Leveraging Technology to Support Mindfulness in the Classroom

Will Bennett
Educational Technology Facilitator
York County School Division
@willbennettva

Resources at bit.ly/vstemind18
Technology should be for people.
How can we use technology to help us in our quest to be good human beings?
THE “ANXIOUS” GENERATION: UNDER 25 ARE MORE STRESSED AND ANXIOUS THAN EVER BEFORE

5 year olds are already subject to anxiety disorders

Rank of suicide as leading cause of death among 15-34

41% of 2016 incoming UCLA freshmen felt overwhelmed, up from 29% in 2010
MINDFULNESS HELPS

- Decreases Stress & Anxiety
- Improves Focus & Attention
- Increases Emotional Awareness & Regulation
- Supports Communication & Kind Relationships
WHAT IS MINDFULNESS?

Mindfulness is a way of paying attention to what is happening right now, by observing what’s going on inside (your thoughts, feelings, physical sensations) and outside (your interactions and surroundings) with openness and curiosity.

Naturally fitting into a Social Emotional Learning Curriculum
When is a time in which you felt you were mindful?
A Story of My Not-Mindful Experience
We're so busy watching out for what's just ahead of us that we don't take time to enjoy where we are...

-Calvin and Hobbes
Mindfulness reduces feelings of stress and improves feelings of anxiety and distress.

Profile of a Virginia Graduate

SUCCESS SKILLS

- Critical Thinking / Problem Solving
- Collaboration
- Self-Management
Support for Mindfulness

An Example from Waller Mill Elementary School

- **Morning Meeting** on the rug
- **Classroom Counseling** – Mindfulness (Go Noodle)
- **Mindful Mondays** – Yoga, Mindfulness (for select students)
- **Staff Mindfulness** – Studio South has reached out for staff to provide PD
- **Morning Announcements** – “Taking a deep breath.” – students leaders leading this
- **Classroom Teachers** – Using resources from Mindful Monday (Go Noodle)
- **Peace Corners** – Every classroom and office space at WMES has peace corners
School-wide Book of the Year

- Buckets Fillers = Kind words and thoughtful actions
- Bucket Dippers = things said or done that put others down
- Lid = “Keep Your Lid On” – deep breath and settling yourself
Do not forget to obtain parental permission as required.
HEADSPACE

www.headspace.com

STOP, BREATHE & THINK KIDS

www.stopbreathethink.com
www.stopbreathethink.com/meditations/

CALM

www.calm.com

GONOODLE

www.gonoodle.com
Power up the best in every kid!
GoNoodle gets over 14 million kids moving in classrooms and homes around the world!

Sign up for FREE

Move with Purpose
BOOST PRODUCTIVITY. IMPROVE BEHAVIOR. BUILD COMMUNITY
Example from Elementary

Transitions can be perfect moments for a class to practice mindful meditations—
to settle, to relieve anxiety, to focus...
(Yes, after recess too. 😊)
Example from Elementary:

Art class did not go well. The homeroom teacher discusses the problems when they returned to the home room, and then together they watch Let It Go.
Example from Elementary:

After first sharing mindful exercises, students might be less responsive, but repetition can help them settle into the practice.

(Just think of the time it takes to teach the routines at the beginning of the year.)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feelings</th>
<th>Emojis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Afraid</td>
<td>😞 😞</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bored</td>
<td>😞 😞</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheerful</td>
<td>😊😊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disappointed</td>
<td>😞 😞</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embarrassed</td>
<td>😞 😞</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frustrated</td>
<td>😞 😞</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glad</td>
<td>😊😊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Happy</td>
<td>😊😊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irritated</td>
<td>😞 😞</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jealous</td>
<td>😞 😞</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kind</td>
<td>😊😊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loved</td>
<td>😊😊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miserable</td>
<td>😞 😞</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nice</td>
<td>😊😊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overwhelmed</td>
<td>😞 😞</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proud</td>
<td>😊😊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiet</td>
<td>😞 😞</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relaxed</td>
<td>😊😊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shy</td>
<td>😞 😞</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thankful</td>
<td>😊😊</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mindfulness of **Feelings**:
Notice whatever **feelings** arise for you. Notice *where* you feel the emotion in your body and bring a quality of **acceptance** and **curiosity** to your emotions.
Strategy 2

