

Responding Mindfully to Stress

In collaboration with EdCan
Small Group Gatherings – June 2020



With Heidi Bornstein & Stephen Chadwick



PAUSE Practice

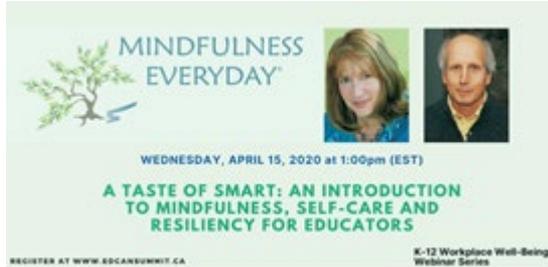
PAUSE PRACTICE

1. Stop
2. Take 3 long slow breaths
3. Check in, see what is here now

sensations – emotions – thoughts

(SET)

Be curious about what you notice
without making judgments



Heidi Bornstein & Stephen Chadwick, Founders of Mindfulness Everyday Teaching Mindfulness in Education since 2009

Heidi, registered psychotherapist, yoga and meditation teacher, and Stephen, retired teacher, both have an extensive background and training in MBSR, mindfulness, yoga and meditation. They have been delivering programs, based on the work of Jon Kabat-Zinn, creator of the MBSR (Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction) Workshop at UMASS in 1980, that are evidence-based, backed by research, and secular.

We promote mindfulness practices to enhance positive mental and physical health, compassionate action and resilience by providing stress reduction training and life skills for young people, educators, professional support staff and parents in the schools, and for organizations and members of the community.

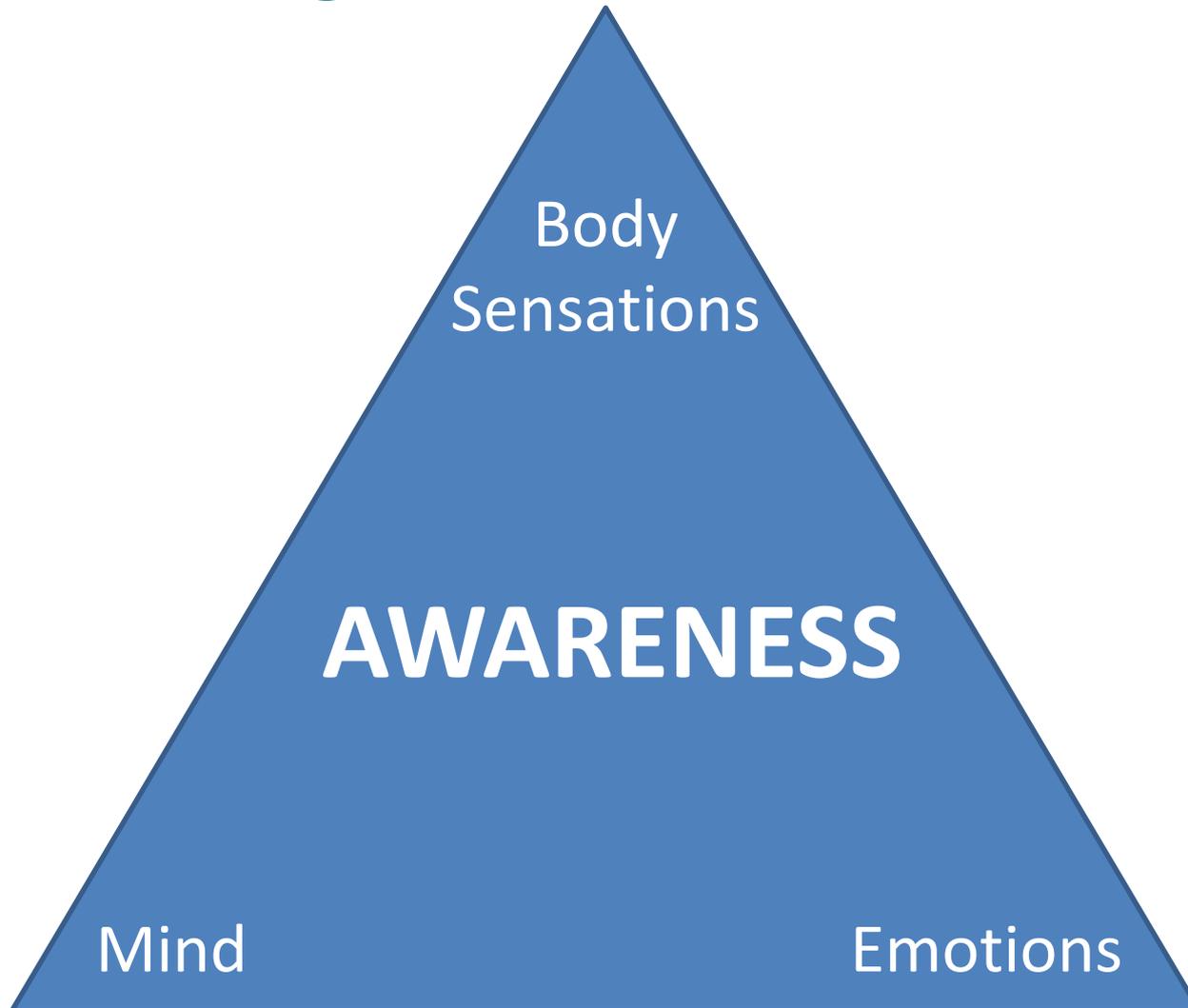
Being a Positive Role Model

Students will look to staff to be positive role models through the process of transitioning back to school.

