

# Yoga and Mindfulness for Adolescents

A curriculum to improve attention, stress, and overall wellbeing in middle and high school students



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# Introduction


Yoga and Mindfulness for Adolescents is a science-based curriculum based upon the mind-body disciplines of yoga and mindfulness. Research has shown that these modalities reduce stress and therefore increase attention in adolescents. This program was created based upon a research study, implemented by Arizona State University, with the intent to investigate the impact of yoga programming on selective attention in female middle school students. The following program integrates the evidence from current literature, the findings of the ASU study, and the evidence-based Learning to Breathe mindfulness curriculum.

The Yoga and Mindfulness for Adolescents program was created to provide a robust combination of short and structured mindfulness discussion, mindfulness group practice, mindfulness individual activity, and yoga practice to reduce stress and increase attention in students. The framework of the program is grounded in the ideals of social and emotional learning. The program targets a middle and high school population and may take place in a gymnasium, classroom, or other private space at school. The program may also take place at an educational center or any setting that serves adolescents. The program was written to be implemented by certified yoga teachers with previous foundational mindfulness knowledge and practice. The following manual will guide instructors through the implementation of the program.

# Framework

The Yoga and Mindfulness for Adolescents program follows a six-week curriculum. Weekly lesson plans are based upon foundational concepts of mindfulness and are supported by learning objectives, necessary materials, and trauma-informed instruction. Learning objectives outline what students will learn and practice each week. Materials aid instructors and students in program activities. Trauma-informed instruction outlines how to facilitate each lesson with understanding of and options for students who may have experienced trauma. There are four sections in each lesson plan:

- **Learn:** informative mindfulness discussion, teaches students about foundational mindfulness concepts
- **Practice:** interactive mindfulness group practice, guides students through formal mindfulness meditations
- **Move:** interactive yoga practice, allows students to participate in mindful-based movement
- **Explore:** take home individual mindfulness activity, encourages students to implement concepts learned in class

Each section of the lesson plan provides implementation instructions, duration, and scripts. Instructions inform the facilitator of how to set up for the lesson, how to execute the lesson, and what materials in the **Supplemental Materials** section support the lesson. Duration estimates how long the lesson will take to implement. Scripts are read to the students to facilitate the program. *All sections that should be read to the students are in italics.* The end of each section will be signified by the lotus flower. 

# Timeline

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Week 1      Creating a Mindfulness Foundation

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Week 2      Being in the Body

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Week 3      Being with Thoughts

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Week 4      Being with Feelings

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Week 5      Giving Kindness and Compassion

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Week 6      Working with Stress

# Weekly Lesson Preparation

When teaching yoga and mindfulness, it is important to have your own established practice in order to support student success and relate to their experiences. Revisiting your yoga teacher training materials and exploring the **Resources** in the **Supplemental Materials** before diving into the lesson plans may be supportive to your teaching success. Prior to each session, thoroughly read, plan, and practice each section of the lesson. It is important to deeply understand the **Learn** information and experience the **Practice** and **Explore** activities in order to correctly and successfully facilitate them. Make sure to review the **Trauma-Informed Instruction** prior to each lesson. Plan and practice the **Move** component with the focus of the lesson in mind and with mindfulness at the forefront. You may use the **Sequence Template** and **Mindful Posture Guide** in the **Supplemental Materials** to prepare the practice.

Prior to student arrival, set up the program space, which will be used to facilitate each section of the weekly lesson. Set out mats, cushions, and chairs in the space, allowing enough distance between students to limit distractions. Chairs and cushions allow for students to sit with comfort and steadiness. You may choose to use a whiteboard to facilitate the **Think and Share** activity in the **Learn** section. Have the students place their belongings (cell phones, backpacks, etc.) in a designated area away from where the lesson will take place, again limiting distractions. If necessary, allow time for students to change into clothes that will be comfortable and conducive to movement. Take time to greet students and create a welcoming and safe atmosphere. Before each lesson, provide each student with a partner or allow students to pick a partner.

# Social and Emotional Learning

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) has become an important part of adolescent education. The fundamentals of SEL encourage the development of skills, knowledge, and attitudes to promote awareness, support relationships, and make responsible choices. Because many school districts encourage the inclusion of SEL constructs in curriculum, it may be advantageous to inform schools, educational groups, and caregivers of the connections between mindfulness, yoga, and social and emotional learning. The constructs of yoga and of mindfulness are expressed, taught, and outlined differently than the constructs of SEL. However the constructs of SEL are naturally intertwined within the long-established and researched foundations of mindfulness and yoga. Within this program, the five constructs of SEL will be explored and developed in each lesson.

- **Self-Awareness:** understand thoughts, emotions, and their impact on behavior
- **Self-Management:** regulate thoughts, emotions, and behaviors in different situations
- **Social Awareness:** understand the perspectives of others
- **Relationship Skills:** establish and maintain healthy and supportive relationships
- **Responsible Decision Making:** make caring and constructive behavioral decisions

# Lesson Plans



# Week One

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**Theme:** Creating a Mindfulness Foundation

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**Objectives:**

- To introduce and define mindfulness
  - To bring awareness to the present moment
  - To practice mindfulness in stillness and movement
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**Materials:**

- Mats and cushions
  - Chairs
  - Journal
  - Whiteboard
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**Lesson Activity Overview:**

- **Learn** - Think and Share
  - **Practice** - Awareness of Breath
  - **Move** - Yoga
  - **Explore** - Mindful or Mindless?
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**Trauma-Informed Instruction:**

When students bring awareness to their experiences and breath, they may notice unpleasant experiences. This may feel uncomfortable, which is normal and does not mean they are not doing the practice incorrectly. Read the script provided in the **Trauma-Informed Instruction Scripts** prior to the **Practice**, which explains options and modifications they may implement.

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# Learn

## Creating a Mindfulness Foundation

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**Instructions:** Students will be introduced to the concept of mindfulness. Read the following script to guide the students through an interactive discussion. The **Think and Share** activity will allow students to reflect on a foundation mindfulness concept and connect with other students. || indicates to give two minutes to think, one minute to share, and offer an option for partnerships to share with the class, if comfortable. Allow an open space for student questions at the end.

**Duration:** 10 minutes

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### **Explanation:**

*Welcome to the Yoga and Mindfulness program! This program will show you how practicing mindfulness in day-to-day life can provide support to your body and mind at school, at home, and in extracurricular activities. Each week, the lessons will include discussion, group practice, yoga practice, and an individual mindfulness activity to do at home.*

**Think and Share:** *What have you heard about mindfulness? Take a moment to write this down in your journal, then share with your partner.*

|| *Would anyone like to share?*

*Mindfulness is paying attention to the present moment on purpose and without judgement. It is not clearing the mind of all thoughts, but instead allowing what is happening to simply happen, without changing or interfering with it. The practice of mindfulness can be done through formal practices or by simply bringing awareness into your everyday activities. The opposite of doing something mindfully is doing something mindlessly. This is called "being on autopilot".*

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# Learn

## Creating A Mindfulness Foundation

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*Mindfulness can stand alone as its own practice or can exist within practices such as yoga, which is what we will be experiencing in this program! There are many positive benefits of practicing mindfulness, including feeling less stressed and more relaxed. This is because mindfulness practices activate the rest and rejuvenate area of our nervous system, which is the opposite of the area activated by stress. With time and practice, just like exercising a muscle to strengthen it, the effects of mindfulness strengthen as well. Our hope is that by practicing mindfulness, we can create positive changes in the brain and behavior.*

**Questions?** 

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**Instructor Notes:**

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# Practice

## Awareness of the Breath

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**Instructions:** Students may lay down or sit on their mats, or sit on their chairs for this practice. Turning off the lights and limiting sounds may be helpful. Use the script on the following page to guide the practice, taking care to speak slowly, pause when prompted, and use a clear but soft tone of voice.

