

Mindfulness-Based Programs for Youth

A TOOLKIT FOR YOUTH WORKERS





Enough by David Whyte

Enough.

These few words are enough.

If not these words, this breath.

If not this breath, this sitting here.

This opening to the life

we have refused

again and again

until now.

Until now.

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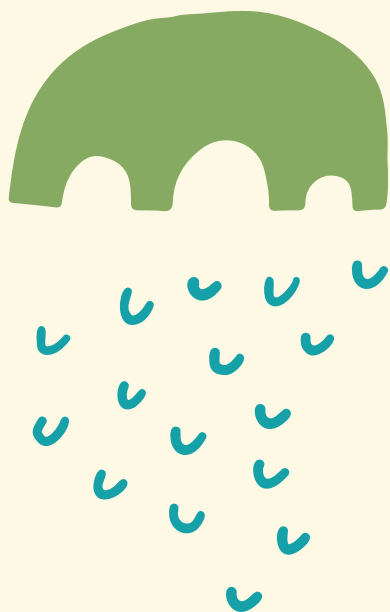
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Research shows that mindfulness-based programs can enhance youth development and contribute to resilience.

This toolkit provides youth workers with the knowledge they need to design effective mindfulness-based programs for youth. It includes best practices, activities, exercises, and evaluation tools.

This toolkit was developed and designed by the Holistic Arts-Based Program (HAP) team at the School of Social Work, Laurentian University and the Knowledge Exchange team at Youth Research and Evaluation Exchange (YouthREX) at the School of Social Work, York University.

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Introduction



Discussions about mindfulness are ever increasing within educational settings, community-based organizations offering services to youth, and popular media. This toolkit is a timely resource for youth workers interested in facilitating mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs) and practices with youth. It offers background on the concept of mindfulness, ideas for creative activities, and ways to assess learning and development of mindfulness and resilience.

Mindfulness is a holistic philosophy that encourages us to live our lives in the present moment with acceptance and curiosity of our thoughts and feelings. This approach contrasts with the tendencies of many youth to negatively judge themselves. Practicing mindfulness can help youth develop more self-acceptance and esteem, and aspects of resilience including self-awareness, emotion regulation, and improved coping skills and relationships.

Most youth experience states of mindfulness sometimes through a physical activity or being in nature. With continued practice, mindfulness can become a trait or disposition and an approach to life. MBIs such as the well-known Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) are recognized as evidenced-based practices for stress reduction and other challenges such as anxiety. Many programs for youth have been adapted from MBSR.

In collaboration with colleagues and students, I developed an arts-based approach to facilitate mindfulness with youth. Our program is called Holistic Arts-Based Program or HAP and it was originally developed from research with children living in foster care. We have also tested HAP with children involved with the mental health care system and most recently with youth from the ages of 11-17 years experiencing challenges with schooling.

It is relevant to note that mindfulness is not a panacea for all of the challenges youth face. Also, when working with youth who have experienced trauma, it is important to be aware that engaging in meditative exercises may increase feelings such as anxiety. We recommend first teaching

grounding and calming techniques. Importantly, an arts-based approach enables youth to engage with practices and concepts at their own speed and levels of comfort, while having fun.

Children and youth are especially in need of interventions that will shore up their strengths and teach abilities such as paying attention, non-judgment, and emotion regulation. An arts-based approach is highly relevant for youth as it is engaging, developmentally appropriate, and enjoyable. Also, arts-based methods are effective for helping youth learn about and express their thoughts and feelings (Coholic, Schwabe & Lander, 2020).

There are also both professional and personal benefits for youth workers in learning and practicing mindfulness. Professional benefits include developing therapeutic presence, which is the ability to be fully present with those we are working with. Researchers have found that therapeutic presence enables us to feel less distracted, tolerate emotion better, and improve our empathy (Fulton, 2005). As a youth worker, it is important to have a personal practice of mindfulness so that we can effectively model and facilitate mindfulness for others.

Through our work, we have become strong advocates for creative strengths-based approaches to facilitating mindfulness with youth as these approaches promote successful learning and make MBIs accessible to more youth. We hope that facilitating creative MBIs brings as much enjoyment to your work as it has to ours!

Diana Coholic, MSW, PhD

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Coholic, D., Schwabe, N., & Lander, K. (2020). A scoping review of arts-based mindfulness interventions for children and youth. *Child & Adolescent Social Work Journal*, doi.org/10.1007/s10560-020-00657-5

Fulton, P. R. (2005). Mindfulness as clinical training. In C. Germer, R. Siegel, & P. Fulton (Eds.), *Mindfulness and psychotherapy* (pp. 55-72). Guildford Press.