Mindfulness of Breath

Focus your attention on the feeling of your in-breath and out-breath. Each time your mind wanders, bring your attention back non-judgmentally.
Mindfulness of **Body**
Feel the **physical sensation** in your body from moment to moment. You can also practice this together with the awareness of **breathing**.
Strategy 3

Mindfulness of **Sounds**

Be aware of sounds as they arise and pass away.
Strategy 4

- **Mindfulness of Thoughts**
- Be aware of your thoughts arising in your mind and passing away and having a sense of distance between yourself and your thoughts. You allow the thoughts to come and go as they please, without judging or attaching to them.
When could exercise like these be used?

(talk to your neighbor)
Stop, Breathe & Think

• Check in with thoughts and feelings, raising self-awareness
• 20 free activities, premium membership is $9.99/month
• Best for 1-to-1

This app always asks students to indicate their feelings at the beginning and end of their meditation. Some of the guided meditations focus on thoughtfulness and interpersonal relations. This app is more suited for older students and individual practice.

www.stopbreathethink.com/meditations/

There is also an app Stop, Breathe, Think for Kids appropriate for lower elementary ages.

www.stopbreathethink.com
FREE Lifetime Premium Membership for Educators

Stop, Breathe, Think app

Stop, Breathe, Think for Kids app
Calm

• relaxing visualization, selection of sounds and even guided meditations
• Excellent tool for you to learn the process of meditation
Introducing: The Calm Schools Initiative

We’re giving free Mindfulness training tools to every teacher in the world

In today's rapidly changing world, children face unique social and emotional challenges. Kids are experiencing greater pressures earlier in life, and feel more stress and anxiety than ever before.

What if their school day began with a few moments of quiet and stillness? Numerous studies have shown the many benefits of teaching mindfulness to children. Through mindfulness education, kids can develop a lifelong capacity for greater self-awareness, concentration, patience, and resilience.
Well-designed guided mediations
Cute videos that are helpful for understanding the process
One of the most complete long-term programs
$5.74-$14.95/mo after 10-day trial
Headspace for Educators

Our newest Social Impact initiative focuses our efforts on one group in particular: educators. Educators are pivotal to society – we entrust our children to them for 8 hours a day, 5 days a week, 10 months a year. So, in 2018, we’re giving an annual Headspace subscription to working K-12 teachers, school administrators, and support staff across the US & UK for just $12 a year.*

Please note, this offer is currently available to individual K-12 educators in the US & UK only. To bring Headspace to your entire school or district (free of charge), email educators@headspace.com.
HEADSPACE

www.headspace.com
www.headspace.com/educators
$12/per for Teachers
Request for FREE for school or division

www.stopbreathethink.com
www.stopbreathethink.com/meditations/
www.stopbreathethink.com/educators/
FREE for Teachers

STOP, BREATHE & THINK KIDS

FREE for Teachers

www.calm.com
www.calm.com/schools
FREE for Teachers

www.gonoodle.com
much FREE content
GoNoodlePlus $10/month
Worry...
Be kinder than necessary. Everyone you meet is fighting some sort of battle.

- Socrates
Strategies

- Mindfulness of breath meditation
- Mindfulness of sounds meditation.
- Mindfulness of thoughts meditation.
- Mindfulness of feelings meditation.
- Open awareness meditation.
Mindfulness

We are all in this together.
We want our students to know that they belong.
We want them to find that calm inner voice.
We want them to thrive, and be happy.
Mindfulness is one small step in that direction.
Leveraging Technology to Support Mindfulness in the Classroom

Will Bennett
Educational Technology Facilitator
York County School Division
@willbennettva