Mindful Resilience and Post Traumatic Growth.
This is the first normal school year for 8th graders since 5th grade!

2nd graders have never had a normal school year!

Teachers haven't had a normal school year since 2018-2019 either!

Wait, you all are having a normal school year?
This too shall pass...

And when it does, how will you want to remember yourself in this time?
TAKING A MINDFUL SEAT

- S Senses
  Sensations
- E Emotions
- A Actions
- T Thoughts

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TURBULENCE AND O2 MASKS
The best way to create stressed out, miserable kids is to surround them with stressed out, miserable adults.

But the best way to create mindful & compassionate kids is to surround them with mindful, compassionate adults.
NEVER...
In the history of calming down
Has anyone ever calmed down
By being told to calm down.

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WHY YOU?

Educators: Calmer kids, improved classroom management, kids performing better

Parents: Better communication, greater family happiness, lower accidents

Therapists: Patients who heal faster and feel understood

Roommates: Happier roommates

Medical Professionals: Greater patient trust

All Caregivers: Less burnout, lower turnover, reduced healthcare costs, fewer restraints
POST TRAUMATIC GROWTH
THE STUDENT PARADOX

“Pick two”

Good Grades

No Friends

Impossible

No Sleep

Failing

Good Sleep

Good Friends

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ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES INCLUDE:

- Physical Abuse
- Physical Neglect
- Sexual Abuse
- Loss of a parent due to death, divorce, or abandonment

- Emotional Abuse
- Emotional Neglect
- Household member addicted to illegal drugs and/or alcohol
- Household member who was incarcerated
- Witnessing domestic violence against mother

ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES HAVE BEEN LINKED TO:

- Risky Health Behaviors
- Chronic Health Conditions
- Low Life Potential
- Early Death

As the number of ACEs increases, so does the risk for these outcomes. To learn more about the different types of trauma CLICK HERE.
THE STRESS RESPONSE
STRESS = REGRESS
(FIGHT/FLIGHT/FREEZE/FORGET IT)

Physiology of threat- system evolved to keep us safe from physical threat but we still use it emotional threat (academic, social, athletic, etc)

BRAIN
• Amygdala (cave dweller brain) ON
• Prefrontal cortex (our evolved higher brain) OFF
• Everyone looks like an enemy or threat
• Only thinking “How do I make it end?” not “Who gets hurt?”

Image courtesy shutterstock
STRESS = REGRESS
(FIGHT/FLIGHT/FREEZE/FORGET IT)

Physiology of threat- system evolved to keep us safe from physical threat but we still use it emotional threat (academic, social, athletic, etc)

BODY
• Breath tightens, heart rate up, heat up, muscles clench
• Digestion shuts off
• Immune system shuts off (who needs long term survival?)

Image courtesy shutterstock
STRESS = PROGRESS
(ATTEND & BEFRIEND)

Physiology of Mindfulness and Compassion
System for caregiving, connecting and feeling safe

BRAIN
• Amygdala off, Prefrontal & Insular cortex on (caveman off)
• Open mind to see the larger picture, take off negativity filters
  – Discern friend from foe, danger from safety
  – See short and long term consequences of action

Image courtesy shutterstock.com
STRESS = PROGRESS
(ATTEND & BEFRIEND)

Physiology of Mindfulness and Compassion: System for caregiving, connecting and feeling safe

BODY
• Breath becomes regular and even, heart rate slows, muscles relax, immune system and digestive system start up again

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Image courtesy shutterstock
Not all fear is irrational; some is actually required for survival. When parents are faced with a perceived or real threat to their children's safety, stress hormones pour into the bloodstream, allowing us to sprint from danger, maintain alertness, and react quickly to sudden changes in our environment. During the coronavirus pandemic, individual vigilance has been essential to interpreting and responding to the steady stream of new information.

Being constantly wired like this nevertheless carries a cost: Rational thought is hijacked. Our risk tolerance goes down. Our instinct to protect shifts into overdrive. We default to primitive thought patterns including black-and-white thinking (School isn't safe until all kids are vaccinated) and catastrophizing (My child's runny nose will probably land him in the hospital). We also engage in filtering, a cognitive distortion whereby we sort through masses of information and latch onto specific ideas that reinforce a personal fear (After reading that ICU doctor's Facebook post about a hospitalized infant, I'm certain my child will get sick with COVID-19).