**Duration:** 10 minutes

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### **Explanation:**

*Bringing awareness to the breath is a foundational practice of mindfulness. Think of the breath as an anchor. When a ship is at sea, being tossed back and forth by waves, the sailor will throw an anchor down into the water to steady the boat in place. The breath can act as an anchor when the brain is being tossed back and forth between thoughts, emotions, and stimuli. The breath is a good anchor for a few reasons. First, the breath is always with us, so we can focus on it at any moment, wherever we are. Second, the breath is easy to feel by placing the hand on the stomach or chest. Third, we generally do not have strong feelings about the breath, so it is a neutral focus point. We can bring awareness to the breath in day to day life when we are feeling stressed or overwhelmed. Today, we are going to do an awareness of the breath practice. This formal mindfulness meditation practice is one of the first practices taught in all mindfulness programs. This may be the first time you have done any form of meditation, which is okay! I will guide you through it. We are going to take the next few minutes to pause and bring our attention and awareness to the breath.*

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# Practice

## Awareness of the Breath

### **Read the Trauma-Informed Practice Script prior to the practice**

*If you are seated, sit tall with your back straight. Relax your shoulders down the back. Allow your hands to comfortably settle in your lap or rest on your knees. If you are laying down, relax your shoulders and allow your arms to fall by your sides. Close your eyes, if that's comfortable for you, or allow a soft gaze to fall on the space in front of you. Relax your forehead and your eyes. Let the muscles in your face soften. Begin to pay attention to the breath, as you breathe in through the nose and out through the nose. Sometimes, we breathe from the chest. Place your hands on your chest and breathe in and out from there. **-pause-** Sometimes we experience this shallow breathing when we are feeling stressed, nervous, or anxious. Now, place your hands on your belly and allow the breath to enter there. Notice the belly expand as you breathe in and deflate as you breathe out. Feel the movement of the breath, in the body, without trying to control or change the breath. Pay curious attention to the breath, noticing whatever you are experiencing right now. **-pause-** You may notice that you have started to think about all sorts of things. This is normal, and is called mind wandering. When you notice the mind wandering, just relax. You can silently say "thinking" or "wandering" to acknowledge what you are experiencing, and then gently bring your attention back to the sensation of the breath. **-pause-** Now allow your awareness to expand to feel your breath moving wherever you are experiencing it. As we conclude this practice, let this last breath bring in new energy and relaxation, and release stress and tension. When you are ready, open your eyes and bring your awareness back into the room.*



# Move

## Yoga


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**Instructions:** Students will be guided through a yoga practice rooted in mindfulness. This week, the focus of the practice will be the breathe. Emphasize breathing cues, incorporate postures that open the chest, and allow moments of stillness to anchor in the breath. Use the **Mindful Posture Guide** in the **Supplemental Materials** for mindful posture recommendations and cues.

**Duration:** 30–45 minutes

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### **Explanation:**

*How many of you have done yoga before? **Allow students to raise hands.** The practice of yoga goes back thousands of years, beginning as a philosophical practice in the Indus River Valley. At that time, the practice did not yet involve movement or postures. Instead, people began by exploring seated meditation and breathing practice. Breathing practice was used to control concentration during long periods of sitting in meditation. Physical movement was used to stretch out the body in between sitting in meditation. Hundreds of years later, yoga evolved into physical postures used to increase flexibility and strength. Yoga was introduced to the Western world at the end of the 19th century and was developed into a fitness modality with the intent to promote physical health. Today, yoga can be defined as coordinated postures matched with breathing practice and meditation. During this program, we will practice yoga like this, as a form of mindful-based movement. Yoga practice may provide a different way to be aware of your breath, body, and mind.* 

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# Explore

## Mindful or Mindless?

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**Instructions:** Students will practice the following independent mindfulness activity every day this week. Provide them with the corresponding **Explore Reminder** found in the **Supplemental Materials**. Instruct them to keep this reminder in sight or near where they will perform their activity. Give students the option to continue their practice of awareness of breath using the provided link on the **Explore Reminder**.

**Duration:** 5 minutes for explanation, 5–15 minutes 1x per day for activity

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### ***Explanation:***

*Think back to our discussion today about mindfulness. When we do something mindfully, we bring attention and intention to that activity. When we do something mindlessly, we are often on "autopilot". This means we are not being purposeful in the activity. In your journal, create one column for mindful activities and one column for mindless activities. Throughout the day, or at the end of each day, write a list of examples of activities you did mindfully or mindlessly.*

*You may also choose to explore your awareness of breath practice once per day by using the link on your reminder card.* 

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# Week Two

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**Theme:** Being in the Body

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**Objectives:**

- To distinguish between the sensations and concepts of the physical body
  - To bring awareness to the present moment experience of the body
  - To experience mindfulness in stillness and movement
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**Materials:**

- Mats and cushions
  - Chairs
  - Journal
  - Whiteboard
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**Lesson Activity Overview**

- **Learn** - Think and Share
  - **Practice** - Body Scan
  - **Move** - Yoga
  - **Explore** - S.T.O.P
- 

**Trauma-Informed Instruction:**

Bringing awareness to experience and the body may include unpleasant experiences that feel uncomfortable and it is normal for students to feel this way. Read the script provided in the **Trauma-Informed Instruction Scripts** prior to the **Practice**, which explains options and modifications they may implement.

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# Learn

## Being in the Body

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**Instructions:** This lesson focuses on how to bring awareness to the sensations of the body. Read the following script to guide the students through an interactive discussion and the **Think and Share** activity. || indicates to give two minutes to think, one minute to share, and offer an option for partnerships to share with the class, if comfortable. Allow an open space for student questions at the end.

**Duration:** 10 minutes

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### **Explanation:**

*Last week, we talked about bringing awareness to our present moment experiences and to the breath. Another way to explore mindfulness is to bring awareness to the body. Unlike the mind, which may be stuck in the past or the future, the body is always in the present. We often bring attention to parts of our bodies, but not to the body as a whole. Being mindful of the body means to bring awareness to sensations of the body at that moment. It does not mean labeling an idea or concept about the physical appearance of the body. For example, take a look at your hand. Notice the shape of your hand, the lines on your palms, the color of your fingernails. This is an example of labeling the physical appearance of your body. Now, close your eyes or soften your gaze. Notice the weight of your hand, the temperature, and the sensations. Think about all the things the hand does for you. This is an example of bringing awareness to the experience of your hand instead of the labeled concepts given to the hands.*

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# Practice

## Body Scan

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**Instructions:** Students may lay down or sit on their mats, or sit on their chairs for this practice. Turning off the lights and limiting sounds may be helpful. Use the script on the following page to guide the practice, taking care to speak slowly, pause when prompted to, and use a clear but soft tone of voice.

