



EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH CONNECTION

MOVING LIVES FORWARD

MEANINGFUL MINDFULNESS

What exactly is 'mindfulness'? Mindfulness means maintaining moment-by-moment awareness of our thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations and surrounding environment, through a gentle, nurturing lens. I know it sounds somewhat like meditation, but the good news is that you do not have to sit in any difficult pose. We are not striving for "Enlightenment" – just simple ability to have better control over our emotions and thoughts.

When we practice Mindfulness, our thoughts tune into what we are sensing in the present moment – rather than rehashing the past or imaging the future.

*There are 3 key characteristics of
Mindfulness:*

- 1) *Attitude that is non-judgmental, curious and kind*
- 2) *Attention to what is occurring in the present moment*
- 3) *Intention to cultivate awareness*

So now, one may ask: Why is this important? Mindfulness is important because it increases our ability to regulate emotions and decrease anxiety and depression. It is a type of self-help technique that costs absolutely nothing. Yes, it takes some time and practice, but unlike meditation everyone can learn to do it. Probably, the hardest part for some of us is that you have to get **QUIET**.

Sounds easy, but not so much in today's world of noise and distractions. One of the first steps is for you to clear out all your digital demands – and yes, that includes all your favorite social media sites!

You have to get comfortable with yourself – with being alone with your thoughts, hopes, wounds and concerns. IF getting quiet is a bit scary, then that takes some time to make mindfulness effective, but once you find your own routine you will see more clearly why this brings more meaning into your life. Mindfulness can also help us gain energy to approach and accomplish what we really need to focus on.

Maybe, the most important impact is that being mindful during our quiet times helps us become more emotionally resilient and empathetic. A recent Forbes article states, "Studies show the ability to tolerate alone time has been linked to increased happiness, better life satisfaction and improved stress management."

Mindfulness helps us maintain a sense of calm and become more of whom we were meant to be – not just for ourselves, but for our families.

**AND THAT IS WHY MINDFULNESS IS
MEANINGFUL.**

Cheryl's Corner of Caring

*"To bear trials with a calm mind
robs misfortune of its strength
and burden."*

Seneca

MEANINGFUL MINDFULNESS

If teachers are interested in implementing this in the classroom, here are 4 ways to do so:

- 1) Through deep breathing exercises*
- 2) Through sensory experiences*
- 3) Through guided imagery*
- 4) Through movement*

*(For more details, simply go to
www.mindfulschools.org.)*

With the extra stress and expectations for school staff during this pandemic, it makes sense that any way we can have more control over our emotions, is worth the effort.

SOURCES:

www.mindfulschools.org

www.mindful.org

www.socialthinking.com

The Mindful Brain (Dr. Dan Siegel)

MEET CENTENNIAL'S EARLY CHILDHOOD CONSULTATION TEAM



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Lincoln & Yuma

For additional support during
the COVID-19 Pandemic you
can call Centennial's
**COMMUNITY
SUPPORT LINE**

You can do this by calling your
nearest Centennial office:

Akron - 970.345.2254

Burlington - 719.346.8183

Cheyenne Wells - 719.346.8183

Elizabeth - 303.646.4519

Fort Morgan - 970.867.4924

Holyoke - 970.854.2114

Julesburg - 970.474.3769

Limon - 719.775.2313

Sterling - 970.522.4392

Wray - 970.332.3133

Yuma - 970.848.5412

Contact your local Centennial Mental Health Center for assistance with any Early Childhood need.

WWW.CENTENNIALMHC.ORG

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