Marinating in a toxic brine of fear and uncertainty can make us sick—whether from fatigue and insomnia or irritability and burnout. And when our children hear us processing endless loops of what if thinking, they can become worried and depressed too. Fixating on a single threat to children's health can keep us from recognizing their broad human needs. I too can be a victim of my own mental gymnastics. (Just ask my kids.)

Reclaiming rational thought amid ongoing uncertainty can be very difficult, yet it is crucial for our health. Parents must first absorb the scientific evidence on Delta. We must cross-check our internal narratives about our own kids against the facts of our local public-health landscape by checking in with trusted health-care professionals.

Next, we must accept the unpleasant reality that risk is everywhere. Children don't just need to have a risk-free childhood; they need to develop the emotional intelligence to navigate a world of threats—real and perceived. Being constantly wired like this nevertheless carries a cost: Rational thought is hijacked. Our risk tolerance goes down. Our instinct to protect shifts into overdrive. We default to primitive thought patterns including black-and-white thinking (School isn't safe until all kids are vaccinated) and catastrophizing (My child's runny nose will probably land him in the hospital). We also engage in filtering, a cognitive distortion whereby we sort through masses of information and latch onto specific ideas that reinforce a personal fear (After reading that ICU doctor's Facebook post about a hospitalized infant, I'm certain my child will get sick with COVID-19).

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BIO/PSYCHO/PSYCHO/SOCIAL

- Biological
- Psychological
- Social
DID YOU KNOW?

YOU CAN ACTUALLY REGULATE YOUR BREATH, WHICH REGULATES YOUR BODY, WHICH REGULATES YOUR NERVOUS SYSTEM AND BRAIN WHICH REGULATE YOUR ATTENTION, IMPULSES, AND EMOTIONS.
REMOTE CONTROL
LONGER BREATH

RESET BUTTON LOCATED AT BOTTOM OF LUNGS
ALPHABREATHS

THE ABC’s OF MINDFUL BREATHING
A: Alligator Breath:

Open your arms wide like alligator jaws on the inbreath,

And let them snap shut on the outbreath.
C: Chocolate Breath:
Breathe in smelling...
Breathe out cooling off...
7/11 BREATH

Breathe in for a count of 7...
Breathe out for a count of 11...
SIMPLE BREATHE HACK:
PUT YOUR HANDS BEHIND YOUR
HEAD TO RELAX YOUR BODY,
AND DEEPEN YOUR BREATH
AUTOMATICALLY
Mindful Body: Exercise

20 minutes as good as many medications for mood, anxiety, attention, sleep!

Time outside associated with mood and focus

Moving slowly, mindful walking and movement

Walk for phone calls, stand instead of sit, drink water

Consider your posture
**Mindful Body: Eating**

Healthy, mindful eating boosts physical and emotional immune system

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### 6 Ways to Practice Mindful Eating

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mindless Eating</th>
<th>Mindful Eating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Eating past full and ignoring your body's signals</td>
<td>Listening to your body and stopping when full</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Eating when emotions tell us to eat (i.e., sad, bored, lonely)</td>
<td>Eating when our bodies tell us to eat (i.e., stomach growling, energy low)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Eating alone, at random times and places</td>
<td>Eating with others, at set times and places</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Eating foods that are emotionally comforting</td>
<td>Eating foods that are nutritionally healthy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Eating and multitasking</td>
<td>When eating, just eating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Considering a meal an end product</td>
<td>Considering where food comes from</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

List created by Christopher Willard PsyD

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Mindful Body: Sleep

Sleep is foundation of physical, cognitive and emotional functioning

- Exercise - but at least two hours before bed
- Eat regularly, but 2-3 hours before bed
- Screen bedtime before bedtime
- Avoid alcohol, nicotine, caffeine, and other drugs
- Shower or bathe at night – mindfully
- Sleep in a bedroom that is dark, cool, and quiet (consider a white noise machine).
Mindful + Psychological

