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Educators Experience Stress

- ☞ K-12 teachers experience a moderate to high level of stress (Montgomery & Rupp, 2005; Gallup poll, 2016)
- ☞ 50% of teachers agree with this statement: "The stress and disappointments involved in teaching at this school aren't really worth it." (Retner, Kober & Frizzell, 2016)

What causes stress for you?

Training for Teachers on Cultivating Mindfulness:

- ☞ “.. can increase teachers’ sense of well-being and teaching self-efficacy, as well as their ability to manage classroom behavior and establish and maintain supportive relationships with students.” (Meiklejohn, et. al., 2012)
- ☞ resulted in a reduction of teachers’ anxiety, depression, feelings of burnout, being rushed and perceived of stress compared with a control group. Their sleep improved, and the teachers said they felt less judgmental. (Jennings 2016)
- ☞ Teachers were better able to cope with classroom challenges, and manage their feelings, and thus their students’ feelings (Jennings, 2016)

“As the sole responsible leader, facilitator in the classroom, we have to respond in a professional manner, but deeper than that we have to respond as human beings.”

“How do I care for myself every day with a freshness and vivacity and also insight to support my own students?” (Teachers quoted from CARE video)

Our focus: Mindful Teaching: encouraging teachers to cultivate mindful awareness inside and outside the classroom. This is an indirect approach to integrating mindfulness in the classroom.

What is Mindfulness?

- ☞ Moment by Moment, Non-judgmental awareness of body, mind and feelings
- ☞ Natural capacity to become aware of the present moment.
- ☞ Choice to become self-aware and cultivate inner resources, such as patience, kindness and understanding

Mindful of the Body

Experience of the Breath

- ☞ Sensation of the breath
- ☞ Inhale / Pause
- ☞ Exhale / Pause

Empathy Practice—“Just Like Me” (see Rechtschaffen, 2016)

Integrating Practices into your Day

Walking mindfully—feel your feet touching the ground, connect with the support of the earth

Gratitude practice—recognize what you have to be grateful for, even in difficult circumstances

Eating mindfully—paying attention to the food, its source, and its ability to nourish you

Anchor Phrases—words to remind you to come back to the present moment

Gifts of Mindfulness

- ☞ It can help us witness our thought patterns and realize which of them may be unconscious assumptions or biases.
- ☞ Often we go through our lives with judgments toward others that have been handed down from our families and societies.
- ☞ To step back and inquire into our minds around what is true and what is toxic leftover that is unhealthy to release

Research:

Meiklejohn, J, Phillips, C., Lee, M, Freedman, Griffin, M.L., Biegel, G., Roach, A., Frank, J., Burke, C., Pinger, L., Soloway, G., Isberg, R., Sibinga, E., Grossman, L., Saltzman, A. (2012). “Integrating Mindfulness Training into K-12 Education: Fostering the Resilience of Teachers and Students”
Retrieved from <http://www.mindful-well-being.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/Meiklejohn-et-al-2012.pdf>

Resources:

Cultivating Awareness and Resilience in Education (CARE) www.garrisoninstitute.org

Jennings, P. (2015) Mindfulness for Teachers: Simple Skills for Peace and productivity in the Classroom. W.W. Norton and Company

McElvaney, K. (2017) “A Journey toward Mindfulness: How to Implement and Sustain this Practice among Teachers.” Edutopia blogpost. 01/18/17

Rechtschaffen, D. (2016) The Mindful Education Workbook: Lessons for Teaching Mindfulness to Students, pages 173-175. Published by W.W. Norton & Company.

Srinivasas, M. (2010) Teach, Breathe, Learn: Mindfulness In and Out of the Classroom, Parallax Press.

“The most valuable thing we can offer others is our own happiness.”