**Duration:** 10 minutes

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### **Explanation:**

*The body scan meditation practice focuses on experiencing the body instead of thinking about the body. During this practice, you will move your mind through the different regions of the body. For some time, each region of the body will be specifically focused on, bringing attention to the sensations that are present. The idea of the body scan is to notice each region of the body, concentrate attention to that area, let it go, and move to the next area of the body. This practice, similar to the awareness of breath exercise from last week, will help bring concentration, calm, and mindfulness to the mind and body. This practice is designed to help you relax, listen to your body, and be in your body. It may feel difficult to focus on the directions that I am giving you, and you may even feel like you are going to fall asleep. Try to stay awake, alert, and follow my instructions to the best of your ability.*

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# Practice

## Body Scan

### **Read the Trauma-Informed Practice Script prior to the practice**

*If you are seated, sit tall with your back straight. Relax your shoulders down the back. Allow your hands to comfortably settle in your lap or rest on your knees. If you are laying down, relax your shoulders and allow your arms to fall by your sides. Close your eyes, if that's comfortable for you, or allow a soft gaze to fall on the space in front of you. Relax your forehead and your eyes. Let the muscles in your face soften. Begin to pay attention to the breath, as you breathe in through the nose and out through the nose. Feel the movement of the breath, in the body, without trying to control or change the breath. Allow the breath to flow freely in and out of the body. **-pause-** The body scan that you are about to practice will allow you to relax, pay attention, and notice the sensations of the body at this moment. When you notice your mind wandering, as the mind does, gently acknowledge the thought and bring your focus back to the body and my voice. Now bring your attention to the body, all the way down to the feet...noticing the sensations, maybe tingling in the toes....moving to the soles of the feet...notice any soreness or throbbing. Now move the attention to the legs...noticing sensations of warmth or cold in the calves...the knees...the thighs. Feel the weight of the legs...allowing the many muscles within the legs to soften. Bring the attention now to the lower back. Take a moment to check in with yourself. If you are experiencing discomfort, overwhelm, or noticing unpleasant experiences coming up, you may bring your focus to the hands, the feet on the floor, or the breath when directed to bring your focus to the body. You may adjust how you are lying or sitting, open your eyes, or opt out of the practice entirely.*

# Practice

## Body Scan

*If you are comfortable continuing, bring your attention again to the low back, noticing any tightness, aching, or tension. Allow your awareness to slowly move up the spine, through the middle back, noticing tiredness, fatigue, or tingling all the way up to the upper back. Now, move your attention to the belly. Feel the belly rise with your inhale, and fall with your exhale. Move your awareness to the chest, noticing your heart beating. Now bring your attention to hands...noticing any feelings and sensations. Now move the attention up to the arms...noticing the feelings and sensations in the wrists...the elbows...the shoulders. Allow your attention to remain on the shoulders for a moment. Notice any tightness, heaviness, soreness. Now allow the muscles of the shoulders to soften. Draw your attention now to head...the neck...the jaw...the nose...the cheeks...the eyes...the top of the head. Notice any tingling, throbbing, or itching. Now open your awareness to your entire body, noticing the breath moving from toe to head. As we conclude this practice, let this last breath bring in new energy and relaxation. When you are ready, open your eyes if they are closed and bring your awareness back into the room.*



# Move

## Yoga

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**Instructions:** Students will be led through a yoga practice rooted in mindfulness. This week, the focus of the practice will be the body. Emphasize cues that bring awareness to alignment, hand and foot placement, and sensations of the body. Use the **Mindful Postures Guide** in the **Supplemental Materials** for mindful posture recommendations and cues.

**Duration:** 30–45 minutes

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### **Explanation:**

*We are going to bring what we have learned in the lesson today about being in the body into the yoga practice. We can approach the yoga practice with mindfulness by accepting the ability of the body in the present moment. We don't want to force the body into the yoga postures, but instead allow the body to achieve the postures that feel the best today. Stay tuned in with what your body is trying to tell you while doing each posture. When you move through the postures, pay attention to the sensations of the body. How does your hand feel when you place it on the ground? Do your shoulders feel stiff? Does your low back feel tight? Notice what your body is experiencing during each posture. Yoga is an individual practice, the boundaries of how long to hold a posture or how long you can balance are not fixed, but fluid. There is no wrong way to practice yoga. By bringing awareness to how our body is aligned, where we place our hands and feet, and how the body is feeling, we can bring mindfulness to the practice.*



# Explore

## Noticing Autopilot

**Instructions:** Students will practice the following mindful awareness activity every day this week. Provide them with the corresponding **Explore Reminder**, found in the **Supplemental Materials**. Instruct them to keep this reminder in sight or near where they perform their activity. Give students the option to continue their practice of the body scan using the provided link on the **Explore Reminder**.

**Duration:** 5 minutes for explanation, 5-15 minutes 1x per day for activity

### Explanation:

*Choose an activity that you normally do every day, like brushing your teeth. Bring awareness to this activity by using the "S.T.O.P." acronym:*

- **Stop** – Pause
- **Take a breath** – What are the sensations of the breath? Are you breathing from the chest or from the belly?
- **Observe** – What are you noticing in the body? What are you thinking? What emotions or moods are you feeling?
- **Proceed** – Continue your activity. What is happening now, in your experience, after taking a mindful moment?

*In your take-home journal, reflection about what you noticed during this activity. When did you do this activity? What did you experience during each component of "S.T.O.P"? Have you become more aware of those moments that you have gone on autopilot?*

*You may also choose to explore your body scan practice, once per day this week.*



# Week Three

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**Theme:** Being with Thoughts

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**Objectives:**

- To understand mental self-talk
  - To bring awareness to thoughts and let them go
  - To experience mindfulness in stillness and movement
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**Materials:**

- Mats and cushions
  - Chairs
  - Journal
  - Whiteboard
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**Lesson Activity Overview**

- **Learn** - Think and Share
  - **Practice** - Mindfulness of Thoughts
  - **Move** - Yoga
  - **Explore** - All Kinds of Thoughts
- 

**Trauma-Informed Instruction:**

Students may feel shame or self-consciousness around their thoughts, so using "we" instead of "you" may illicit the common humanity of thoughts. Read the script provided in the **Trauma-Informed Instruction Scripts** prior to the **Practice**, which explains options and modifications they may implement.

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# Learn

## Being with Thoughts

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**Instructions:** This lesson will focus on how to notice thoughts, watch them come and go, and work with thoughts instead of against them. Read the following script to guide the students through an interactive discussion and the **Think and Share** activity. || indicates to give two minutes to think, one minute to share, and offer an option for partnerships to share with the class, if comfortable. Allow an open space for student questions at the end.

**Duration:** 10 minutes

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### **Explanation:**

*Today, we are going to look inward again, but this time at our thoughts. Within our previous practices, we have practiced noticing our thoughts, allowing them to come into our awareness and allowing them to pass as we brought our focus on the breath or on the body.*

**Think and Share:** *In your journal, reflect on your experience with your thoughts in the awareness of breath and body scan practices. Did you experience many thoughts? Only a few? Did thoughts reoccur? Were the thoughts pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral? Then, share your insights with your partner. You do not have to share specifics or details about your thoughts. || Would anyone like to share?*

*As you may have noticed, most of the time our brains are generating thoughts. Our brains have the ability to do amazing things, such as solving problems, remembering information, and communicating. In addition, the brain may also be filled with constant chatter and unpleasant thoughts of that bother us and may stick in our minds.*



# Practice

## Mindfulness of Thoughts

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**Instructions:** Students may lay down or sit on their mats, or sit on their chairs for this practice. Turning off the lights and limiting sounds may be helpful. Use the script on the following page to guide the practice, taking care to speak slowly, pause when prompted to, and use a clear but soft tone of voice.

