

A New Mindful Life in the Parent-Child Relationship



Rochelle Calvert, Ph.D, B.C.B.A-D
www.newmindfullife.com

GUIDED PRACTICE 3 minute breathing space



WHAT DID YOU NOTICE?



Coming towards our intention

- Experience with mindfulness
- What is it you hope to learn?
- What inspires you to integrate this learning in your work/life?

Outline

- Understanding Mindfulness
- Reacting vs Responding in the parent/child relationship
- Research to support moving towards mindful parenting
- Teaching parents/children mindful parenting-
DEVELOP PERSONAL PRATICE
- Considerations for mindfulness practices with parents and children

Definition

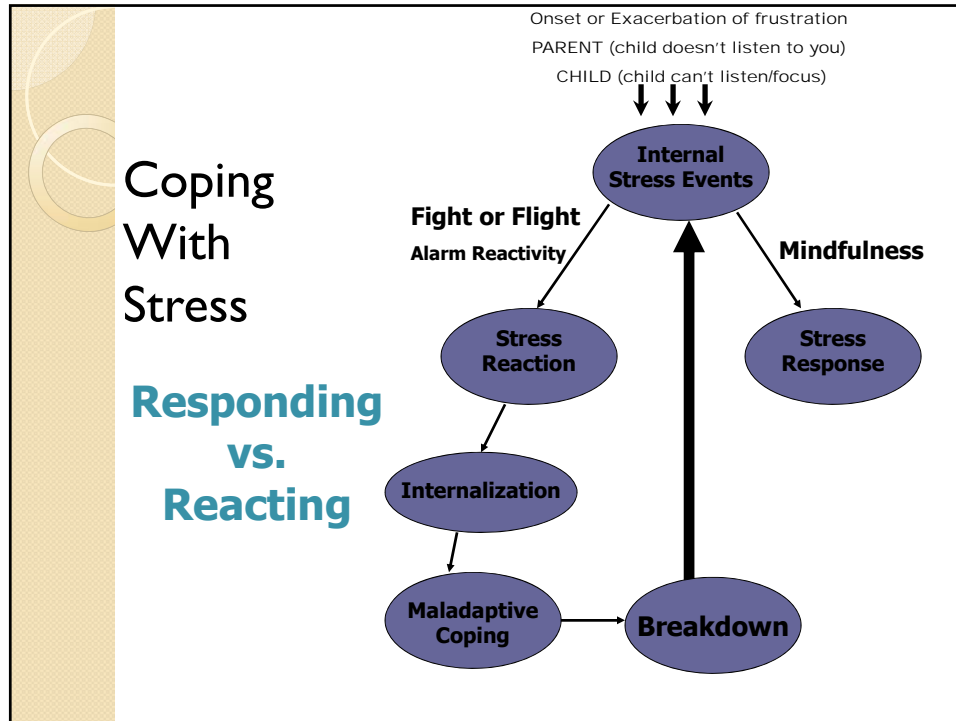
- Mindfulness
 - “deliberately paying attention, being fully aware of what is happening both inside yourself- in your body, heart and mind, and outside yourself, in your environment. Mindfulness is awareness without judgment or criticism”
- Jan Chozen Bays

Understanding Mindfulness

- Micro of mindfulness- attending to what is happening moment to moment
- Macro of mindfulness- attending to a whole context that exemplifies a full engagement of body, mind and heart with skillfulness of how we live and meet experiences in life

The “Active” Ingredient in Mindfulness

- Non-doing- Allowing just being (with whatever is) to arise
- Aware and “riding the wave”
- Recognizing emotional, cognitive, sensate reactions as simply that
- Fundamentally changing one’s relationship with what is arising



Stress Reaction Cycle

- The “fight” or “flight reactions drive the moment if we are unaware
- This reaction automaticity influences parenting dynamic with child
 - Creates a reactionary process for parent
 - Creates a reactionary process for child