Mindfulness is a holistic philosophy that is much more than a meditation practice or a set of techniques.

It encourages us to explore who we are, question our worldview, and foster appreciation for our experiences.

01. Mindfulness 101



Mindfulness is a holistic philosophy that is much more than a meditation practice or a set of techniques. It encourages us to explore who we are, question our worldview, and foster appreciation for our experiences.

There are many ways to practice mindfulness. We often think of formal activities such as meditation or breathing exercises, but you can also be mindful during everyday activities, like eating or washing dishes.

The key is to bring your attention to what you are doing in the present moment, and to avoid judging any feelings or thoughts that may arise.

What does mindfulness look and feel like? Let's consider some of the practices and ways of being that constitute a mindful philosophy and approach to life.¹

Acceptance

Seeing and acknowledging things as they are in the present moment.

Authenticity

Openness, honesty with the self and others, and gaining a realization of the beauty and completeness of each human being.

Awareness

Awareness of thoughts, feelings, and habits; seeing the “big picture” rather than giving into one’s conditioned habitual behaviour; awareness of the wider environment.

Curiosity

A spirit of interest, investigation, and exploration.

Empathy and Compassion

A respectful consideration of another person’s experience, including feelings, needs, and desires; this consideration will naturally extend to include the environment.

Equanimity

A quality of wisdom, an evenness and steadiness of mind that comprehends the nature of change.

Gentleness

A soft, considerate, and tender quality, but not passive, undisciplined or indulgent.

Letting Go

Non-attachment, not holding on to thoughts, feelings or experiences.

Loving Kindness

Truly wishing another well – to be healthy, safe, free from harm, and free from fear; a quality embodying friendliness, benevolence, and love. Loving kindness extends to all that surrounds a person, too.

Non-attachment

Letting go, not grasping and clinging to outcomes; allowing events to simply unfold.

Non-judging

Impartial witnessing, observing the present moment without evaluation or categorization.

Non-reactivity

Ability to respond with consciousness and clarity, instead of automatically reacting in a habitual or conditioned way.

Non-striving

Non-goal-oriented, remaining unattached to outcome or achievement.

Openness (Beginner’s Mind)

Seeing things newly, as if for the first time.

Patience

Allowing things to unfold in their own time.

Trust

Developing a basic trust in your experience and your own inner wisdom.

¹ The table is reprinted from *Teachers teaching mindfulness with children: An interpretative phenomenological analysis* by N. J. Albrecht (2016) [Doctoral dissertation, Flinders University].

“Mindfulness means paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally.

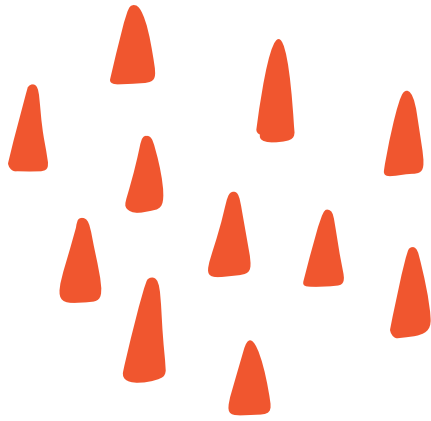
This kind of attention nurtures greater awareness, clarity, and acceptance of present-moment reality. It wakes us up to the fact that our lives unfold only in moments.

If we are not fully present for many of those moments, we may not only miss what is most valuable in our lives but also fail to realize the richness and the depth of our possibilities for growth and transformation.”

**- Jon Kabat-Zinn,
Wherever You Go, There You Are
(1994)**



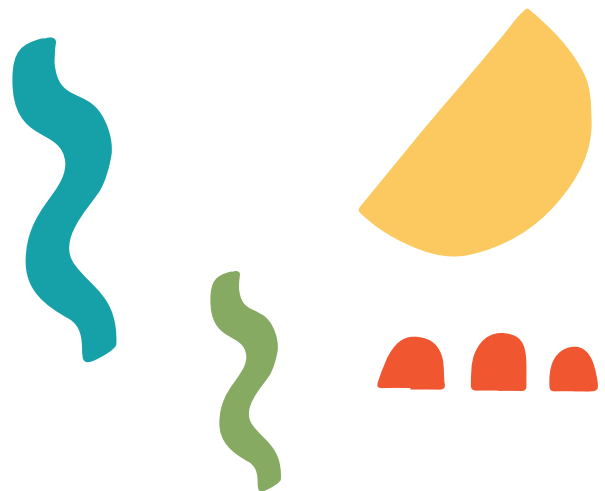
How to Practice Mindfulness²



- 1.** Take a couple of minutes to notice your breathing. Sense the flow of the breath, the rise and fall of your belly.
- 2.** Notice what you are doing as you are doing it and tune into your senses. When you are eating, notice the colour, texture, and taste of the food.
- 3.** When you are walking, tune into how your weight shifts and the sensations in the bottom of your feet. Focus less on where you are headed.
- 4.** Don't feel that you need to fill up all your time with doing. Take some time to simply be.
- 5.** When your mind wanders to thinking, gently bring it back to your breath.