How you handle your fears, your own stress, and how you act throughout the day will impact how children assess their own situations and react.

<https://www.anxietycanada.com/articles/7-tips-for-educators-returning-to-school-during-covid-19/>

Triangle of Awareness



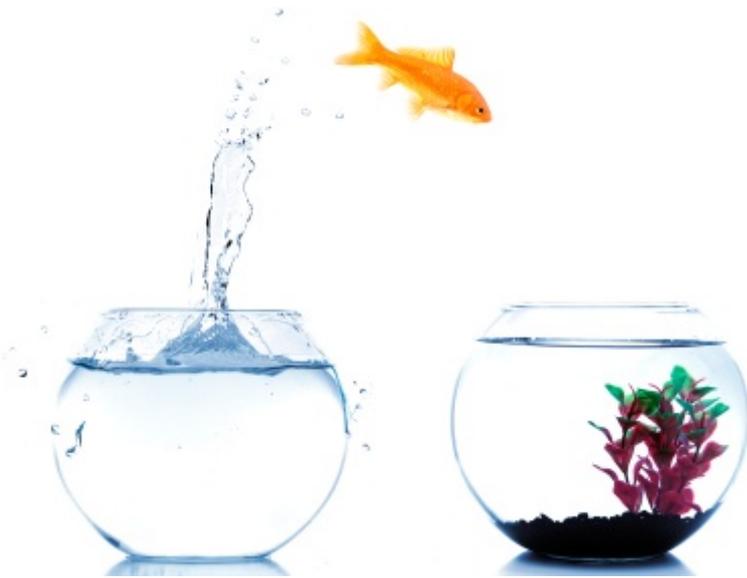
Acknowledging Transitions

Transitions are the spaces between moments.

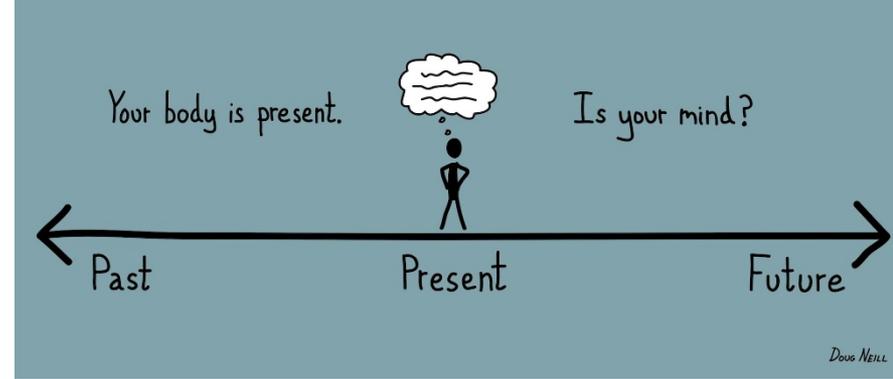
*Transitions are not just about just getting you ready for the next experience, they **are** the experience.*