Understanding the relationship

- **Reactivity vs. Responsivity- PARENTS**
 - Understanding automatic pilot in interactions
 - Many possibilities for types of reactions
 - Become aware of parents emotions, sensations and thoughts in different situations with the child
 - Learn to know your unfolding patterns
 - Avoiding
 - Controlling
 - Ignoring
 - See these as sign posts; let them be a road map to change

Considerations for Parents

- Parenting style
- Mental or emotional awareness
- Environmental factors
- Family history- cultural, mental/emotional, developmental, abuse
- Learned ways of relating to child

Understanding the relationship

- **Reactivity vs. Responsivity: CHILD**
 - Understanding automatic pilot in interactions
 - Many possibilities for types of reactions
 - Become aware of child's emotions, sensations and thoughts - processing for type of child can be different
 - Learn to know their unfolding patterns
 - Avoiding
 - Controlling
 - Ignoring
 - These patterns often manifest in the deficits of communication, socialization and behavior
 - See these as sign posts; bring awareness to these patterns with curiosity and non-judgment
 - Let mindfulness of these patterns be road map to change

Considerations for the child

- Temperament
- Mental and emotional ability/deficit
- Learning capacity
- Environmental factors
- Family support

Research

- Mindful parenting:
 - Promotes secure attachments (Siegel and Hartzell, 2003)
 - More mindful parenting= more positive parenting (less negative) which related to more positive behaviors from child- less anxiety, depression or acting out (Parent et. Al, 2016)
 - Mindful parenting reduces child stress (Waters, 2016)

Adopting a new perspective with parent/child relationship

- Healing and connecting through mindfulness
 - Greater acceptance, openness, trust
 - Boundless compassion
 - Meaningful interactions
- Learning a new way of being
 - Greater sense of possibilities- relating to each other, learning and growing together

Mindful Parenting

- Listening with full attention
- Non-judgmental acceptance of self and child
- Emotional awareness of self and child
- Self-regulation in the parenting relationship
- Compassion for self and child

GUIDED PRACTICE Awareness of Breath



WHAT DID YOU NOTICE?



Cultivating Mindfulness

- Develop mindfulness into your life
- Breath is an Anchor to The moment
 - Four Foundations to Practice
 - Awareness of the Body- Experiencing Sensation as it is in this Moment
 - Noticing the Pleasant, Unpleasant and Neutrality of the Moment
 - Observing Emotional and Mental Experiences of the Moment
 - Opening to the Constancy of the Unfolding Moment
- Your practice is what will inform how you can teach and share mindfulness with parents and children

Practicing Mindfulness

- Formal Practice
 - Establish daily 5-10 minutes (use 4 foundations as way to learn types of practice)
 - Guided recordings useful to learn- Insight timer, Headspace, Calm
 - Take a mindfulness course- 6 or 8 week
 - Teach/offer practice from where YOU are in your formal practice

Practicing Mindfulness

- Informal Practice
 - Learn to bring mindfulness into everyday life- especially places of automaticity
 - Bring awareness to the senses
 - 3 minute breathing space
 - Awareness- what is in mind, body and heart now
 - Gathering- focus the attention to the breath; only the breath
 - Expanding- investigate what is here now in mind, body and heart
 - RAIN
 - Recognize-(oh- this experience is like this)
 - Allow- (let go of following, avoiding or ignoring)
 - Investigate- (curiosity, touching the edges, the visceral nature)
 - Non-identify- (this is what is arising-now, its an experience unfolding, this experience is not me- it is what it is in this moment)

GUIDED PRACTICE RAIN



WHAT DID YOU NOTICE?