- 6.** Recognize that thoughts are simply thoughts; you don't need to believe them or react to them.
- 7.** Practise listening without making judgments.
- 8.** Notice where you tend to zone out (e.g., driving, emailing or texting, web surfing, feeding the dog, doing dishes, brushing teeth). Practise bringing more awareness to the activity.
- 9.** Spend time in nature.
- 10.** Notice how the mind likes to constantly judge. Don't take it seriously. It's not who you are.

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² Reproduced from Smith, M. A. (2013). What's the buzz about mindfulness? *Visions Journal*, 7(4), 26-28. Retrieved from <https://www.heretohelp.bc.ca/visions/wellness-vol7/whats-the-buzz-about-mindfulness>



02.

Mindfulness-Based Programs

Mindfulness-based programs offer training in present moment awareness, which involves attending to the present rather than imagining the future or dwelling on the past. This evidence-based practice has been shown to alleviate the negative impacts of stress and anxiety.



Jon Kabat-Zinn is widely recognized as the first practitioner to bring Buddhist teachings to Western medicine. In the 1970s, he developed Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) to reduce the suffering of individuals with chronic health conditions (Kabat-Zinn, 2013). MBSR has since been adopted worldwide and used as a framework for other approaches, including Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT), for use with adults experiencing depressive relapse (Segal et al., 2013).

Adults who participate in these programs have shown improvements in their overall mental wellness, including increased self-regulation, flexibility, concentration, self-compassion, acceptance, objectivity, and affect tolerance (Davis & Hayes, 2011).

Research shows that mindfulness-based programs can enhance youth development and contribute to resilience.

Youth participating in mindfulness-based programs experience a number of positive outcomes, including increased mindfulness (Ames et al., 2014; Bögels et al., 2008; Bluth, Campo, et al., 2016; Bluth, Gaylord, et al., 2016; Edwards et al., 2014; Jee et al., 2015; Tan & Martin, 2015), self-awareness (Wisner & Starzec, 2016), emotion regulation (Fung et al., 2016; Loughheed & Coholic, 2016), self-regulation (Wisner & Starzec, 2016), self-compassion (Bluth, Gaylord, et al., 2016; Edwards et al., 2015), self-esteem, and acceptance (Tan & Martin, 2015). Youth reported experiencing personal growth, empowerment (Wisner & Starzec, 2016), and acceptance by a group of peers (Loughheed & Coholic, 2016).

Studies of parent and child training in mindfulness also show promise (Bögels et al., 2008; Haydicky et al., 2015). Parents reported an increase in mindfulness and in goal achievement, with reductions in parenting-related stress (Haydicky et al., 2015). They noted their children had experienced decreases in externalizing behaviours, attention problems, and withdrawal (Bögels et al., 2008), and significant improvements in functioning (Haydicky et al., 2015) and social skills (Bögels et al., 2008).



Holistic Arts-Based Program (HAP)

Holistic Arts-Based Program (HAP) is an effective 12-week arts-based mindfulness group program that engages children and youth in a strengths-based and meaningful helping process.

HAP helps young people develop self-awareness and feel better about themselves, learn the healthy expression of feelings and improve emotion regulation, and develop more effective coping strategies at home and school.

PROGRAM COMPONENTS

Mindfulness

Activities are facilitated that encourage awareness through paying attention on purpose, non-judgmentally, in the present moment. Mindfulness promotes growth and a sense of wholeness, emotion regulation, self-awareness, and understanding of thoughts, behaviours, and feelings.

Arts-Based & Experiential

Art materials such as paint, clay, and markers are used to help children engage with themes and ideas being explored in the group. Games, art activities, and physical movement are fun and provide opportunities for discussion and reflection. Children devote time and energy to these activities because they enjoy doing them.

Group Work

Working and learning together in small groups has many benefits. It encourages cooperation, respect, support, and feelings of compassion for self and others. It promotes feelings of belonging and can help create a safe space for sharing and exploring.

Content

A wide variety of arts-based and experiential activities are used to teach mindfulness-based practices and tai chi. This is a holistic, strengths-based social group work approach, and the program was developed from research with marginalized children aged 8-12-years-old. Two facilitators per group are recommended.