Sherianna Boyle

Is the end of one activity just an invitation to the next? Mark Williams

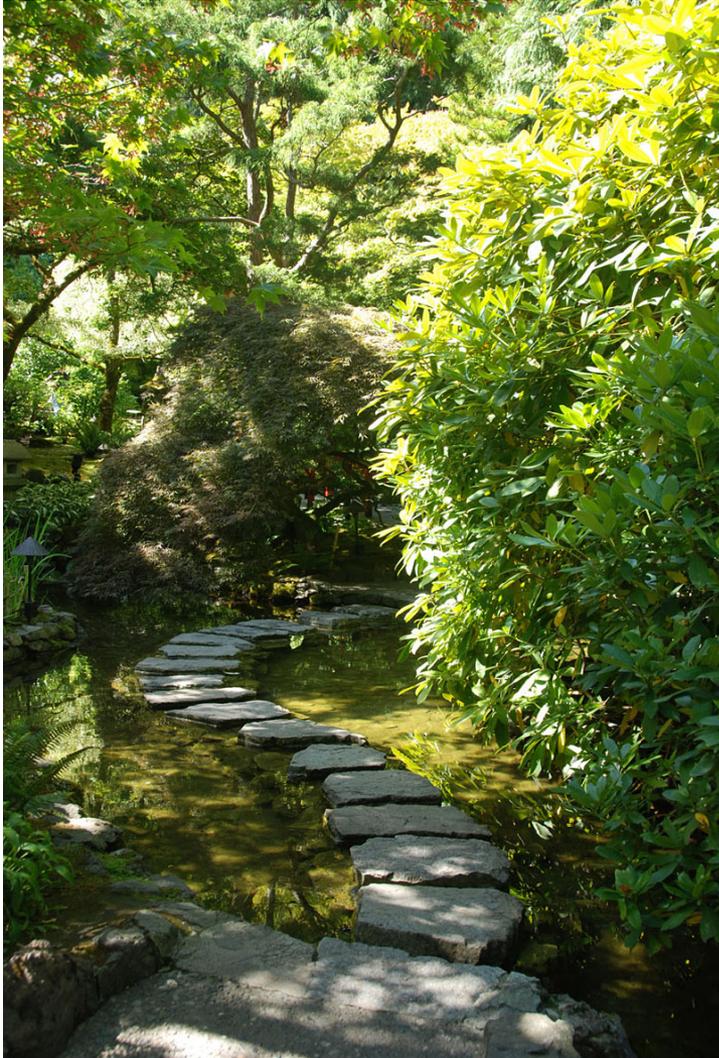


Arriving Practice – Implications for Teaching Students



- You may have students in their seats, either in person or online, with their bodies present, but not their minds or their attention.
- Acknowledging transitions, using a mindfulness arriving practice helps create readiness to learn in students.

Intention of the Session



This small-group experiential workshop will provide a variety of mindfulness/attention practices that promote stress management.

We will examine how understanding the physiology of stress, through the lens of mindfulness, can support educators and helping professionals in responding to situations with greater resilience.

WHAT IS MINDFULNESS?

Mindfulness in Education

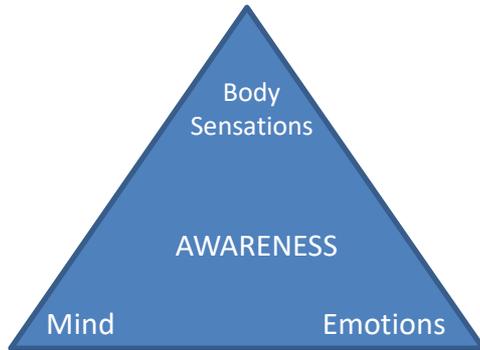
**Mindfulness,
is paying attention
to the here
and now,
with kindness and
curiosity
so we can choose
our behaviour.**

Amy Saltzman, M.D.



Mindful or Mind Full

Mindfulness is About Relationship



To yourself: Body, Mind, Heart (vertical integration)

To Your Community: Family, friends, cultural community, city/town you live in, province, country (of origin & where you live now, if they are different)



To The World: What contribution can you make to improve the world in some way?