**Duration:** 10 minutes

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### **Explanation:**

*In this mindfulness of thoughts practice, we are going to bring attention to the present moment and the chatter of the mind. It is normal for the mind to constantly have thoughts coming and going. If thoughts are unpleasant, we may want to push them away, because they may cause unpleasant feelings. We may try to stop our thoughts all together, which is a strategy you may have even heard before. However, "clearing the mind" is not necessarily possible, or helpful. We will learn a new way of working with these thoughts by bringing mindfulness to the them. We can become curious about our thoughts, without placing too much meaning on them or getting stuck on them. We can notice and note our thoughts, and then allow them to pass through our minds like a cloud passing through the sky. Remember that thoughts are just thoughts. We are not our thoughts. We can say to ourselves, "This is my mind thinking. I don't have to believe every thought that I think."*

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# Practice

## Mindfulness of Thoughts

### **Read the Trauma-Informed Practice Script prior to the practice**

*Take a moment to get comfortable, yet alert, in your space. If you are seated, sit tall with your back straight. Relax your shoulders down the back. Allow your hands to comfortably settle in your lap or rest on your knees. If you are laying down, relax your shoulders and allow your arms to fall by your sides. Close your eyes, if that's comfortable for you, or allow a soft gaze to fall on the space in front of you. Begin to pay attention to the breath, as you breathe in through the nose and out through the nose. Feel the breath as it comes and goes, maintaining awareness of the duration of the breath...from beginning to end. **-pause-** Notice if your thoughts have already begun to wander to something you did earlier today, yesterday...or something that you need to do. Become aware that you are thinking without trying to clear your mind by pushing the thoughts away. Acknowledge the thoughts, then let them go gently. While you are present here, observing the thoughts coming and going, you may make a very soft note about what you notice. If you notice a planning thought, silently whisper "planning". If you notice a memory, silently whisper "remembering". If you notice a worried thought, "worrying". Now, without giving the thought any more attention than this, let it drift away like a cloud in the sky, watching it float away. Direct your attention back to the breath....the inhale through the nose...and the exhale out the nose. Notice the rise and then the fall of the belly. Bring your attention to the sensations of the breath. Like the breath moves in and out of your body, your thoughts move in and out of your mind. Remind yourself that thoughts are just thoughts.*



# Move


## Yoga

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**Instructions:** Students will be led through a yoga practice rooted in mindfulness. This week, the focus of the practice will be thoughts. Emphasize cues that encourage acceptance of thoughts and staying present within the practice. Use the **Mindful Posture Guide** in the **Supplemental Materials** for mindful postures recommendations and cues.

**Duration:** 30-45 minutes

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**Explanation:** *In today's practice, we are going to continue to bring awareness to the breath and to the body, as those are both very important components of mindfulness practice and of yoga practice. Now that we have some practice with noticing your thoughts, I invite us to notice the thoughts that arise in the mind while we are practicing yoga. Notice if these thoughts show up as encouraging and supportive or as judging or comparing. Notice if thoughts are repeating themselves, or if thoughts have nothing to do with yoga practice as all. Take what we have learned just a few minutes ago in the mindfulness of thoughts practice and apply those skills to yoga practice. Allow the thoughts to visit the mind, and then allow them to go. We can meet the mind's chatter with words of encouragement as well. Try "you are strong" in place of "you can't do this".* 

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# Explore

## All Kinds of Thoughts

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**Instructions:** Students will practice the following mindful awareness activity every day this week. Provide them with the corresponding **Explore Reminder**, found in the **Supplemental Materials**. Instruct them to keep this reminder in sight or near where they perform their activity. Give students the option to continue their mindfulness of thoughts practice with the link on the **Explore Reminder**.

**Duration:** 5 minutes for explanation, 5-15 minutes 1x per day for activity

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### **Explanation:**

*In this lesson, we learned about how to be aware of our thoughts. In your journal, draw a few triangles, circles, and squares. Throughout the day, or at the end of each day, write down some of the thoughts that you had. Write the pleasant thoughts in triangles, the unpleasant thoughts in circles, and the neutral thoughts in squares. Once you are done with this, notice that each thought is just a thought. Can you be mindful of all of your thoughts? Reflect on this in your journal. Do this each day of the week.*

*You may also choose to explore your mindfulness of thoughts practice, once per day this week.* 

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# Week Four

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**Theme:** Being with Feelings

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**Objectives:**

- To notice connections between sensations, thoughts, and feelings
  - To bring awareness to and work with all feelings
  - To experience mindfulness in stillness and movement
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**Materials:**

- Mats and cushions
  - Chairs
  - Journal
  - Whiteboard
- 

**Lesson Activity Overview**

- **Learn** - Think and Share
  - **Practice** - Mindfulness of Feelings
  - **Move** - Yoga
  - **Explore** - R.A.I.N
- 

**Trauma-Informed Instruction:**

Adolescents may experience more intense emotions and distress due to biological and brain changes. You may experience greater resistance from students this week, which may show up in sarcasm, indifference, or defensiveness. Read the script provided in the **Trauma-Informed Instruction Scripts** prior to the **Practice**, which explains options and modifications they may implement.

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# Learn

## Being with Feelings

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**Instructions:** This week, students will learn how to notice and approach feelings. They will learn to notice how their feelings, their thoughts, and their body sensations are related to one another. Read the following script to guide the students through an interactive discussion and the **Think and Share** activity. || indicates to give two minutes to think, one minute to share, and offer an option for partnerships to share with the class, if comfortable. Allow an open space for student questions at the end.

**Duration:** 10 minutes

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### **Explanation:**

*So far, we have learned about how to be mindful of the present moment, the body, and thoughts. This week, we are going to bring some mindfulness to our feelings. Feelings are a part of being human. We all have emotions, even if we do not like to talk about them with our friends, our families, our teachers, or even ourselves. They help us communicate with others and adapt to situations! They can be pleasant, like happiness and contentment, or they can be not so pleasant, like sadness and frustration.*

**Think and share:** *This think and share will be similar to your last Explore activity. In your journal, write down some feelings that you often have. Write the pleasant feelings in triangles, the unpleasant feelings in circles, and the neutral feelings in squares. Then, share your insights with your partner. || Would anyone like to share?*

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# Learn

## Being with Feelings

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*As we have just seen, some feelings can feel differently to different people. There are no "bad", "wrong", or "right" feelings - it is how we handle them that matters. Quietly think of ways that you may currently approach your emotions. Sometimes we get caught up in our feelings or we avoid our feelings all together. When we are mindful, we recognize, feel, and let go of our feelings instead of instead of suppressing our feelings. We can use to acronym R.A.I.N. to mindfully approach our feelings through recognition, acceptance, investigation, and non-identification. We will talk about how to do this in your **Explore** activity!*

**Questions?**



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**Instructor Notes:**

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# Practice

## Mindfulness of Feelings

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**Instructions:** Students may lay down or sit on their mats, or sit on their chairs for this practice. Turning off the lights and limiting sounds may be helpful. Use the script on the following page to guide the practice, taking care to speak slowly, pause when prompted to, and use a clear but soft tone of voice.