Target Population

Marginalized children and youth from the age of eight and up.

Group Size

Usually 4-8 participants.

Facilitator Qualifications

Facilitators should have a personal mindfulness practice and be actively engaged in learning about and practicing mindfulness. Ideally, facilitators should have knowledge and experience in working with youth, social group work, strengths-based practice, resilience, and child development.

Duration, Frequency & Length

12 weeks, for 2 hours, once a week.

Program Goals

1. Teaching and facilitating mindfulness skills and concepts in accessible, relevant, and meaningful ways.
2. Improving self-awareness and understanding/expression of feelings, thoughts, and behaviours.
3. Developing self-compassion and empathy.
4. Recognizing and shoring up strengths.

These objectives lead to the development of other abilities and skills, such as improved mood and coping/social skills, better emotion regulation and self-esteem, and more effective performance at school.

Outcomes

Increases in self-awareness, confidence, self-esteem, emotion regulation, improved mood, coping and social skills, empathy, attention, focus, feelings of acceptance in a group of their peers, and the healthy expression of feelings.



Learn More!

A session-by-session description of the HAP program is available in *Facilitating mindfulness: A guide for human service professionals* by Diana Coholic.

www.dianacoholic.com // dcoholic@laurentian.ca



03. Seven Best Practices for Designing a Mindfulness Program

01.

Create a safe, inclusive, and welcoming space – physically and emotionally/psychologically – that reflects care and concern.

a) physically:

- Choose a location that is easily accessible.
- Eliminate (or strive to minimize) any physical barriers to participation.
- Ensure access to accessible and all-gender washrooms.
- Provide water and healthy snacks, such as fruit.

b) emotionally/psychologically:

- Model and support a culture within the program that ensures confidentiality; inclusivity; non-judgement; and respect.

02.

Be intentional with program design.

- a) Deliver programs in age- and/or gender-specific groupings.
- b) Keep groups relatively small so that all youth can meaningfully participate (approximately 6-8 participants).
- c) Ensure an ideal 1:3 facilitator-to-youth ratio, depending on the specific needs and challenges that youth may bring to the group.
- d) Schedule sessions for no longer than 120 minutes (with breaks as required).
- e) Plan for one session a week.

03.

Promote youth engagement.

- a) Create opportunities for youth to determine what kind of group they want to belong to (e.g., group norms/rules).
- b) Encourage youth to lead activities, where possible.

04.

Recognize youth's strengths.

- a) Focus on what is going well and use challenges as teaching moments.
- b) Foster self-determination.
- c) Recognize personal strengths.
- d) Build competencies.
- e) Develop resilience.

05.

Foster supportive relationships.

- a) Develop positive therapeutic relationships with youth.
- b) Promote group cohesion with activities aimed at helping the group develop a sense of belonging and identity.
- c) Encourage and support positive peer interactions.
- d) Build youth supports outside of the group (e.g., involve carers, parents, teachers, other practitioners).

06.

Support facilitators to embody mindfulness practice.

- a) Ensure that facilitators model mindfulness and positive relationships with one another.
- b) Support facilitators in maintaining a personal mindfulness practice so that they do not expect more from participants than what they themselves practice. In this way, they can model mindful awareness and maintain presence throughout each session.
- c) Ensure that facilitators have professional training in the type(s) of program(s) they are delivering, and in working with the unique needs of the young people in their group(s).
- d) Instruct facilitators to fully engage and participate in all activities and discussions.

07.

Plan for beyond the program.

- a) Access or refer youth to community-based supports and resources once the program ends.
- b) Identify the use of appropriate mindfulness apps or other online tools and technologies for continued practice and support.
- c) Create opportunities for follow up with peers and facilitators, through technology or social media, as appropriate.



04.

Activities & Exercises to Support Mindfulness

A.

Mindful Breathing

Focus your attention on your breath and allow thoughts and sensations to come and go.

1. Find a comfortable place to sit. Put your feet flat on the ground and try to straighten your posture. Gently close your eyes. Let your shoulders drop down and away from your ears. Pay attention to your breathing; allow yourself to continue to breathe naturally.
2. Rest your hands gently on your stomach.
3. Breathe in through your nose. Exhale slowly through your mouth. Continue to take slow, smooth breaths.
4. When you breathe in, notice your stomach rise as you fill your lungs with air. When you breathe out, notice your stomach fall. Imagine that your stomach is a balloon: fill it with air and then watch it deflate.
5. Continue to focus on the gentle inhalation and exhalation of your breath. In...and out...
6. Continue to focus on your breathing and stay in this relaxed state for as long as you like. When you are ready, slowly open your eyes and bring your attention back to your surroundings.