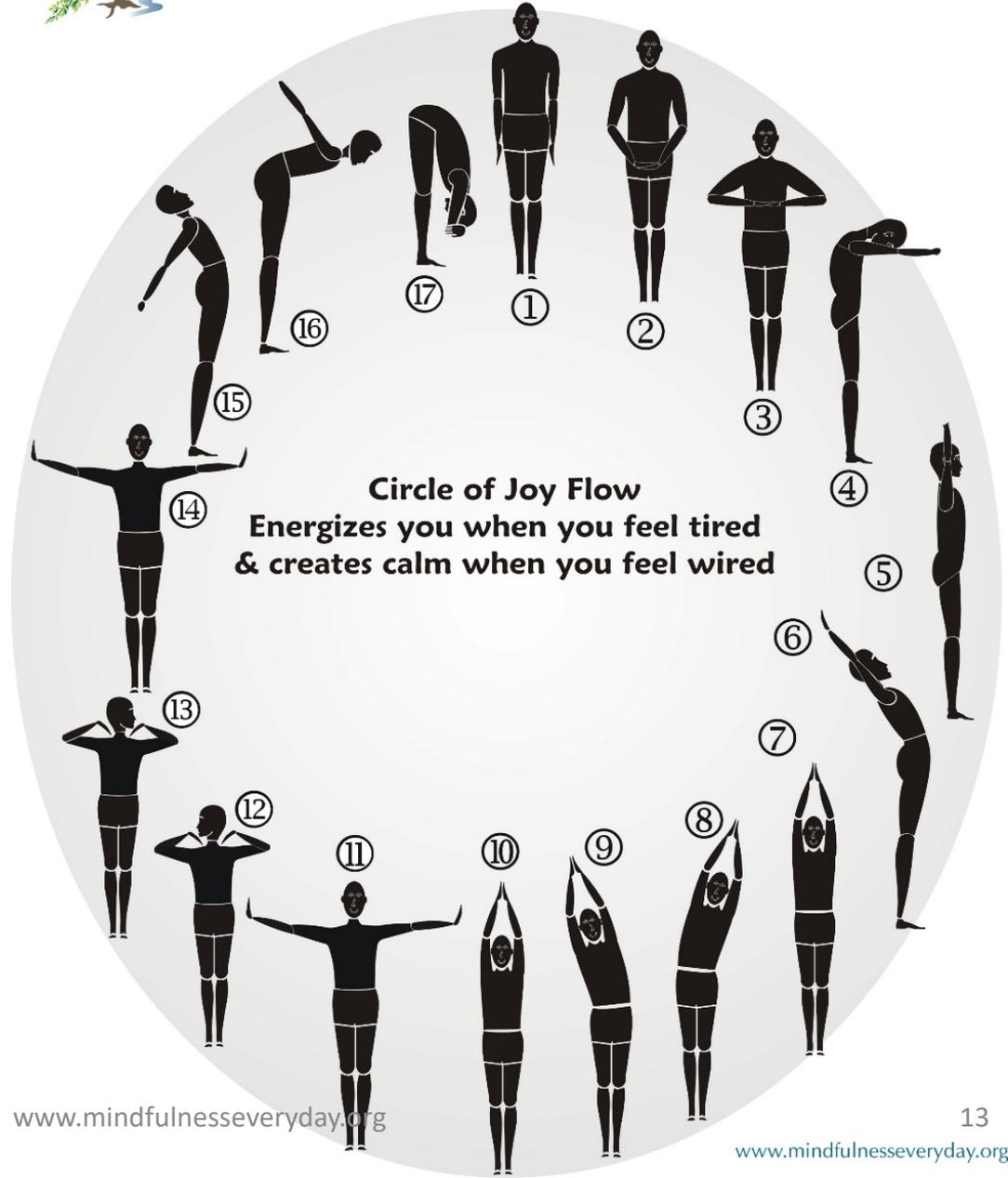
PRACTICING MINDFULNESS

Mindful Movement



MINDFULNESS EVERYDAY®

RESOURCES FOR CONSCIOUS LIVING



Body Scan



Inquiry into the Body Scan

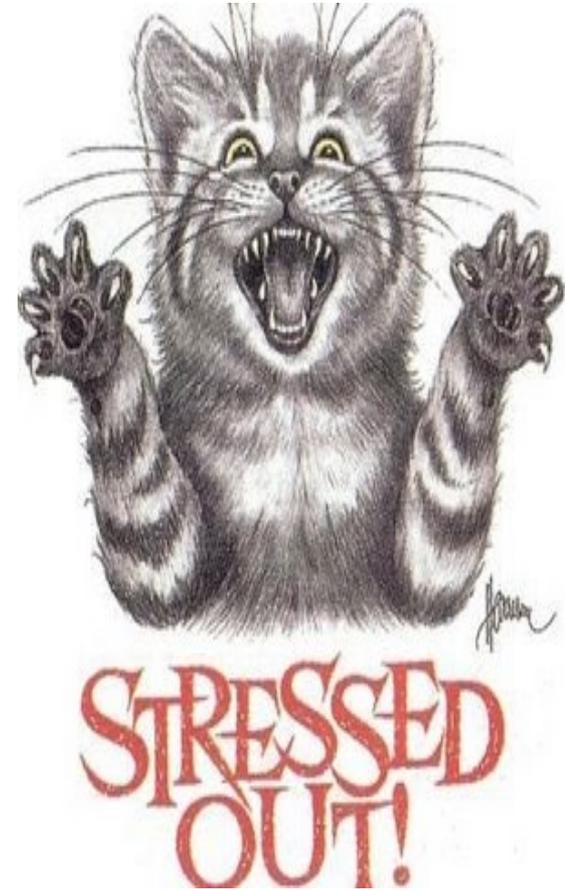


- What was your experience of the Mindful Movement and the Body Scan Practices?
- Can you give some words to express how you are feeling now?

RESPONDING MINDFULLY TO STRESS

What is STRESS?

- Stress is neither good nor bad. It is our body's way of responding to any kind of demand or threat.
- When stressed, our bodies react by releasing chemicals into the blood giving us more energy and strength.
- This can be a good thing if our stress is caused by physical danger. This is called “acute stress”.
- However, the body doesn't always distinguish between a real or an imagined threat. And sometimes, we are imagining “threats” constantly; this is referred to as chronic stress which is **not** healthy.



What Stresses You Out?

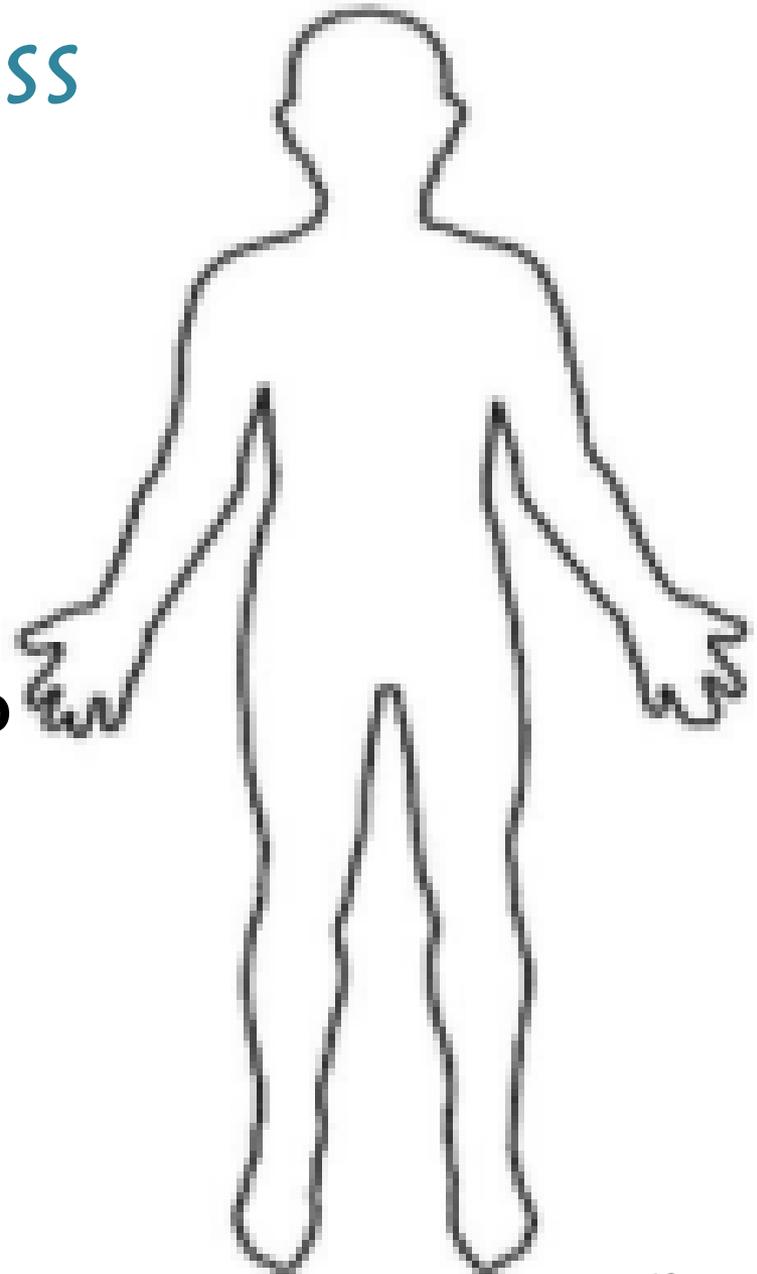
- ❖ *What are some of the common stressors for you, both personally and professionally?*