Mindfulness Practices with Parents

- Formal Practices
 - Awareness of the Breath/Body sensations
 - Awareness of reactivity-thoughts and emotions
 - Heart Practices- Loving Kindness and Compassion
- Informal Practices
 - RAIN
 - Awakening senses- using senses to connect to child
 - Slow-down moments in parenting

Mindfulness with Children

- Formal practices – can be done as mindfulness practice develops more regularly over time
 - Body scan (direction to sensations with body in stillness)
 - Head, shoulders, knees and toes
 - Whole body
 - Being with Breath (direction to breath)
 - Short or long breath
 - Belly, heart or nose
 - Mindful walking (direction to sensations of feet and movement of legs and arms)
 - Fast or slow
 - Circles, squiggly or straight
 - Mindful Movement (direction to sensations with body in motion)
 - Yoga poses
 - Personal poses

Mindful Ways of being with Children

- Informal practices (can be more directly practiced as mindfulness practices develop)
 - Waking up the senses (seeing, touching, hearing, smelling, tasting) when in play or everyday activity
 - Water, colors, textures, sounds, flowers, food
 - Feeling tones in life (pleasant and unpleasant)
 - Preferred toys, activity; non-preferred toys, activity- help them learn how to un-hook reactivity

Leading Mindfulness Practice

- Form
 - 1) establish an intention (for the practice for parent or child)
 - 2) establish a sense of connection to the environment/grounding
 - 3) direct a focus point for the attention
 - 4) inquiry into the mindful experience

Considerations when leading a practice

- Be flexible with the experience as it unfolds
- Use your own direct experience of mindfulness with the practice to support the child (attend classes or gain support from teacher)
- Offer words and/or modeling that note, describe observations of practice focus
- Be aware of your reactivity patterns, and possibly parent/child's reactivity patterns

Opportunity to teach

- Find a partner
- Choose if you want to lead practice for parent or child
- Decide type of practice to lead- formal or informal (remember to lead from where you are)
- Remember the form:
 - 1) establish an intention (for the practice for parent or child)
 - 2) establish a sense of connection to the environment/grounding
 - 3) direct a focus point for the attention
 - 4) inquiry into the mindful experience

MINDFULNESS OF THE BREATH

Intention

- Consider the attitude or quality you want to cultivate during the practice.
- Inwardly offer to your self and the parent/child this intention to hold during the practice
- If your parent/child is able to be included in setting the intention ask him/her to choose from one that may be helpful (e.g., calmness, acceptance, patience)

Grounding

- Choose a location where you and your parent/child can connect to the support around you (e.g., a comfortable chair, pillow)
- Offer direct attention to sense/feel a connection to the ground/environment for support (e.g., feeling base of the body or feet connecting to the ground, feeling the body take a posture that is upright)

Focus attention to the breath

- Offer attention to the breath at the nostrils, chest or breath
- Offer counting of breaths to keep attention at inhaling and exhaling (e.g., count inhale 1, exhale 1, inhale 2, exhale 2, etc.; you can also explore the duration of the count of the breath as well)
- Letting go of counting, encourage your parent/child to notice sensations of the breath (e.g., temperature, texture)
- Encourage your child to notice movements of the breath (e.g., duration- long, short; rhythm- fast, slow; density- expansion, contraction)
- If the attention appears to become distracted or attending to other experiences- thoughts, emotions or sensations in the body, direct awareness back to the sensations, movement or count of the breath

Inquiry

- As the practice unfolds, or when it is finished offer interest and curiosity into your parent/child's experiences to support their practice
- "What do you notice now?"
- "How is noticing your breath like this different than you usually experience it?"
- Offer only reflections of their experience as they share with you to deepen their experience

Discussion/Questions

Information

SIT course (Six-week Introductory Training in mindfulness)

October 12th, Thursday's from 6-8pm

-6 week course

-Learn to develop consistent individual mindfulness practice

-Learn to manage stress in healthy ways

Drop-In Mindfulness Classes

Wednesdays 6-700pm

Thursdays 5-6pm

Sunday 5-6pm

-Guided mindfulness meditation

-Brief inquiry and discussion on how to integrate practice into everyday life

RESOURCES

www.newmindfullife.com

-Free guided meditation audios

-Meditation resources

CONTACT

rochelle@newmindfullife.com