Remember, it's normal for your mind to wander, and you may become aware of physical sensations or feelings in your body. Simply notice them and bring your mind back to your breath. You don't need to analyze or give these thoughts or feelings or images any meaning in this moment. Simply acknowledge them without judgment and bring your mind back to your breath.

Anxiety Canada. (2018, December 27). *Mindful breathing*.
<https://www.anxietycanada.com/articles/mindfulness-exercises>

Bertin, M. (2017, September 25). *A 5-minute mindful breathing practice to restore your attention*. Mindful. <https://www.mindful.org/5-minute-mindful-breathing-practice-restore-attention>

Greater Good in Action. (n.d.). *Mindful breathing*.
https://ggia.berkeley.edu/practice/mindful_breathing



When you bring attention to how your body feels on the inside (especially by focusing on specific parts of the body), you may experience thoughts or feelings about how your body looks or feels on the outside.

Acknowledge these thoughts or feelings – like any that may surface during these exercises – without judgment, and bring your mind back to your breath.

Being mindful and aware of your body is about developing a deeper connection with yourself in the present moment, and an acceptance of all that you are and all that you feel, which can ultimately lead to greater self-compassion.

B.

Body Scan

- 1.**
Lie down in a comfortable place. Although you may feel sleepy or your mind may drift, the goal is to try and remain alert and aware of the present moment.
- 2.**
Gently close your eyes. Let your shoulders drop down and away from your ears. Bring your attention to your breathing. Breathe in...and out... and just allow yourself to continue to breathe naturally.
- 3.**
Bring awareness to the physical sensations in different parts of your body. Notice what you feel without judgment. Do you notice tingling, warmth, pulsating, tightness or another sensation? It's not about good or bad, it's just about noticing.
- 4.**
Continue to breathe at your own pace; notice how your lungs slowly fill with air when you breathe in and deflate when you breathe out.
- 5.**
Bring your awareness to where your body makes contact with the floor, couch or bed. On each breath out, let go and sink a little deeper into the surface below you.
- 6.**
Start the body scan*. Begin by scanning your left foot for any sensations; simply become aware of them. Then scan your left calf. Scan up slowly, now through your thigh. Allow yourself to feel any and all sensations. Scan your right foot, then your calf, then your thigh. Focus on your stomach next; feel it rising and sinking as you breathe in and out. Nice and slow. Your heart rate may slow down. This is normal. Remain aware of your stomach, your breath. Scan for any sensations in your left hand and arm. Then scan for any sensations in your right hand and arm. Continue to bring awareness and a gentle curiosity to the sensations. Come up to your chest. Continue scanning up along your neck and to your face. Feel the sensations in your jaw and your throat. Notice how the back of your head rests against the surface under you. Bring your awareness the top of your head.
- 7.**
Take a moment to notice how all your body parts are connected. Let any sensations come to you. Just notice what kind of sensation it is – tingling, warmth, coolness, heaviness, floating. Accept whatever sensation there is as just that, a sensation that will arise and slowly and gradually change. It is just another part of you!
- 8.**
Continue to focus on your breathing for as long as you like. When you are ready, slowly open your eyes and bring your attention back to your surroundings.

Anxiety Canada. (2018, December 27). *Body scan*. <https://www.anxietycanada.com/articles/mindfulness-exercises>

Greater Good in Action. (n.d.). *Body scan meditation*. https://ggia.berkeley.edu/practice/body_scan_meditation

Smookler, E. (2019, April 11). *Beginner's body scan meditation*. Mindful. <https://www.mindful.org/beginners-body-scan-meditation>

*If you don't feel anything in the moment, just allow yourself to "not" feel anything. If you become aware of tension or any intense sensation in a particular part of your body, see if you can "breathe in" to it — using the breath in to bring a gentle awareness to the sensations present in your body, without trying to change them. The mind will inevitably wander away from the breath and the body from time to time, which is normal. When you notice your mind has wandered, gently acknowledge it, and then return your attention to the part of the body you intended to focus on.

C.

Take 5

This is a simple mindfulness and relaxation exercise that you can do at any point throughout the day. It only takes about 30 seconds.

1. Stretch your left hand out like a star.
2. Get your right pointer finger ready to trace your fingers up and down.
3. Slide this finger up the thumb and breathe in through the nose... and then slide it back down and breathe out through the mouth.
4. Slide up each finger slowly, and then slide down the other side.
5. Keep going until you have finished tracing your hand.

If you have time, you can “take 10” and do this on the other hand as well.



Muscara, C. (2017). Simple mindfulness strategy – take 5 [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MqariSXiSvs>

MacDonald, L. (n.d.). *Take 5 breathing exercise for kids*. Childhood 101. <https://childhood101.com/take-5-breathing-exercise>



D.