**Duration:** 10 minutes

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**Explanation:**

*The mindfulness practice that we are going to do in a moment is very similar to the previous mindfulness practices we have been doing each week. If you notice, each week the practices build upon each other and add a new focus of awareness. This week, since we are focusing on feelings, our emotions will be our focus. However, our feelings can be deeply intertwined with our thoughts and our body. The feelings we have may be related to thoughts that we have. Additionally, feelings do not only occur in our brains but in our bodies as well. We will practice recognizing this "triangle of awareness" - sensations, thoughts, and feelings. We will recognize sensations as we have been, through the breath. We will recognize thoughts through noticing, noting, and letting go. We can identify the feelings in a similar way. Feelings are constantly in motion, like thoughts. Remember, you are not alone in your feelings, and all feelings are okay.*

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# Practice

## Mindfulness of Feelings

### **Read the Trauma-Informed Practice Script prior to the practice**

*Take a moment to get comfortable, yet alert, in your space. If you are seated, sit tall with your back straight. Relax your shoulders down the back. Allow your hands to comfortably settle in your lap or rest on your knees. If you are laying down, relax your shoulders and allow your arms to fall by your sides. Close your eyes, if that's comfortable for you, or allow a soft gaze to fall on the space in front of you. Bring your attention to the breath, as you breathe in through the nose and out through the nose....Notice the sensation of the breath through the nostrils, the rising and falling of the chest, without trying to control or change the breath. When the mind begins to wander, as the mind does, bring your attention back to the sensations of the breath in the body. **-pause-** As you are present here, you may notice thoughts coming into the mind. You may also notice when a feeling arises, perhaps related to that thought, the previous lesson, or something that has happened today or yesterday. Can you notice the feeling in some part of your body?....the shoulders....the stomach...the throat...wherever you are finding this feeling in the body, just be aware of it. Watch how it comes about, lingers for a moment, and then passes by, just as a wave rises, peaks, and falls. As you brought your attention to this feeling....the sensations may have shifted and changed in your body as well. Sometimes, feelings appear as surges of energy in the body....strong and intense...sometimes quiet....sometimes fast....maybe slow. Can you observe any feelings that come up without getting caught up in them? Try and sit back, surfing the feeling waves as they rise, peak, and fall. **-pause-** Come back to the sensation of the breath, placing your hands to your chest and belly, bring yourself back to the present moment.*



# Move

## Yoga

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**Instructions:** Students will be led through a yoga practice rooted in mindfulness. This week, the focus of the practice will be feelings. Emphasize cues that encourage the students to bring awareness to their present experiences. Offering cues of encouragement may support positive feelings in students. Use the **Mindful Posture Guide** in the **Supplemental Materials** for mindful posture recommendations and cues.

**Duration:** 30–45 minutes

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### **Explanation:**

*This week, we are going to continue to bring awareness to any feelings that arise during the yoga practice. Notice if these feelings show up in unison with sensations or thoughts. For example, do you notice that the muscles in back of your legs feel tight...then you think "I can't fold very far in my forward fold", and therefore feel frustration? It is valid to feel any feelings. Sometimes, unpleasant feelings may appear when we are participating in physical activity or an activity that may be new to us, like yoga. Try to become aware of the complete "triangle of awareness" - sensations, thoughts, and emotions - during this practice. By bringing awareness to feelings without giving them too much attention and without fighting with them, we can then allow them to pass by.*



# Explore

## R.A.I.N.

**Instructions:** Students will practice the following mindful awareness activity every day this week. Provide them with the corresponding **Explore Reminder**, found in the **Supplemental Materials**. Instruct them to keep this reminder in sight or near where they perform their activity. Give students the option to continue their mindfulness of feelings practice with the link on the **Explore Reminder**.

**Duration:** 5 minutes for explanation, 5-15 minutes 1x per day for activity

### Explanation:

*This week, each day try to mindfully work with one feeling using the the R.A.I.N acronym.*

- **Recognize** – Notice and label your feeling, such as "happy", "angry", or "sad".
- **Accept** – Tell yourself that whatever you are experiencing is okay. All feelings are natural parts of the human experience.
- **Investigate** – Notice the sensations in the body that are associated with that feeling, such as a smile, a clenched jaw, or a tight chest.
- **Non-identify** – Separate yourself from the emotion. Try not to take your emotions personally and instead as something passing through.

*After you experience this feeling, or at the end of the day, reflect on your experience of each component of R.A.I.N. in your journal.*

*You may also choose to explore your mindfulness of feelings practice, once per day this week.* 

# Week Five

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**Theme:** Giving Kindness and Compassion

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**Objectives:**

- To observe the tendency to judge ourselves and others
  - To foster kindness and compassion towards ourselves and others
  - To experience mindfulness in stillness and movement
- 

**Materials:**

- Mats and cushions
  - Chairs
  - Journal
  - Whiteboard
- 

**Lesson Activity Overview:**

- **Learn** - Think and Share
  - **Practice** - Loving-Kindness
  - **Move**- Yoga
  - **Explore** - Mindful Walking
- 

**Trauma-Informed Practice**

Students who have experienced trauma may blame themselves for their experiences. They may have a hard time giving themselves love and compassion or recalling loving memories. They may be resistance, disinterested, or reactive. Read the script provided in the **Trauma-Informed Instruction Scripts** prior to the **Practice**, which explains options and modifications they may implement.

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# Learn

## Giving Kindness and Compassion

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**Instructions:** Students will learn how to give kindness and compassion to themselves and others. They will be able to recognize kindness and meanness and cultivate kind thoughts. Read the following script to guide the students through an interactive discussion and the **Think and Share** activity. || indicates to give two minutes to think, one minute to share, and offer an option for partnerships to share with the class, if comfortable. Allow an open space for student questions at the end.

**Duration:** 10 minutes

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### **Explanation:**

*Through this program, you have learned a lot about the habits of the mind. Some of the habits of the mind are not so helpful to our health and wellbeing, such as judgement and meanness. We often practice meanness to ourselves and our experiences as well as to others and their experiences. Sometimes we do this without even noticing. To support our health and happiness, we can practice the opposite of meanness, which is kindness. Kindness, or often referred to as loving-kindness in mindfulness practice, can be directed towards ourselves, as a form of self-compassion. It can also be practiced towards others.*

**Think and Share:** *In your journal, write down how you practice kindness and meanness to yourself. What are your kind behaviors, feelings, and thoughts? What are your mean behaviors, feelings, and thoughts? Then, share with a partner. || Would anyone like to share?*

**Questions?** 

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# Practice

## Loving-Kindness

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**Instructions:** Students may lay down or sit on their mats, or sit on their chairs for this practice. Turning off the lights and limiting sounds may be helpful. Use the script on the following page to guide the practice, taking care to speak slowly, pause when prompted to, and use a clear but soft tone of voice.