When we are stressed, our perspective is distorted

• Mindfulness
• Gratitude
• Practice these with other people
• 4:1 Ratio
• Don’t believe everything you think

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Mindful Psychological

When we are stressed, our perspective is distorted

• Practice gratitude, mindfulness, etc to shift perspective
• Practice these with other people
• 4:1 Ratio
• “I’m having the thought that ________”
• Empowerment over helplessness
DON'T BELIEVE EVERYTHING YOU THINK
Mindful + Psychological

Gratitude is linked to lower anxiety and depression, better health, life satisfaction, less aggression, more kindness, better sleep

Daily or regular lists of five

Practice online or off with colleagues, friends, family

Create a group or text with a friend

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WHAT WENT WELL?
Mindful + Psychological

When we are stressed, our perspective is distorted

• 4:1 Ratio
• Negativity sticks: 4 positives outweigh one negative
• “Brains are Velcro for the negative, & Teflon for the positive”
• Consider what and who you are interacting with, and how to deliberately shift this ratio
• Each news story, take a walk, read something, music, creativity, make something, humor, artwork, comedy, cat videos
Mindful Social/Emotional

“If your mind is a dangerous neighborhood, don’t go there alone”

• Reach out twice as much as you think you need to
• Reach out when you are down and when you’re up
• Every 3 news articles, reach out, set an alarm, get multiple text threads going, take a walk and call someone, write postcards, start penpals
• Read or teach online with family and friends

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Social/Emotional

“*If you are the average of the five people you spend the most time with, consider who you choose*”

- You can’t be everyone’s support system
- Practice patience and nonjudgment
- If you are the average of the five people you spend the most time with, consider who you choose
- Block negativity online
- Careful how much news you read and from where
- Set positive and negative boundaries with roommates, family, partners, parents, others
ADAPTING MINDFULNESS

Shorter exercises in the session and out
Engaging the five senses as anchors
Engaging the imagination as an anchor
Utilize natural learning styles in teaching & reflecting
  Play, games, music, arts and crafts, storytelling, writing, movement / exercise, athletics
GAMES

• Simon Says, Mother May I, Red Light
• Freeze Tag, Freeze Dance,
• 20 Questions, I Spy
• Psychiatrist
MINDFUL GAMES

• Jenga blocks with mindfulness practices
MINDFUL CANDYLAND

- **Blue**: Describe how your body feels when you are sad, a time that you were sad, or something that makes you sad, and how you manage sad feelings…
- **Yellow**: Describe a time that you were glad…
- **Red**: Describe a time that you were mad….
- **Purple**: Notice one sound.
- **Orange**: Take one mindful breath.
- **Green**: Describe a sensation somewhere in your body.
- **Remember, if you get a double card, you have to think of two things!**
MINDFUL CANDYLAND

• Blue: Describe a time that you were sad, or something that makes you sad, and how you felt better.

• Yellow: Describe a time that you were glad, or something that makes you glad to think about, and how you shared that with a friend.

• Red: Describe a time that you were mad, or something that makes you mad to think about, and how you can deal with mad feelings.

• Purple: Notice one sound.

• Orange: Take one soup breath.

• Green: Describe a sensation in your feet.

Remember, if you get a double card, you have to think of two things!

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Mindful: Social

PTSD from HELPLESSNESS and UNPREDICTABILITY

Make life as predictable as possible

Live like a preschool: Create routines and rituals, rather than rigid structures, think about what you will do when this ends, make plans, put people and even meals in calendar