Thought Jar

For this activity, you need an assortment of beads, and a glass or plastic jar (with a lid) half filled with water. Let's assume you are facilitating this activity with a small group. Ask the group members to think about what they felt and thought during the day, and encourage each person to take a bead, which represents a feeling and/or thought, and drop them one by one into the jar, identifying out loud what each bead represents.

Once you have enough beads in the jar and everyone has had a chance to contribute, invite the group members to take turns swirling and shaking the jar. You can imagine what is happening to the beads as the jar is shaken.

Everything is swirling around and it is very hard to identify the beads. This is akin to that feeling we have when we feel distracted, and/or have plenty of thoughts and feelings all swirling around in our minds at once; when we feel overwhelmed.

If you stop shaking the jar, all of the thoughts and feelings settle to the bottom. This symbolizes a more mindful mind when we feel more focused and calm. When we are focused, we can identify our thoughts and feelings. Learning mindfulness-based practices can help us keep our minds more calm, and with self-awareness, we can make better choices and decisions.

A mindful mind does not necessarily have fewer thoughts and feelings, but the mindful person has the ability to identify what these are.

Reproduced from Coholic, D. (2019). *Facilitating mindfulness: A guide for human service professionals*. Northrose Educational Resources.

E.

Me as a Tree

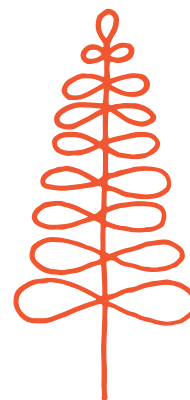
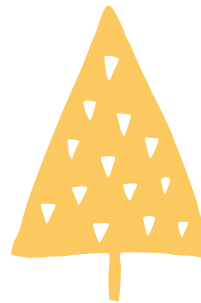
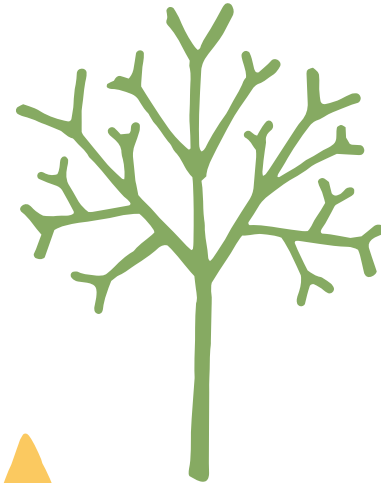
This activity helps young people begin to consider and talk about themselves, and to learn about each other (if you're using it in a group format). It's a good exercise to use if you want to learn more about your participants, build group cohesion, and facilitate a group discussion. You can enable youth to talk about themselves in an abstract way, which may feel safe and comfortable, and you can discuss the diversity in the group by pointing out how each tree is different and special, and how diversity is a positive characteristic.

The activity begins by asking youth to draw or paint themselves as a tree. Everyone can draw a tree, but each tree will be unique. Encourage participants to think about what the tree would look like and what might be around it, but encourage them to draw the tree without thinking too much about it.

Here are some examples of open-ended questions and statements that you can use to facilitate discussion:

Please tell us about your tree.

- What kind of tree is it?
- Your trunk appears... (adjective – solid, strong, small, colourful)
- Your tree has lots of... (objects - roots, branches, leaves, animals, fruit). Can you tell us about that?
- If you gave a title to this drawing, what would you call it?
- It looks like your tree is in a (season – winter, spring, fall, summer) scene.
- Does your tree make a sound? What does it say?
- It looks like your tree is... (verb – growing, reaching for the clouds, swaying, losing all its leaves).
- You used a lot of colours to draw your tree.
- I'm wondering how you feel about your tree.



Adapted from Coholic, D. (2016). *How to effectively use arts-based activities in youth work*. YouthREX. <https://youthrex.com/blog/how-to-effectively-use-arts-based-activities-in-youth-work>



05. Evaluation Tools

The following tools assess mindfulness and resilience in youth. They can be used as part of pre- and post-surveys to evaluate the effectiveness of mindfulness-based programs.



a. Child and Adolescent Mindfulness Measure (CAMM)³

The Child and Adolescent Mindfulness Measure is a self-report measure of mindfulness intended for use with youth over the age of 9 years (Greco et al., 2011). It consists of 10 items describing the absence of mindfulness.

Scoring Instructions: First reverse all scores by changing 0 to 4, 1 to 3, 3 to 1, and 4 to 0 (2 stays unchanged). Then sum all items. Higher scores correspond to higher levels of mindfulness.