What is Your Stress Signature?

- ❖ How do you know you are stressed?
- ❖ Where does stress show up in your body?

- headaches
- throat
- back
- tightness in the chest
- tightness in the stomach / abdomen
- tightness in muscles
- any others?



How Do You Cope With Stress?

❖ What are some helpful ways you cope with stress?

- taking a walk
- listening to music

❖ What are some unhelpful ways you cope with stress?

- stress eating
- overworking



Fight or Flight – Acute Stress Response

-Increased blood flow to brain;
Increased production of
catecholamines (epinephrine,
norepinephrine, dopamine)
which help to facilitate cognitive
performance

-Pupils dilate/Peripheral
vision is reduced

-Heart rate increases

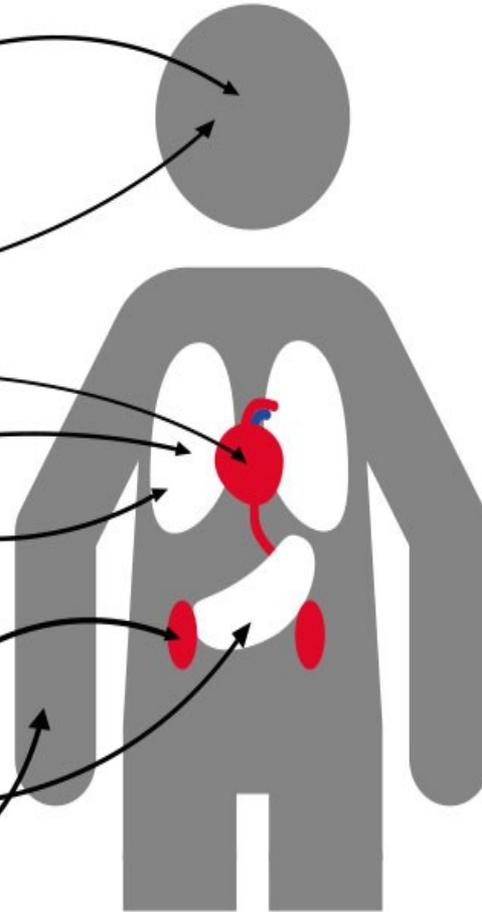
-Faster, deeper breathing

-Increased blood flow to large
muscle groups

-Adrenal hormones (cortisol and
DHEA) released, resulting in
increased energy mobilization

