**Mindfulness Practices for School Staff - Center for Trauma Care in Schools**

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**3 ideas for your personal practice**

Mindfulness can support and sustain you as an educator by helping you manage the stress of today’s world and giving you new abilities to benefit others. In fact, a guiding principle in the Mindful Schools community is the idea that our own self-care, self-awareness, and personal mindfulness practice serves as the essential model for our students – even before you formally teach mindfulness to them. Here are 3 ideas that to helped your practice throughout the school year.

**1. Set a Morning Intention**

Here’s a simple intention I often return to: “My goal for today is NOT to get everything done. My goal today is to really BE with my students.”

**2. Engage in Radical Self Care**

As educators, our job is to be there for our students, but if we neglect to take care of ourselves we will be unable to be fully present for those around us or responsive to the challenges of the school day. Here are ways you can practice radical self-care.

You need sleep. You have to. Sleep.

Eat healthy snacks during the day. It’s simple. But it’s not easy!

Connect with other adults during your day – consider starting a Happy Teacher Lunch, or a “stone soup” style salad potluck for teachers once a week.

Work on building your “just say no” muscle. It is okay to recognize your own human limits and to set boundaries with compassion.

**3. Post Inspirations in Your Room that Focus on Being**

Like integrating Mindful Rituals, it can be useful to remind everyone in the classroom to focus on being over doing. Some examples are as follows:

“In this room, who we are matters.”

“We are a community of (free thinkers, critical thinkers, kind kids, etc.)”

“Doing isn’t as important as being.”

“In this room, we take care of ourselves, each other, and this place.”

“This room is a safe space for every one of us and all of each of us.”

**6 practices to do – in front of your students**

Remember that your nervous system is the intervention in the classroom and that your students will look to you to know what is acceptable or allowed in your classroom. Your students look to you to determine if your room is a place where it is safe for them to “be”. These practices will also help create a more equitable classroom, where students begin to understand that everyone in the room is learning and growing, including the teacher!

**1. Practice “Teacher First” Sharing**

Any time you ask students to share something personal about themselves (either in writing or in discussion), use a “Teacher First” practice. This means that if you ask something of your students, you share your own answers first. This practice not only gives students an example of what to do, it also models ways of being open, self-reflective, and vulnerable.

**2. Be Open with Your Students**

Look for ways to demonstrate your own honesty or vulnerability in the classroom every day.

**3. Own Your Mistakes**

Everyone makes mistakes. It’s part of being human! Make mistakes in the classroom and point them out to your students every day.

**4. Model Emotional Awareness**

When you get flustered in the classroom, name your emotions.

**5. Take a Pause**

Anytime you get overwhelmed by the doing in the room, pause the room, take a visible deep breath and let your students watch you come back to your sense of being.

**6. Just Be with Your Students**

Find (and create!) moments for you to practice “authentic being” with your students.

<http://www.aipinc.org>

<http://www.mindfulschools.org>

<http://www.trepeducator.org>