³ Greco, L., Baer, R. A., & Smith, G. T. (2011). Assessing mindfulness in children and adolescents: Development and validation of the child and adolescent mindfulness measure (CAMM). *Psychological Assessment*, 23, 606-614.

Tell us how you feel.

We want to know more about what you think, how you feel, and what you do. Read each sentence. Then circle the number that tells *how often* each sentence is true for you.

		Never True	Rarely True	Sometimes True	Often True	Always True
01	I get upset with myself for having feelings that don't make sense.	0	1	2	3	4
02	At school, I walk from class to class without noticing what I'm doing.	0	1	2	3	4
03	I keep myself busy so I don't notice my thoughts or feelings.	0	1	2	3	4
04	I tell myself that I shouldn't feel the way I'm feeling.	0	1	2	3	4
05	I push away thoughts that I don't like.	0	1	2	3	4
06	It's hard for me to pay attention to only one thing at a time.	0	1	2	3	4
07	I get upset with myself for having certain thoughts.	0	1	2	3	4
08	I think about things that have happened in the past instead of thinking about things that are happening right now.	0	1	2	3	4
09	I think that some of my feelings are bad and that I shouldn't have them.	0	1	2	3	4
10	I stop myself from having feelings that I don't like.	0	1	2	3	4



a. Child and Youth Resilience Measure (CYRM)⁴

The Child and Youth Resilience Measure is a self-report measure of social-ecological resilience (Jefferies, McGarrigle, & Ungar, 2018). It asks youth about the obstacles they confront, and the resources they call upon to overcome these obstacles.

Scoring Instructions⁵

Sum all items to gain a total score of an individual's resilience. The minimum score is 17 and the maximum score is 85. In addition to an overall score of resilience, scores can be derived for the two subscales of the measures:

Caregiver resilience relates to characteristics associated with the important relationships shared with either a primary caregiver or family. To derive caregiver resilience scores, sum 7 items: 4, 5, 6, 8, 11, 15, 17. The minimum score is 7 and the maximum score is 35.

Personal resilience includes intrapersonal and interpersonal items. These are linked as both dimensions depend on individuals' social ecologies to reinforce their resilience. To derive personal resilience subscale scores, sum 10 items: 1, 2, 3, 7, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 16. The minimum score is 10 and the maximum score is 50.

For the overall measure and subscales, higher scores indicate characteristics associated with resilience.

⁴ Jefferies, P., McGarrigle, L., & Ungar, M. (2018). The CYRM-R: A Rasch-validated revision of the Child and Youth Resilience Measure. *Journal of Evidence-Informed Social Work*, 1-24.

⁵ Resilience Research Centre. (2019). *Child and Youth Resilience Measure (CYRM-R) & Adult Resilience Measure (ARM-R) manual 2.2*. <https://cyrm.resilienceresearch.org>



Tell us about yourself.

To what extent do the following statements apply to you?
There are no right or wrong answers.

		Not at all	A little	Somewhat	Quite a bit	A lot
01	I get along with people around me.	1	2	3	4	5
02	Getting an education is important to me.	1	2	3	4	5
03	I know how to behave/act in different situations (such as school, home, and church).	1	2	3	4	5
04	My parent(s)/caregiver(s) really look out for me.	1	2	3	4	5
05	My parent(s)/caregiver(s) know a lot about me (for example, who my friends are, what I like to do).	1	2	3	4	5
06	If I am hungry, there is enough to eat.	1	2	3	4	5
07	People like to spend time with me.	1	2	3	4	5
08	I talk to my family/caregiver(s) about how I feel (for example, when I am hurt or sad).	1	2	3	4	5
09	I feel supported by my friends.	1	2	3	4	5
10	I feel that I belong/belonged at my school.	1	2	3	4	5
11	My family/caregiver(s) care about me when times are hard (for example, if I am sick or have done something wrong).	1	2	3	4	5
12	My friends care about me when times are hard (for example, if I am sick or have done something wrong).	1	2	3	4	5
13	I am treated fairly in my community.	1	2	3	4	5
14	I have chances to show others that I am growing up and can do things by myself.	1	2	3	4	5
15	I feel safe when I am with my family/caregiver(s).	1	2	3	4	5
16	I have chances to learn things that will be useful when I am older (like cooking, working, and helping others).	1	2	3	4	5
17	I like the way my family/caregiver(s) celebrates things (like holidays or learning about my culture).	1	2	3	4	5

06. Other Mindfulness Programs for Youth



Connecting Adolescents to Learning Mindfulness (CALM)

This eight-week, 1.5-hour program was designed for 14-18-year-old youth and is based on Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction.

