanced cognitive abilities and age level social & emotional development
- **Social & Emotional Development**- need for connection, love and acceptance

*How could mindfulness address these challenges?*

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## Stress/Anxiety

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|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stress levels often higher and more intense for gifted people</li> <li>• Incoming data is processed as fight, flight or freeze</li> <li>• When stressed, information doesn't flow to prefrontal cortex for executive processing</li> <li>• Shuts down higher order thinking</li> </ul> | <p style="text-align: center;">Mindfulness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can reverse the brain patterns that are activated during biological stress</li> <li>• Focused attention                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear the brain clutter/reset</li> <li>• Movement</li> <li>• Growth mindset</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |
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## Over-excitabilities/Intensity

- Difficult for gifted to find a relaxed, receptive state needed for optimal learning
- OE/I students have trouble filtering
- PFC on overload, difficult to make decisions, sort, make priorities
- Often over react to experiences rather than thoughtfully respond

### Mindfulness

- Strengthen attention and awareness in the here and now
- Slowly begin to trust in ability to “choose” their response to overstimulation rather than just reacting
- Mindful movement
- Pause, listen, breathe

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## Asynchronous Development

- Struggle with organization, study skills, switching attention- slower development of cortex in brain
- Advanced cognitive abilities interfere with age level development- Pruning delayed in gifted
- Inner struggle

### Mindfulness

- Thickens brain’s cortex- bridges gap
- Trains one’s awareness of attention
- Allows for intentional development of executive function skills
- Reflection

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## Social & Emotional Development

- Social anxiety
- Difficulty finding connection, love and acceptance
- Misinterpret others words, actions, body language
- Have little perspective about situations they encounter- no frame of reference

### Mindfulness

- Neutrally observe own feelings, thoughts, and sensations
- Practice an optimistic state of mind downplaying the thoughts of failure, frustration and hopelessness
- Visualizing/journaling/ kindness/gratefulness

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## A Mindful Learning Community for Gifted Learners

- Stresses non-judgment and compassion, is safe and welcoming
- Guides students to a level of self-acceptance and self-compassion
- Empowers students to advocate for themselves and be resilient in the face of adversity
- Encourages students to reach out to others for help and companionship
- Teaches students become more compassionate and accepting toward others
- Stresses in a community of learners, all students thrive

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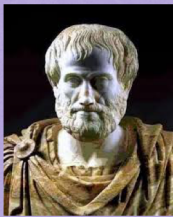
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The ultimate value of life depends upon awareness and the power of contemplation rather than mere survival

-Aristotle

### Practicing Mindfulness Will:

- Improve student self-control and self-regulation skills
- Strengthen resiliency and decision making
- Bolster enthusiasm for learning
- Increase academic success
- Develop positive social skills such as empathy, compassion, patience and generosity
- Infuse classroom learning with joy and optimism
- Reduce peer-to-peer conflict

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Mindful attention centers on conscious awareness of the present moment:

*By focusing our attention and controlling our breath,*  
we can learn to reduce stress and optimize the learning capacity of the brain.

### The MINDUP Curriculum 5 Competencies:

1. Self-Awareness
2. Self-Management
3. Social Awareness
4. Relationship Skills
5. Responsible Decision-Making




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## MindUp 5 Competencies

### SELF-AWARENESS

Assessing our feelings, interests, values, and strengths, maintaining self-confidence

### SELF-MANAGEMENT

Regulating emotions to handle stress, control impulses, and persevere in overcoming obstacles

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### SOCIAL AWARENESS

Understanding different perspectives and empathizing with others; recognizing and appreciating similarities and differences; using family, school, and community resources effectively

### RELATIONSHIP SKILLS

Maintaining healthy relationships based on cooperation; resisting inappropriate social pressure; preventing, managing and resolving interpersonal conflicts; seeking help when needed

### RESPONSIBLE DECISION MAKING

Using a variety of considerations, including ethical, academic and community-related standards to make choices and decisions

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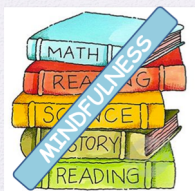
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*Between stimulus and response  
there is a space and in that  
space lies our freedom and  
power to choose our response*



Victor Frankel

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