-Digestion slows dramatically

-Blood pressure increases



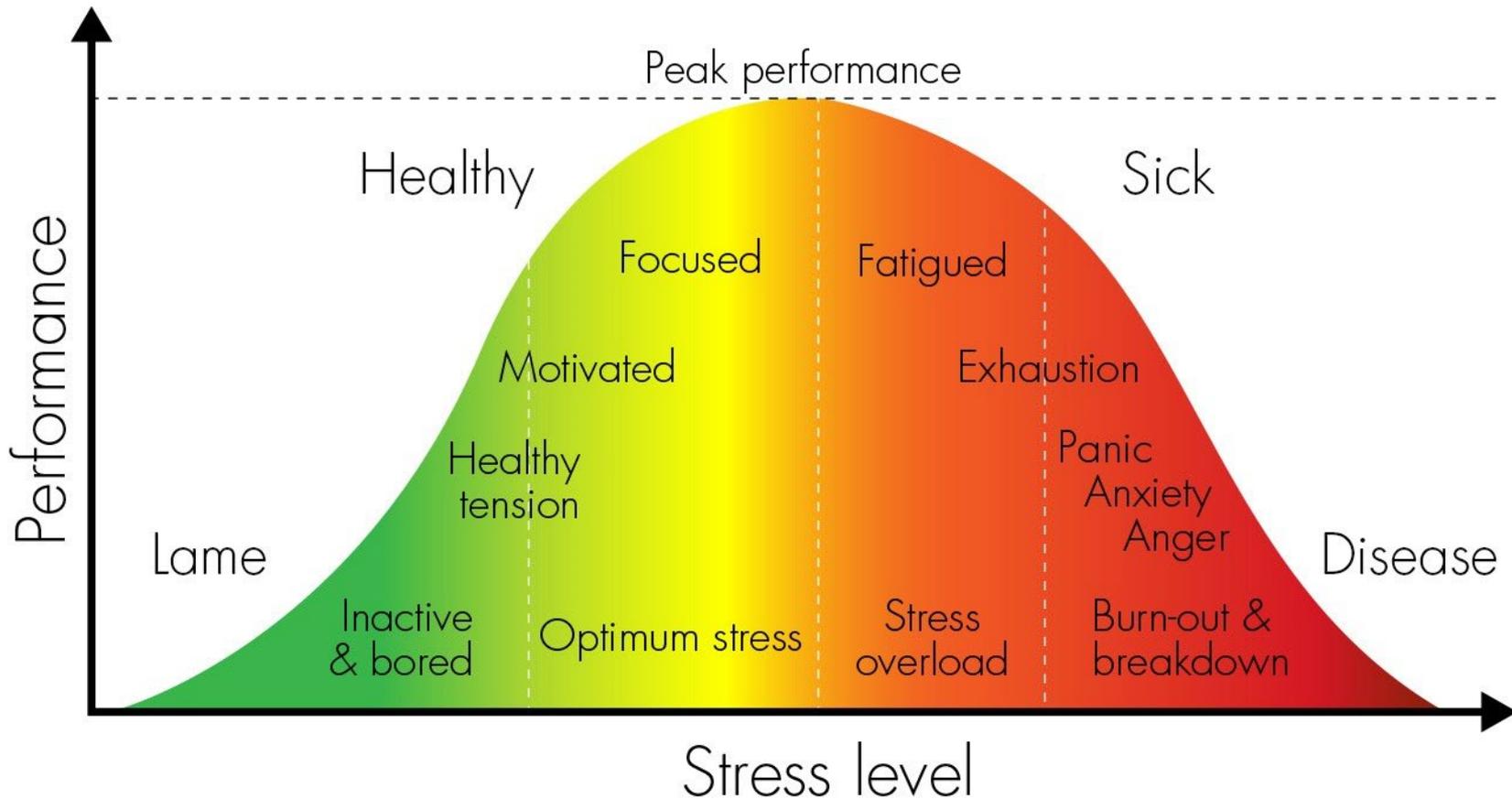
REACTIONS

- Increased alertness
- Increased short term strength
- Increased ability to handle stress
- Heightened ability to focus
- Increased oxygen to the brain
- Faster, deeper breathing
- Heightened sense of smell
- Body and mind are hyper-alert

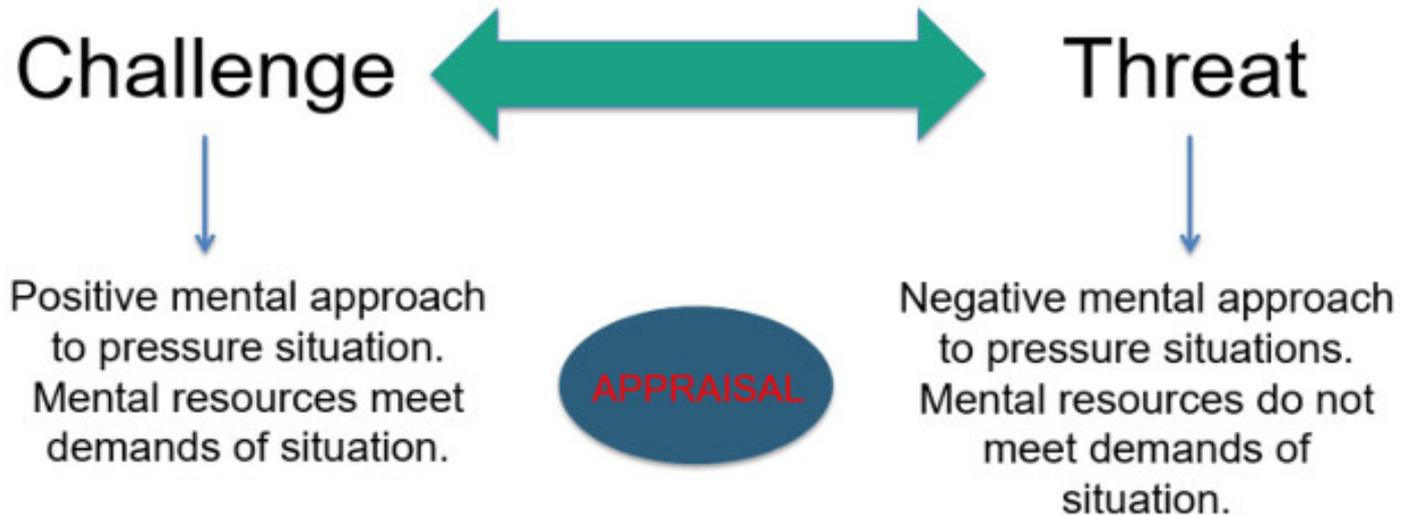
OTHER RESPONSES

- Perspiration increases to cool body
- Muscle tension increases to prepare for "fight or flight"
- Saliva production decreases
- Metabolism speeds up considerably
- Inflammation increases
- Blood flow from skin surface is diverted to larger muscle groups & brain
- Body extremities can change temperature
- Blood pressure increases