**Duration:** 10 minutes

---

### **Explanation:**

*This practice will help us direct feelings of loving-kindness to ourselves and to other people in our lives. The intention of the practice of loving-kindness is to wish ourselves and others peace, happiness, and wellbeing. Practicing kindness can help counteract the meanness that we often practice and create calm, peace, and happiness in the mind. Sometimes it may feel unnatural or uncomfortable to bring loving-kindness to ourselves because it is something that we are not used to and often not taught how to do. Although this may be the case, this practice is not self-centered, but instead a form of self care. If we can extend kindness and compassion to ourselves, it can make it easier to do the same to others. I will be inviting you to bring someone to mind and to silently, in your head, repeat certain phrases or wishes to direct towards that person. You can even make the phrases your own, if that feels more natural. Like our other practices, allow yourself to bring attention to how you are feeling, your thoughts, and your sensations in this practice instead of forcing these things.*

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# Practice

## Loving-Kindness

### **Read the Trauma-Informed Practice Script prior to the practice**

*Take a moment to get comfortable, yet alert, in your space. If you are seated, sit tall with your back straight. Relax your shoulders down the back. Allow your hands to comfortably settle in your lap or rest on your knees. If you are laying down, relax your shoulders and allow your arms to fall by your sides. Close your eyes, if that's comfortable for you, or allow a soft gaze to fall on the space in front of you. Bring your attention to the breath for a moment to begin. Now think of a time when you felt kindness from a parent, a friend, a teacher, a stranger, even your pet. Notice if you begin to experience the feeling of being loved, of kindness, of compassion. Notice what sensations in the body are paired with these feelings, lightness, release of tension, a smile. Now, take this feeling of being loved and cared for and direct this feeling towards yourself. Silently, in your head, repeat these phrases: May I be strong. May I be happy. May I be peaceful. May I be well. **-pause-** Now recall the person you remembered before who previously showed you kindness. With this person in mind, direct feelings of kindness towards them. Silently, in your head, repeat these phrases: May you be strong. May you be happy. May you be peaceful. May you be well. **-pause-** Now, bring to mind someone neutral, who you see regularly but do not know well. With this person in mind, direct feelings of kindness that you have directed to yourself and your loved one, to them as well: May you be strong. May you be happy. May you be peaceful. May you be well. Notice any feelings that have risen through this practice of compassion to yourself and others. Acknowledge that this practice may have been difficult, which is okay. You did the best that you could, in this moment of kindness and compassion.*



# Move

## Yoga

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**Instructions:** Students will be led through a yoga practice rooted in mindfulness. This week, the focus of the practice will be kindness and compassion. Emphasize cues that encourage the students to bring kindness to their present experiences. Use the **Mindful Postures Guide** in the **Supplemental Materials** for mindful posture recommendations and cues.

**Duration:** 30–45 minutes

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### **Explanation:**

*During this yoga practice, try to bring self-compassion into your practice. We just experience a loving-kindness meditation, which is one component of self-compassion. Often times when we are doing something new or when we are doing a physical activity, negative thoughts come to mind that are mean, such as "I'm bad" or "I can't do this". If this happens, try to silently repeat a loving-kindness phrase such as "I am strong" or "I am peaceful" to yourself. Another component of self-compassion is mindfulness, which we have been practicing for weeks now. If negative thoughts come up, you may bring awareness to the thought, notice any feelings or sensations that may come up, and then allow them to pass through. Focusing back on your breath can anchor you when these thoughts occur. Lastly, the urge to compare yourself to those around you may come up. Recall that we are all human and we are all experiencing similar thoughts and feelings.*



# Explore

## Mindful Walking

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**Instructions:** Students will practice the following mindful awareness activity every day this week. Provide them with the corresponding **Explore Reminder**, found in the **Supplemental Materials**. Instruct them to keep this reminder in sight or near where they perform their activity. Give students the option to continue their mindfulness of feelings practice with the link on the **Explore Reminder**.

**Duration:** 5 minutes for explanation, 5-15 minutes 1x per day for activity


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### **Explanation:**

*For this mindful walking activity, we will focus on the sensations of the body while walking as a moving meditation. This walk can be done on a path outside, in your backyard, or even in your bedroom. Any space that allows you to walk without interruption works for this activity. You will take 15-20 steps in one direction, stop to notice sensations, turn, and repeat in the other direction. As you walk, notice:*

- *your feet on the ground*
- *your weight shifting from one foot to the other foot*
- *your foot lifting off the ground and moving forward*

*Notice when thoughts or emotions arise, then bring your attention back to the sensations of the feet and legs. Once you practice this activity, you may bring mindfulness to walking in the hallway, walking up stairs, or in place of rushing.*

*You may also choose to explore your loving-kindness practice, once per day this week.* 

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# Week Six

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**Theme:** Working with Stress

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**Objectives:**

- To recognize stressors in their lives
  - To support themselves and others through the experience of stress
  - To practice mindfulness in stillness and in movement
  - To reflect upon the program
- 

**Materials:**

- Mats and cushions
  - Chairs
  - Journal
  - Whiteboard
  - Envelopes and jar
- 

**Lesson Activity Overview:**

- **Learn** - Think and Share
  - **Practice** - Just Like Me
  - **Move** - Yoga
  - **Explore** - A Wish for Myself and Another
- 

**Trauma-Informed Instruction**

There are no specific trauma-informed practices for this lesson. Read the script provided in the **Trauma-Informed Instruction Scripts** prior to the **Practice**, which explains options and modifications they may implement.

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# Learn

## Working with Stress

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**Instructions:** This lesson, the students will learn how to recognize stress and support themselves and others through the experience of stress. Read the following script to guide the students through an interactive discussion and the **Think and Share** activity. **||** indicates to give two minutes to think, one minute to share, and offer an option for partnerships to share with the class, if comfortable. Allow an open space for student questions at the end.

**Duration:** 10 minutes

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### **Explanation:**

*In our lessons, we have learned how to bring awareness to our bodily sensations, thoughts, and feelings. This can be extremely helpful to supporting ourselves in stressful situations, because stress can show up in the body and the mind. Humans have an innate stress response that we experience in the body when we feel threatened called the "fight or flight" response. As humans have evolved, instead of fighting or fleeing for survival, we are faced with modern day stressors such as homework and relationships. When we experience this response, our thoughts may start to go a mile a minute, our hearts may beat rapidly, and we may feel worried or overwhelmed. Stressors may be short-lived, or they may last for a long time.*

**Think and Share:** *In your journal, write down 5 things that may be stressors in your life. When you're done, share with a partner. **||** Would anyone like to share?*

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# Learn

## Working with Stress

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*The body has an opposite response to the stress response when we promote relaxation, called the "rest and restore" response. We activate the relaxation response when we practice mindfulness and relaxation techniques, such as mindfulness in stillness and movement. To support our health and overall wellbeing, we want our stress and relaxation responses to be balanced out.*

**Questions?**



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**Instructor Notes:**

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# Practice

## Just Like Me

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**Instructions:** Students may lay down or sit on their mats, or sit on their chairs for this practice. Turning off the lights and limiting sounds may be helpful. Read the student explanation to the group, to give context of the activity. Use the script on the following page to guide the practice, taking care to speak slowly, pause when prompted to, and use a clear but soft tone of voice.

