Career Education, Grade 10 - Personal development/Self-Awareness

By Christina Willard-Stepan

**Overview/Rationale:**

There is much research to support the benefits of teaching mindfulness to help students to manage stress, and also to help increase their self-awareness and they progress through making future plans. Teaching this skill to the class and making it a part of regular class routines, can increase focus for all.

**Duration:**

Introduction happens over 3 classes, first 20 minutes of each class, with the hope that the class regularly integrates some sort of mindfulness activity (5 min) to start each class on an ongoing basis. The first lesson will take approximately 45 minutes as it is the first introduction.

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| **Big Ideas** | * Finding a balance between work and personal life is essential to good physical and mental health * Effective career planning considers both internal and external factors |
| **Curricular Competencies** | * Consider the impact of personal and career choices on themselves and others * Recognize the need for a healthy balance between school and other life activities |
| **Content** | * Self assessment for career research |

**Materials/Links:**

* TedTalk – All it takes is 10 mindful minutes – Andi Puddicombe <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qzR62JJCMBQ>
* Guided practice links at the bottom of the page: <https://www.mindfulschools.org/resources/explore-mindful-resources/#starter-lesson>
* Projector and internet access for viewing TedTalk
* Device for listening as a class for the first 2 activities, access to individual mobile devices for final activity
* Space (outside or in larger room like gym) for walking meditation on 3rd day

**Activity day 1:**

**\***It is recommended that the teacher have some familiarity with mindfulness or meditation practice prior to facilitating this lesson by trying the meditations themselves and reading some of the supplemental materials (this will be good for you too if you have never practiced!). Being too still may induce anxiety in some students, so participation should be optional if a student is showing signs of distress. A shorter or more active meditation might be better suited to some students.

**\*** These specific guided meditations are suggestions only – you may have your own favourites, or choose to do different ones – there are many available online (check out ‘Short Guided Meditations for Teens’ links in resources below)

* Check in with class as a whole – How many people have meditated before? What are some assumptions/ideas that you have about meditation?
* View Ted talk as a class – ‘All it takes is 10 mindful minutes’ – Andi Puddicombe (10 min)
* Ask class to note how they are feeling right now, and to rate on a scale of 1-10, their level of stress that they feel in their body, and also in their mind. This rating is private and for their own purposes only
* Invite class to take a comfortable seated position on a chair, or on the floor
* Play ‘Mindfulness of breath’ guided meditation from link provided (13 min).
* Discussion - Have students check in with their stress rating. Has it changed at all?
* Discuss the benefits of mindfulness/meditation
* Discuss things other then sitting meditation that might also be ‘mindful’ or’ meditative’

**Activity day 2:**

* Begin the next class with the ‘Body Scan’ meditation (19 min).
* Have a brief reflection/discussion about the difference between this meditation and the last
* Remind students to bring their own devices with headphones for the next class if possible

**Activity day 3:**

* Begin class with the ‘Walking Meditation’ (13 min), inviting students to pace the classroom, walk outside, or find a larger space (i.e. gym) for the class to move back and forth in
* Have a brief reflection/discussion about the difference between this meditation and the last
* If you are working in my Blueprint or other portfolio system, have students submit a brief journal reflection about their experience of all 3
* Invite students to investigate apps and other resources for them to continue with their own practice (see resources below for suggestions)
  + **Mobile Apps:**
    - [Stop, Breathe, and Think](http://stopbreathethink.org/)**:** Free web and mobile app for youth, with meditations for mindfulness and compassion
    - [Calm.com](http://www.calm.com/)**:** Free website and mobile app with guided meditation and relaxation exercises
    - [Insight Timer](https://insighttimer.com/)**:** Free mobile app with virtual “bells” to time and support your meditations
    - [MindShift](http://www.anxietybc.com/mobile-app)**:** Free mobile app for teens developed by AnxietyBC, with mindfulness and other coping skills for anxiety
    - [Smiling Mind](http://smilingmind.com.au/)**:** Free mobile mindfulness app for young people, from Australia
    - [**Headspace**](https://www.headspace.com/): “Meditation made simple.” This app has a free introductory period, after which it requires a paid subscription to continue to use

**Lastly:**

These lessons are intended to introduce the concept of this tool for self-awareness for high school students. The invitation is for teachers to begin to integrate this into class more regularly my beginning class with a 5 min, mindfulness activity on a regular basis. (Apps and resources for this are listed below)

**Additional Resource Links for Teachers:**

**Mobile App -** [Insight Timer](https://insighttimer.com/)**:** Free mobile app with virtual “bells” to time and support your meditations

Eight Principles of Teaching Mindfulness Meditation to Adolescents (attached)

<https://www.mindfulschools.org/resources/explore-mindful-resources/#starter-lesson>

Mindfulness Guide for Teachers, Dr. Amy Saltzman

<http://www.contemplativemind.org/Mindfulness-A_Teachers_Guide.pdf>

Benefits of Mindfulness

<https://positivepsychologyprogram.com/benefits-of-mindfulness/>

Mindfulness for Teens

<http://mindfulnessforteens.com/resources/>

Short Guided Meditations for Teens:

<http://mindfulnessforteens.com/guided-meditations/>

<http://www.innerstrengthfoundation.net>

**Eight Principles of Teaching Mindfulness Meditation to Adolescents**

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These principles are adapted from a longer version in [*A Mindfulness-Based Approach to Working with High-Risk Adolescents*](http://www.mindfulteachers.org/2016/04/mindfulness-high-risk-adolescents.html) by Sam Himelstein*,*and are published here with permission from[Routledge](https://www.routledge.com/products/9780415642453).

**1. Clear Goals**  
The goal of one session might be to relax, while the goal of another session might be awareness of how emotions manifest in the body.  
  
**2. Non-Attachment to Logistics**  
Closed eyes aren’t necessary to practice “correctly,” and may be resisted because of intense trauma or because of mistrusting other group members.

**3. Effective Techniques**  
Less abstract types of practices, such as counting the breath or body-based meditations, tend to work best when first introducing mindfulness techniques to adolescents.

**4. Time**  
Start with 2 to 5 minutes in the first session, then gradually increase meditation time according to what a particular group can handle.

**5. Facilitator’s Role**  
You should not spend every moment of the meditation talking. Your students need to be able to engage their own experience without you guiding them the whole time.

**6. Metaphors**  
It's important to use effective metaphors for the specific group of kids that you're teaching. I use a weight-training metaphor, since so many of the young men I teach like to work out.

**7. Process the Experience**  
Kids need to be aware of whether the process was positive or negative, and whether it met their expectations. This is also a chance for you to learn what it is they are actually experiencing, which will help you teach more effectively.  
  
**8. Self-Disclosure**  
It is important for you to be willing to disclose your personal experience with mindfulness. This will deepen your relationship with your students and deepen their practice.

Adapted from [*A Mindfulness-Based Approach to Working with High-Risk Adolescents*](http://www.mindfulteachers.org/2016/04/mindfulness-high-risk-adolescents.html), by Sam Himelstein, PhD. © Routledge, 2013. Used with permission. [www.routledge.com](https://www.routledge.com/products/9780415642453)