

Group #1

Mindfulness

This session has been designed to be run by a single facilitator. A group of individuals might choose to rotate who facilitates each session. The selected facilitator for a given may choose to do extra self led learning prior to facilitating their topic.

Facilitator Overview

- 1. Check in- ask how the week has been for participants**
- 2. Review group norms & expectations for participation in exploration**
- 3. Facilitate group discussion asking questions and providing information from manual**
- 4. Deliver take home message(s)**
- 5. Set next meeting**

Group Expectations/Norms for Participation in Exploration

Confidentiality

All statements made by members in the group must be treated with the utmost respect and confidentiality. Specific group information will be shared with the treatment team; however, only general comments will be made to parents.

Norms will be read at the beginning of group for full understanding in order to create safety for each session.

Confidentiality is expected from all group members, members should not discuss group outside of group, please bring any issues/comments back to the next group.

Confidentiality creates a safe & trusting environment for the work of therapy. All cell phones/technology MUST be turned off.

What are the expectations of the group?

Arrive, and leave on time.

Group is voluntary. Group will be led by a different member each week. Can be on a rotation.

Sharing about yourself is necessary for you to benefit from group. This may feel difficult for some members initially however small disclosures build trust and safety within the group, which in turn will increase your comfort level when sharing. The premise is what you put into group is what you get out of group.

Note that we encourage balance sharing so that all members get the opportunity to share equally.

There is some structure to each session in that there will be themes for each week.

Direct advice giving and discussion of superficial topics is not helpful in this group.

Feedback is welcomed, as it connects the person giving and receiving and if non-blaming, constructive and relevant to what's occurring within the group it can be deeply meaningful.

Do not come to group under the influence of drugs/alcohol or other non prescribed medicine by your doctor.

Group offers the opportunity to learn more about how you relate to others. Group members are encouraged to ask questions, to wonder about things said or not said, to share associations and thoughts.

Check in. Ask each member how their week has been.

Ask Question: *What is mindfulness?*

Facilitator to allow for discussion and when appropriate provide the following information/guidance

Definition of mindfulness: Paying attention to the present moment on purpose, and without judgment – Jon Kabat Zinn.

Ask Question: *What kind of things can be pay attention to or be “mindful” of?*

We can pay attention to internal and external cues to help increase our mindfulness capabilities.

- **Internal** cues like our body sensations, thoughts, emotional states, urges, and behaviors
- **External** cues like our environment- anything you can take in through the senses.

Ask Question: *How can mindfulness help us in our day to day lives?*

When we are aware of our moment-to-moment experience, it becomes easier to make decisions and act in ways that are effective, in line with our values, and meet our goals.

We take a hold of our minds rather than always feeling like our minds are taking us on a ride that we can't control. We respond to a situation based on CHOICE vs. reacting to a situation based on HABIT.

By doing this we open the door to acceptance, experiencing life, and connecting to ourselves and the world around us. We have richer information and experiences.

Ask Question: *What are some things that make mindfulness challenging? How can we move through these challenges?*

Examples:

- I don't feel relaxed
 - The goal of mindfulness isn't relaxation. It's paying attention to the present moment.
- Mindfulness brings up anxiety
 - When we're so used to not being in the moment, slowing down can feel unsettling. It's new. It's okay to ease into mindfulness practice
- You keep thinking you're not doing it right/Doubt
 - There is no "doing it right" in mindfulness, there is only noticing. Mindfulness is paying attention on purpose, without judgment.
- Your mind can't stop thinking/you get restless
 - This is completely normal. This is what our minds DO. When your mind wanders, because it will, noticing that it's wandered and bring it back to the present moment is exactly what mindfulness is.

Questions to ask group members to facilitate discussion

- *What are the ways you have practiced mindfulness?*
- *What has been successful/unsuccessful?*
- *Do you schedule time daily for mindfulness?*
- *What is something new this week you can practice for mindfulness?*

Deliver Take Home Messages:

Life is busy. Mindfulness is an investment: like the financial advisors always say: pay yourself first. 5 minutes of planful mindfulness per day is not much. Mindfulness can also be done while you're doing your daily activities. Mindfully shower, mindfully wash dishes, mindfully walk the dog.