**Duration:** 5 minutes

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### **Explanation:**

*Our practice this week will bring light to the shared experience of stress that all humans have. Often times, we may feel as though we are alone in the stressors we experience, because they may be different than the stressors that our friends may be experiencing at this moment. As we saw in our **Think and Share** activity, we all experience stress. Because of this, we want to bring kindness and understanding to not only our experience of stress, but to the experience of stress of those around us. Just because someone seems as though they are handling their stress well or seems to not have any stress in their lives as all, does not mean that is the case. As we experienced in previous weeks' lessons, we sometimes try to push aside or ignore feelings, thoughts, and sensations that we do not like or that feel unpleasant. We now know how to bring awareness to sensations, feelings, and thoughts and how to show kindness to ourselves and others, but can we bring some compassion to the experience of stress?*

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# Practice

## Just Like Me

### **Read the Trauma-Informed Practice Script prior to the practice**

*Take a moment to get comfortable, yet alert, in your space. If you are seated, sit tall with your back straight. Relax your shoulders down the back. Allow your hands to comfortably settle in your lap or rest on your knees. If you are laying down, relax your shoulders and allow your arms to fall by your sides. Close your eyes, if that's comfortable for you, or allow a soft gaze to fall on the space in front of you. Now bring to mind a comfortable and loving person in your life. This person can be a friend, a family member, a teacher, or even someone you do not know very well. Hold this imagine in your head as you consider a few things about this person. **-pause -** This person has felt stress and worry, just like me. This person has had stress and worry effect their mood, their obligations, and their health, just like me. This person wants to have a healthy mind and body, just like me. This person desires supportive ways to cope with the stressors and worries in their life, just like me. **-pause-** Now, we will direct wishes towards this person....I wish this person may have the support they need to carry them through the stressors of life. I wish this person finds happiness, wellbeing, and peace in their life. Just like me. **-pause-** When you are ready, open your eyes if they are closed and bring your awareness back into the room.*





# Move

## Yoga

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**Instructions:** Students will be led through a yoga practice rooted in mindfulness. This week, the focus of the practice will be to experience whatever is occurring right now, not trying to force any specific experience. Emphasize students to allow acceptance of stressful thoughts and feelings, and allow them to pass. Use the **Mindful Postures Guide** in the **Supplemental Materials** for mindful postures recommendations and cues.

**Duration:** 30–45 minutes

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### **Explanation:**

*Mind-body modalities of movement, like yoga, are supportive to allowing your body to experience the relaxation response. Some people, however, may not feel so relaxed while they are participating in yoga practice. It is common to experience similar distractions during yoga that you have experienced during our seated meditations. Maybe your mind wonders to what you are having for lunch or the grade you might have earned on the test you took yesterday. Your body may feel sore from sports practice or tired from not getting enough sleep. You might feel like you are in a bad mood because your sister took your favorite shirt. All of these worries and stressors are normal. I invite you to bring awareness to these experiences, acknowledge them, and allow them to pass. As much as you can, try to stay in the moment of the practice and each posture. It is part of your inner strength to be able to relax and let go.*



# Explore

## A Wish for Myself and Another

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**Instructions:** Students will practice the following mindful awareness activity directly following the yoga practice, instead of at home. Provide them with the corresponding **Explore Reminder** as instructions, found in the **Supplemental Materials**, and with an envelope and slip of paper. Use a jar to collect the slips of paper, but allow students to keep their letters.

**Duration:** 10 minutes

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### **Explanation:**

*In this activity, you are going to reflect on how you wish to bring the skills and habits you learned into your daily life. In your journal, write a letter to yourself, answering the following questions:*

- *How will you bring mindfulness into your day to day life?*
- *How will you bring kindness to your sensations, thoughts, and feelings?*
- *Which habits of self-compassion can you strengthen?*
- *What do you hope to take away from this program?*
- *What is one wish you have for yourself?*

*Seal your letter in the provided envelope with your name on it, and keep it in a safe place. You may revisit this letter whenever you need extra support.*


*The second part of this activity is intended to send positive wishes to others in the group. On a slip of paper, write a wish for another member of the group. Make the wish general and do not mention anyone by name. When you are done, place your slip of paper in the jar.*

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# Closing Statement

*We have made it to the end of our time together! Over the course of six weeks, we have learned how to practice mindfulness by bringing awareness to whatever is happening in the present moment without judging ourselves. We have built a mindfulness foundation, practiced being in the bodies, practiced being with thoughts and feelings, learned how to give kindness and compassion to ourselves and others, and worked with our stress. By participating in yoga practice, you have built a mindful-based movement practice that can support your body and mind alike. With your toolbox full of mindfulness knowledge and practices, you have learned healthy strategies to bring mindfulness into your life. We can become aware of our what our body and mind are telling us through sensations, thoughts, and feelings. We can make healthy behavioral choices based upon what our body and mind needs in the moment. I hope you take with you that stressors, hardships, and emotions are part of being human. Since we are all together in these shared experiences, we can choose to bring kindness and support to ourselves and to others.*

**Think and Share:** *How will you continue practicing mindfulness in your life, at home, in the classroom, and in any other part of your life? -open the floor for anyone to share with the group-*

*Thank you for sharing and thank you for participating in this yoga and mindfulness program. This is not the end of your mindfulness journey, but just the beginning! As you leave, please take a slip of paper from the jar with a wish from one of your group members.* 

# Supplemental Materials

# Trauma-Informed Instruction Scripts

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**Week 1:** *During this practice, if you experience discomfort, overwhelm, or notice unpleasant experiences when bringing attention to the breath, you may bring your focus to the hands or the feet on the floor when directed to bring your focus to the breath. You always have the choice to adjust how you are lying or sitting, open your eyes, get a drink of water, or opt out of the practice entirely.*

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**Week 2:** *During this practice, if you experience discomfort, overwhelm, or notice unpleasant experiences when bringing attention to the body, you may bring your focus to the hands, the feet on the floor, or the breath when directed to bring your focus to the body. You always have the choice to adjust how you are lying or sitting, open your eyes, get a drink of water, or opt out of the practice entirely.*

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**Week 3:** *During this practice, if you experience discomfort, overwhelm, or notice unpleasant experiences when bringing attention to thoughts, you may bring your focus to the hands, the feet on the floor, or the breath when directed to bring your focus to thoughts. You may also rest the hands on top of each other or on your heart. You always have the choice to adjust how you are lying or sitting, open your eyes, get a drink of water, or opt out of the practice entirely.*

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# Trauma-Informed Instruction Scripts

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**Week 4:** *During this practice, if you experience discomfort, overwhelm, intensity, or notice unpleasant experiences when bringing attention to feelings, you may bring your focus to the hands, the feet on the floor, or the breath when directed to bring your focus to feelings. You may also rest the hands on top of each other or on your heart. You always have the choice to adjust how you are lying or sitting, open your eyes, get a drink of water, or opt out of the practice entirely.*

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**Week 5:** *During this practice, if you experience discomfort, overwhelm, or notice unpleasant experiences when bringing a person or yourself to mind, you may bring your focus to the hands, the feet on the floor, the breath, or choose to think of a comforting person when directed to think of a person or yourself. You may also rest the hands on top of each other or on your heart. You always have the choice to adjust how you are lying or sitting, open your eyes, get a drink of water, or opt out of the practice entirely.*

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**Week 6:** *During this practice, if you experience discomfort, overwhelm, or notice unpleasant experiences when bringing a person to mind, you may bring your focus to the hands, the feet on the floor, the breath, or choose a different person when directed to think of a person "just like you". You may also rest the hands on top of each other or on your heart. You always have the choice to adjust how you are lying or sitting, open your eyes, get a drink of water, or opt out of the practice.*

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# Mindful Posture Guide




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**Palm Press:** *Bring the palms together at the center of the chest, with the forearms parallel to the floor. Equally press the palms into each other. Notice sensations in the hands and forearms. Notice any thoughts or sensations that arise.*