Stress Curve – Peak Performance



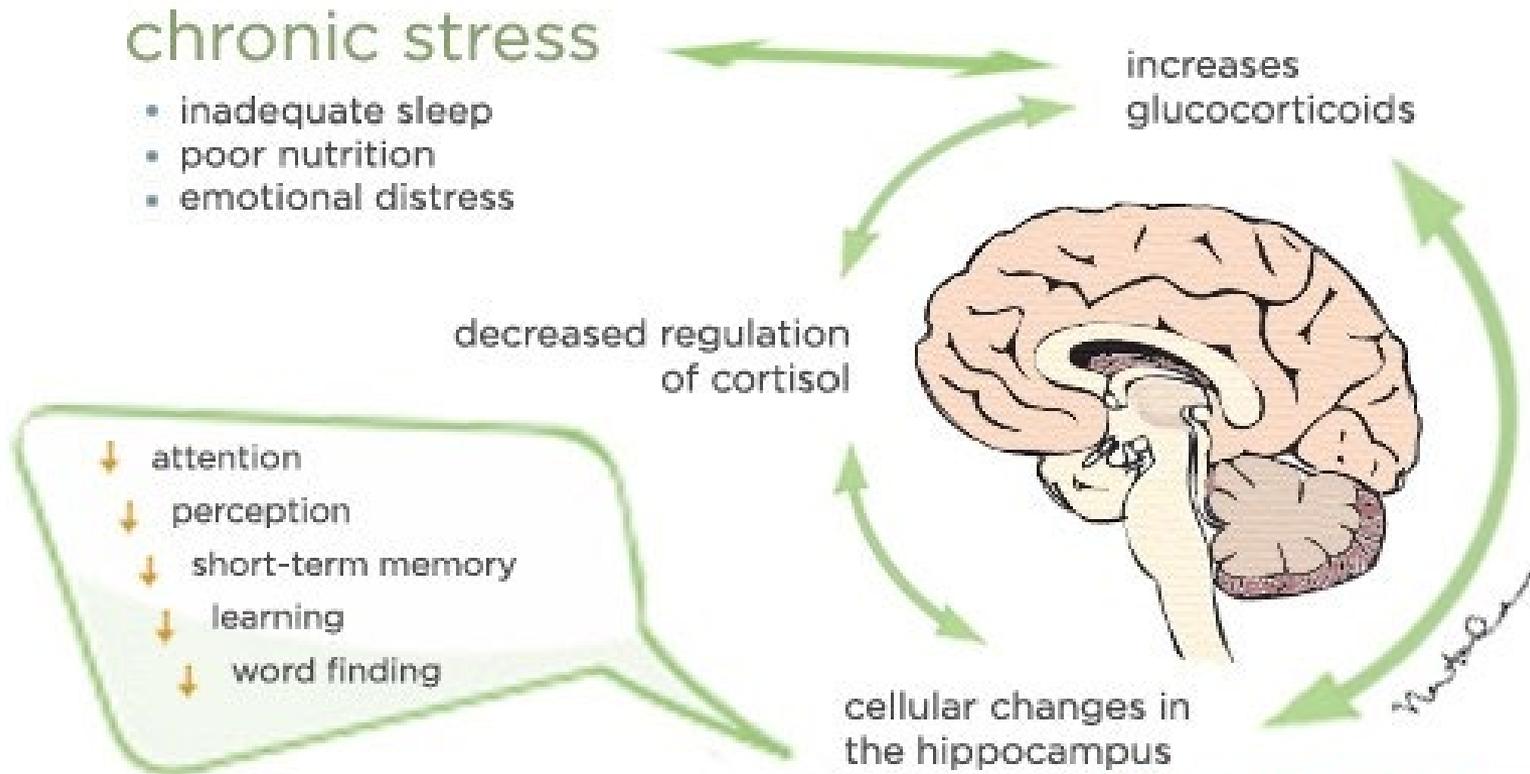
Stress as a Challenge vs a Threat



*People experience **stress** as either a **challenge** or a **threat**. **Challenge** feelings happen when you feel you have enough resources to cope with the situation. In contrast, when you feel the situation is too demanding, exceeding your resources, you experience **threat**.*

How Stress Affects the Brain During Learning

The stress-brain loop



The Prefrontal Cortex & Executive Function

Stress affects the Pre-Frontal Cortex. 'Executive Functions' refers to a family of mental functions that are needed whenever going 'on automatic' would be insufficient or detrimental.