Control what you can: clean basement, organize books and toys, weed the garden
# COVID-19 Daily Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before 9:00am</td>
<td>Wake up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:00-10:00</td>
<td>Morning walk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00-11:00</td>
<td>Academic time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00-12:00</td>
<td>Creative time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:30PM</td>
<td>Chore time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:00-2:00</td>
<td>Quiet time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:30-4:00</td>
<td>Academic time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:00-5:00</td>
<td>Afternoon fresh air</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:00-6:00</td>
<td>Dinner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:00-8:00</td>
<td>Free TV time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:00</td>
<td>Bedtime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:00PM</td>
<td>Bedtime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Before 9:00am</td>
<td>Please don't wake up yet. Stay asleep just a little longer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:00-10:00</td>
<td>Academic time (NO ELECTRONICS: Sudoku books, flash cards, study guide, Journal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00-11:00</td>
<td>Creative time (Legos, magnatiles, drawing, crafting, play music, cook or make it)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00-12:00</td>
<td>Disney plus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00</td>
<td>Crap, you haven't eaten yet? Popcorn &amp; cheese sticks for all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:30PM</td>
<td>Get out of my house this instant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:00-2:30</td>
<td>What do you mean you're hungry again?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:30-4:00</td>
<td>Afternoon fresh air (Walk the dog, play outside)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:00-5:00</td>
<td>Cereal. Serve yourself.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:00-6:00</td>
<td>Disney plus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:00-6:00</td>
<td>Free TV time (3rd showers x3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:00</td>
<td>Bedtime</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:00PM</td>
<td>Bedtime</td>
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“When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, ‘Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping.’”

-Mr. Rogers
Mindful Social

PTSD from HELPLESSNESS and UNPREDICTABILITY

Be a Helper: get groceries, share food, listen, help neighbors with yardwork, support restaurants, inspiring chalk quotes, give blood, sew masks, volunteer your skills

Juliana’s “Community Build Days”

See and thank the helpers

Kids especially remember moments of helping

Tutoring and peer mentoring program

Make things- art, crafts, writing, movement, music, more

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To bring more mindfulness into everything we do, we can simply ask ourselves **WHAT AM I DOING, AND HOW DO I KNOW I'M DOING IT?**

and then check in with our five senses. Our thoughts and feelings may race to future or get stuck in the past, but our five senses can always be there to bring us right back into the present moment.

EXERPTED FROM *GROWING UP MINDFUL* BY CHRIS WILLARD, PSYD
@DRCHRISWILLARD DRCHRISTOPHERWILLARD.COM
There’s a guy in this coffee shop sitting at a table, not on his phone, not on a laptop, just drinking coffee, like a psychopath.
SELF COMPASSION BREAK
SELF COMPASSION BREAK

• This is painful, uncomfortable...
• Everyone makes mistakes, feels inadequate...
• May I forgive myself, let this go, be kind to myself...
KIND WISHES

Now we will tie your breath to wishes. These are kind wishes, okay? Breathe in as you think of someone you want to send a wish to. Think of a wish. Breathe out as you send them a wish.

Make a kind wish for yourself.

Make a kind wish for a friend.

Make a kind wish for someone who takes care of you.

And now the last wish, make a wish for the whole world.

This time make a kind wish for your community.
“Child’s Mind is a wonderful reminder that every young person is capable of great understanding, compassion, and joy.” Thich Nhat Hanh

A wonderful approach to learning mindfulness- full of great skills, practical tools, and enormously helpful wisdom.” – Jack Kornfield

Growing up Mindful is filled with wisdom and expert guidance in sharing the blessings of mindfulness with young people. Drawing on his vast experience as a teacher, clinician and practitioner, Chris Willard provides the kind of practical, doable exercises and reflections that will help you bring mindfulness alive in all the situations of daily life.” – Tara Brach

“This magnificent collection of pearls of wisdom and practical advice on how to cultivate mindful awareness in our youth, and even ourselves, is an important resource for any educator, clinician, or parent who supports the development of children and teens. Each of the experienced contributors offers a unique perspective on a range of populations and ages, creating a broad spectrum of insights in accessible and useful ways we can apply immediately. Soak in these pages!!” - Daniel J. Siegel, M.D.

Christopher Willard’s delightful book Child’s Mind makes the wonder and transformative power of mindfulness accessible to everyone. His elegantly simple practices are a joy to read and will impact kids and families for generations to come.” - Susan Kaiser Greenland

If you’re considering how to bring mindfulness into the lives of children, this book is the place to begin. It breathes the sweetness of mindful awareness. I recommend this book for anyone who wants to be eased into the original wonder and delight of mindfulness practice, or who wants their kids to grow up savoring each precious moment of their Lives.” Christopher K. Germer, Ph.D.