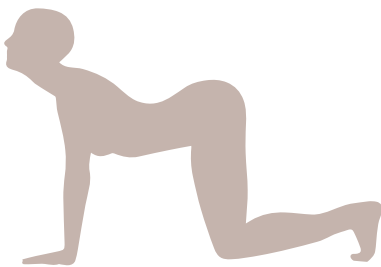
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**Seated Twist: -starting in Palm Press-**  
*With the palms still pressing together, inhale, twisting at the waist and bringing the gaze over the right shoulder. Exhale, bringing the shoulders down the back. Option to bring hands to the floor. Notice the sensations in the back and hips. Repeat on left side.*

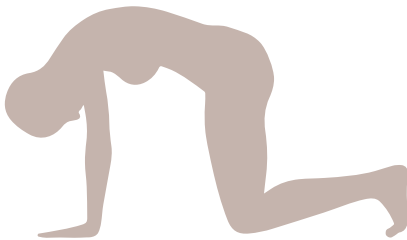
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**Cat/Cow:** *Begin with the hands beneath the shoulders and the knees under the hips. On an inhale, allow the belly to drop towards the floor while reaching the forehead and tailbone towards the sky. On an exhale, round the back and release the head and tailbone towards the floor. Move through the posture for a few breaths, noticing sensations in the upper body, back, and lower body.*

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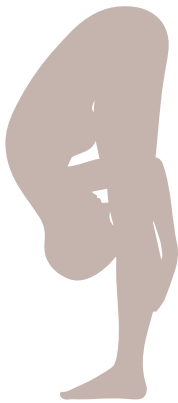


# Mindful Posture Guide



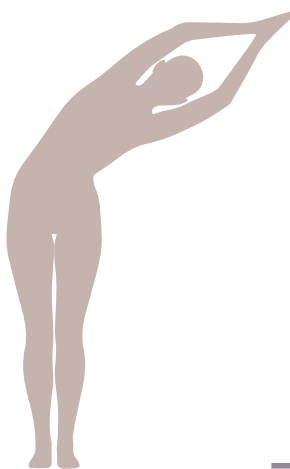
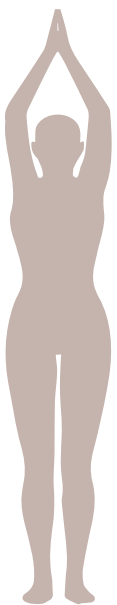

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**Child's Pose:** *Begin by bringing the seat to the heels, the feet together, and the knees hip width apart. On an exhale, bend forward, reaching your hands forward and allowing your forehead to rest on the floor. Take a few breaths, noticing thoughts or feeling that arise in this posture along with any sensations of the arms, back, or hips.*




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**Forward Fold:** *Inhale, reaching the arms up towards the sky. Exhale, slowly bending forward, reaching towards the floor. Bend the knees any amount to allow the chest to rest on the thighs. Allow your head, neck, and arms to hang...grab opposite elbows, approach the floor with each breath. Notice sensations in the body...release any thoughts or feelings...then slowly rise.*




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**Upward Reach/Side Bend:** *Inhale, reaching your arms up, interlacing the fingers at the top. Exhale, bending your upper body to the right without moving your hips. Hold the posture, noticing sensations in each side of the body. Return to center on an inhale, repeating on the left side with an exhale.*

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# Sequence Template

Grade:	Week:	Date:
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Focus:	Teacher:
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Opening

Standing

General

Finishing

# Explore Reminders

Make copies of each reminder. Cut on the lines and hand out to each student on the corresponding week.

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## Week One - Mindless or Mindful?

### Mindless

What activities did you do mindlessly, or on autopilot?

### Mindful

What activities did you do with awareness, paying attention to the present?

**Awareness of Breath:** [www.newharbinger.com/46714](http://www.newharbinger.com/46714)

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## Week Two - Noticing Autopilot

S.T.O.P: Stop - Take a breath - Observe - Proceed  
Stop - Pause

Take a breath - What are the sensations of the breath?

Are you breathing from the chest or from the belly?

Observe - What are the sensations in the body? What are you thinking right now? What emotions or mood are you feeling right now?

Proceed - Continue your activity. What is happening now, in your experience, after taking a mindful moment?

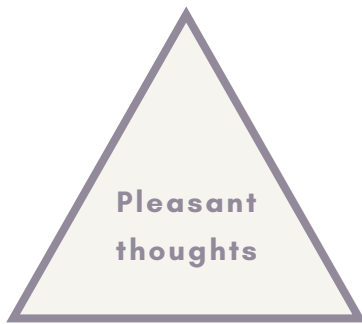
**Body Scan:** [www.newharbinger.com/46714](http://www.newharbinger.com/46714)

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# Explore Reminders

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## Week Three - All Kinds of Thoughts



Can you be mindful of all of your thoughts?

**Mindfulness of Thoughts:** [www.newharbinger.com/46714](http://www.newharbinger.com/46714)

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## Week Four - R.A.I.N.

USE the R.A.I.N method to mindfully work with your feelings

Recognize - Notice and label your feeling

Accept - Whatever you are experiencing is okay

Investigate - Feel the sensations in the body

Non-identification - Separate yourself from the emotion

**Mindfulness of Feelings:** [www.newharbinger.com/46714](http://www.newharbinger.com/46714)

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# Explore Reminders

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## **Week Five - Mindful Walking**

Take 15-20 steps in one direction - Stop, notice sensations - Turn - Repeat

Notice:

Your feet on the ground

Your weight shifting from one foot to the other foot

Your foot lifting off the ground

Your foot moving forward

Your foot connecting with the floor

When thoughts or emotions arise, bring your attention back to  
the sensations of the feet and legs

**Loving Kindness:** [WWW. Newharbinger.com/46714](http://WWW.Newharbinger.com/46714)

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## **Week Six - A Wish for Myself and Another**

How will you bring mindfulness into your day to day life?

How will you bring kindness to your sensations, thoughts, and feelings?

Which habits of self-compassion can you strengthen?

What do you hope to take away from this program?

What is one wish you have for yourself?

On a slip of paper, write a wish for another member of the group.

When you are done, place your slip of paper in the jar.

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# Resources

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## Yoga

- **Sequencing**

- <https://www.yogajournal.com/poses/>
- <https://workoutlabs.shop/products/yoga-cards-beginner-intermediate-set>

- **Teaching**

- <https://www.yogajournal.com/teach/tools-for-teachers/>
  - <https://www.yogajournal.com/teach/teaching-yoga-to-teenagers/>
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## Mindfulness

- **Education**

- Full Catastrophe Living by John Kabat-Zinn, PhD
- Fully Present by Susan L. Smalley, PhD and Diana Winston
- <https://med.virginia.edu/mindfulness-center/continue-your-practice/recommended-reading/>

- **Practice**

- [https://www.umsystem.edu/totalrewards/wellness/mindfulness/mindfulness\\_practices](https://www.umsystem.edu/totalrewards/wellness/mindfulness/mindfulness_practices)
- <https://med.virginia.edu/mindfulness-center/continue-your-practice/audio-recordings/>

- **Teaching**

- Learning to Breathe by Patricia C Broderick, PhD
  - Teaching Mindfulness to Empower Adolescents by Matthew Brensilver, PhD, JoAnna Hardy, and Oren Jay Sofer
  - [https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/five\\_tips\\_for\\_teaching\\_mindfulness\\_to\\_at\\_risk\\_teens](https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/five_tips_for_teaching_mindfulness_to_at_risk_teens)
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End of Program