The 3 core Executive Functions are:

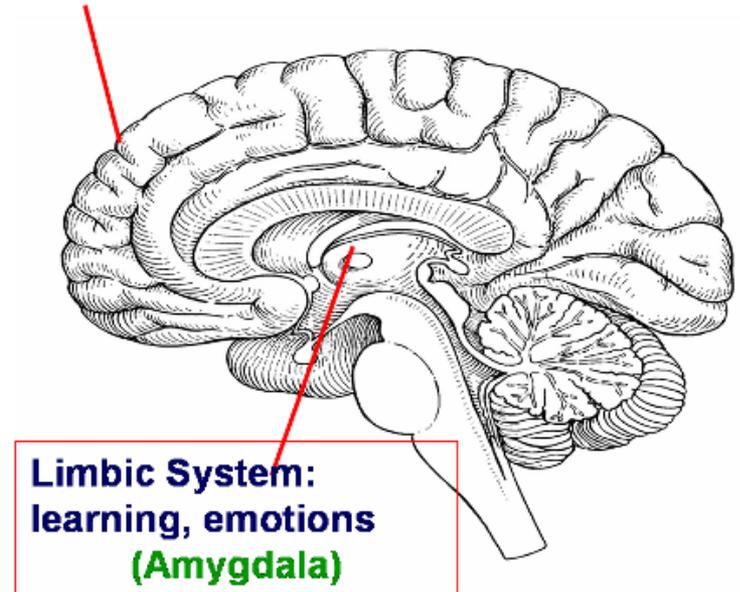
- Inhibitory Control (impulse-control)
- Working Memory
- Cognitive Flexibility

Functions are:

- Problem-solving
- Reasoning
- Planning

EFs are core skills critical for cognitive, social, and psychological development, mental and physical health, & success in school and in life.

Frontal Cortex:
decision-making, self-control



How Stress Affects Teaching

Manifestations of Stress

- Physical, then emotional, exhaustion
- Short fuses—impatience, irritability, and anger—with students and colleagues
- Repression of feelings
- Lethargy
- Depression
- General lack of resiliency
- More frequent absences
- No sense of humor
- Difficulty being organized
- No time to listen to anyone
- Frequent illness

What can be done about it

Teachers physically, mentally, and emotionally replenish themselves by developing their inner resources for resilience.

A = Acknowledge: being aware of what exacerbates stress levels

B = Body and Mind Well-being: Using strategies to attain homeostasis

Physical exercise / Meditation & Diaphragmatic Breathing / Time Management Strategies / Creative Problem Solving / Cognitive reframing

C = Communicate

Awareness of body language

Using “I” statements

Support from administration &

colleagues

Stress Contagion

"It is clear from a number of recent research studies that teaching is one of the most stressful professions, and that teachers need adequate resources and support in their jobs in order to battle burnout and alleviate stress in the classroom," said UBC education professor Kimberly Schonert-Reichl, the study's co-author and director of HELP.

"If we do not support teachers, we risk the collateral damage of students."

Practicing Together

With students, with colleagues, with your family:

1. Use the PAUSE practice to acknowledge transitions – beginning of the day, in between activities (lunch), end of the day, etc. Try the PAUSE practice to begin a staff meeting.
2. Practice Checking-in with your body, mind and emotions (Triangle of Awareness) to bring awareness to the present moment. Being aware of what you need can help you make wise decisions, taking a breath, moving the body, etc.
3. Introduce Checking-in with students so they can develop self-awareness.
4. Use the Circle of Joy or other Mindful Movement as a balancing technique for you and your students – if you are wired, it can help chill you out; if you are tired, it can help give you energy.

Short periods of practice done regularly are more beneficial than longer intermittent practices.

Benefits of Mindfulness for Teachers Personally & Professionally

- Improves focus and awareness
- Increases 'presence'
- Promotes emotional balance
- Supports stress management & stress reduction
- Supports healthy relationships at work & at home
- Supports overall well-being
- Increases ability to see student behaviour more compassionately and less as a challenge to self.
- Increases responsiveness to students' needs.
- Enhances classroom climate.
- Reduces burnout.
- Increases job satisfaction.



From *Mindful Teaching and Teaching Mindfulness, A Guide for Anyone Who Teaches Anything*
by Deborah Schoeberlein

Q & A



Wage
Peace
by
Judyth
Hill

*Wage Peace with your breath.
Breathe in firemen and rubble,
breathe out whole buildings and flocks of red wing blackbirds.
Breathe in terrorists
and breathe out sleeping children and fresh mown fields.
Breathe in confusion and breathe out maple trees.
Breathe in the fallen and breathe out lifelong friendships intact.
Wage peace with your listening: hearing sirens, pray loud.
Remember your tools: flower seeds, clothes pins, clean rivers.
Make soup.
Play music, memorize the words for thank you in 3 languages.
Learn to knit, and make a hat.
Think of chaos as dancing raspberries,
imagine grief
as the outbreath of beauty
or the gesture of fish.
Swim for the other side.
Wage peace.
Never has the word seemed so fresh and precious:
Have a cup of tea and rejoice.
Act as if armistice has already arrived.
Celebrate today.*

Next Steps

Stay Tuned for upcoming webinars and community sessions.

Visit www.edcansummit.ca/webinar-series for updates.

For more information and resources,
Visit:

www.mindfulnesseveryday.org

www.edcan.ca/well-at-work