

# MindMatters *Overcoming Adversity and Building Resilience*

## A Tool Kit for Empowerment

Carolyn Rich Curtis, Ph.D. & Charles Stolzenbach, L.M.F.T.

### Goals

People who have experienced trauma and toxic stress often have difficulty regulating their emotional responses when facing challenges in school, life, and relationships. As participants learn the skills and strategies in **Mind Matters**, they can begin to say, "I am not a victim of what happened to me. I am the hero in my own life story."

### Introduction

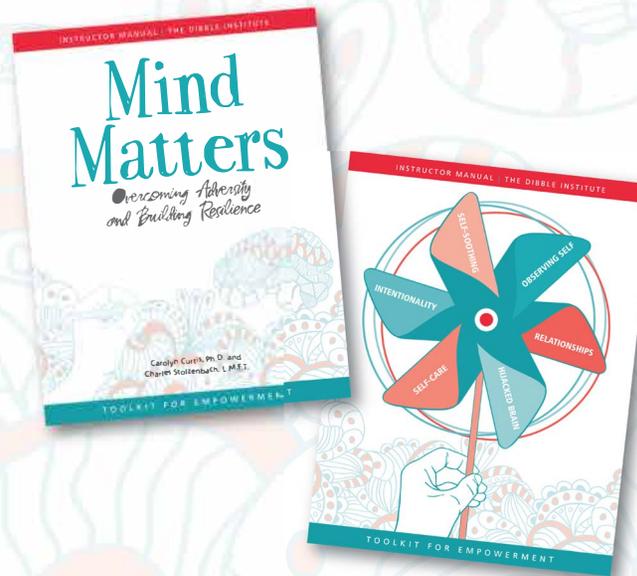
**Mind Matters'** 12 one-hour lessons (or 21 - 15 to 20 minute sessions) teach participants ages 12 and up to respond to negative experiences with innovative methods based on current research and neuroscience. These skills give individuals a way to take charge of their emotions and improve their states of mind. They learn to address their physical, relational, and mental health needs.

### Key Topic Areas

- **SELF-SOOTHING AND EMOTIONAL REGULATION**  
cultivating a mindfulness practice
- **DEVELOPING AN OBSERVING SELF**  
managing stress, dealing with intrusive thoughts, internal family systems
- **RELATIONSHIP SKILLS**  
developing empathy, building and using a support system, asking for help
- **COMPASSION FOR THE HIJACKED BRAIN**  
understanding the science of ACEs
- **SELF-CARE SKILLS**  
yoga, rhythm, tapping, focused attention
- **INTENTIONALITY**  
goal setting, developing a new self-statement

**"The authors have truly created a gift to the community of people looking for a way to help others learn about just how normal childhood adversity is, how profound its effects are our brain, bodies, lives, and communities, and most importantly, how to soothe and heal ourselves."**

—JANE STEVENS, FOUNDER, PACES CONNECTION



### Unique Aspects of Delivery

- Strong emphasis on **safety**,
- Lessons are **fun and engaging**,
- Creates **"new habits of mind"** through journals.
- Practical, **hands-on activities** that build resilience and increase hope.
- May be taught by **teachers in the classroom or counselors in small groups**.

### Expands Access

- **Easy to implement:** 12-hours, written in a clear concise manner.
- **Training:** recommended but not required.
- **Affordable** and practical
- **Flexible:** lessons can be taught in different order and can be taught in segments.
- **Culturally competent:** Meets the needs of different cultural groups.

### Who Benefits?

Teens, youth, and adults who have experienced trauma and toxic stress either directly or indirectly. District and school staff exposed to secondary trauma..

### Proven Results

Mind Matters is **research-based and evaluated**. Results from a Random Control Trial with youth in-care shows significant **gains in trauma coping skills and improvements in PTSD symptoms**. There were trending improvements, but not to significance, in **social competence and emotional regulation**.

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