<http://stefaniegoldsteinphd.com/connecting-adolescents-to-learning-mindfulness-calm>

Holistic Life Foundation (HLF)

Mindful Moment Program is 15 minutes of breath work and meditation implemented as part of the school curriculum every morning. Occasional extended sessions run 60-90 minutes.

<http://www.hlfinc.org>

Integra Mindfulness Martial Arts (Integra MMA)

Integra MMA is a 20-week group treatment for adolescents with learning disabilities and mental health problems developed at Ryerson University's Child Development Institute.

<https://psychlabs.ryerson.ca/childselfregulation/research/integra-mindfulness-martial-arts>

Learning to Breathe (Body Reflection Emotions Attention Tenderness Habits Empowerment) L2B

Six- or 18-session mindfulness-based curriculum designed for adolescent groups.

<http://learning2breathe.org>

Making Friends with Yourself (MFY)

MFY is designed after the Mindful Self-Compassion (MSC) program, an eight-week workshop intended to train adults to be more self-compassionate. MFY is a six-week program held once a week for 90 minutes. Each week focuses on a specific theme, such as experiential mindfulness activities, brain science, and self-compassion, and homework is assigned.

<http://www.mindfulselfcompassionforteens.com>

Mind Body Awareness Project (MBA)

The MBA project is a 10-session curriculum based on Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction for marginalized youth. Visit their website to access short mindfulness videos for facilitators and youth workers.

<http://www.mbaproject.org/about-mindfulness-3/our-curricula>

Mindfulness in Schools Project (MiSP)

.b (Stop Breathe Be) is a mindfulness-based, 10-week curriculum course designed for youth aged 11-18, to be delivered to groups. This program has a lot of ongoing research and is supported by Jon Kabat-Zinn.

<http://mindfulnessinschools.org>

Mindful Schools

The curriculum is designed for educators to deliver simple and effective mindfulness-based practices during the school day to combat toxic stress.

<http://www.mindfulschools.org>

Mindfulness-Based Substance Abuse Treatment for Adolescents

Twelve-session, mindfulness-based, substance use treatment for adolescents that includes a free online course for youth workers.

<http://centerforadolescentstudies.com>

MYmind

Mindfulness-based training for adolescents with Autism Spectrum Disorder and their parents, which consists of nine 1.5-hour sessions. Parent and youth sessions are run simultaneously.

<http://ddmh.lab.yorku.ca/mymind-mindfulness-training/>

Still Quiet Place

The Still Quiet Place is a mindfulness-based program designed for children and youth from Kindergarten to Grade 12, to be delivered in a variety of settings with individual youth or groups.

<http://www.stillquietplace.com>

07.

Additional Resources

Apps

Headspace

Hundreds of themed guided meditations, SOS exercises and mini meditations.

Insight Timer

30,000 free guided meditations and music tracks.

Calm

A 10-minute daily meditation explores a different mindful theme each day. Sleep stories and music, meditation lessons, nature sounds, and more.

Stop, Breathe, and Think

An award-winning app for kids, teens, and young adults. Mindfulness games and activities, guided exercises, guided journaling, and a daily check-in.

Smiling Mind

Developed by psychologists and educators, with dedicated programs for children and youth, divided by age range (7-9, 10-12, 13-15, and 16-18).

Breathr

Developed at BC Children's Hospital by youth and experts. Simple breathing exercises, guided meditations, and facts about the benefits of mindfulness.

MindShift CBT

Interactive CBT-based tools, a thought journal, and guided meditations for tackling worry, panic, perfectionism, social anxiety, and phobias.

Videos / Podcasts

Dr. Dan Siegel for Mindsight Institute

"BRAINSTORM: The Power and Purpose of the Teenage Brain"

<https://youtu.be/H1pf1xTMUng>

The Dalai Lama Center for Peace + Education

"Educating The Heart" – Videos

<http://dalailamacenter.org/learn/videos>

The Breath Project

Why Meditate?

(an animated film by Isaiah Seret)

<http://www.mbaproject.org/resources/multimedia>

CBC's Quirks & Quarks: "The Science of Mindfulness"

<https://www.cbc.ca/radio/quirks/the-science-of-mindfulness-1.3934579>

Happify

"Why Mindfulness is a Superpower:

An Animation"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w6T02g5hnT4>

Websites

Mindful.org

<http://mindful.org>

AnxietyCanada.com

<https://youth.anxietycanada.com/mindfulness-exercises>

PositivePsychology.com – What is Mindfulness? Definition + Benefits

<https://positivepsychology.com/what-is-mindfulness>

Books

Coholic, D. (2019). *Facilitating mindfulness: A guide for human service professionals*. Northrose Educational Resources.

08.

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