

Continuing the Conversations at Home (for parents/caregivers)

Three Questions to ask their kids:

1. What did you hear tonight that you can share that surprised or confused you? (We want to honor the confidentiality of the small group conversation while giving your kids a chance to be heard.)
2. What strategies do you use when you feel really sad or anxious? Do you need to develop some healthy ways to deal with those feelings?
3. Do you have any questions you want to ask me?

Three questions for kids to ask their parents/caregivers:

1. What did you hear tonight that surprised you or was new for you?
2. What strategies do you use when you feel really sad or anxious?
3. Do you have any other questions you want to ask me?

Group Leader Guide

1. Ask -Why do you think it is important for us to openly talk about suicide?
2. Acknowledgement that talking about suicide is hard
 - a. "I know that this is a difficult subject, however where there is silence, there is power. Even though it is hard to talk about, talking about it openly is more helpful than talking about suicide behind closed doors. I know that it is uncomfortable, but the more you talk about it, the easier it gets, and the more likely you are going to be able to help someone. If we keep suicide as something we see as embarrassing, shameful, something we "shouldn't talk about", then we are closing ourselves off to helping people who do have suicidal thoughts".
 - b. "If you start to get uncomfortable and need a break, let us know so we can help you. It is not a bad thing if you get uncomfortable, it is actually pretty normal so please don't be embarrassed if you start to feel emotions about this topic".
 - c. (Have a plan to help a child if they start to feel uncomfortable. Use some of the calming and coping ideas that were sent along with this guide).
 - d. Have everyone say the word Suicide together, 3 times
3. "Suicide is related to depression, so we are going to be talking about both of these".
4. Walk through the Test Yourself questions, stating them and asking if they believe if it is True or False, then provide them the answer. Answer any questions they have before moving onto the next question.
5. Some of the questions are purposefully created to be partially right and partially wrong.
6. Try to stop a few times between questions to take a Coping/Calming Break. Use some of the ideas that were sent along with this guide. By doing this you are helping the children regulate their emotions, give their brains a little time to process what they are learning, and teaching them a new way to handle their emotions.
7. Closing Discussion/Activity:
 - a. Go around circle and everyone say at least 1 thing they are grateful for in their lives.
 - b. Go around the circle and have everyone identify 1 way they can show someone kindness or that you care about them ("listen to them" doesn't count as an answer)

Adolescent Depression -- Test Yourself

- T F Stress has negative consequences and should be avoided whenever possible
- T F Some common methods of coping with stress can make the situation worse instead of better
- T F Suicide attempts usually happen without warning and with no apparent cause
- T F Teenage girls report more depression than do teenage boys
- T F A teenager who threatens suicide is only trying to get attention
- T F Teenagers with depression are easy to identify because they are quiet, withdrawn, alone and sad
- T F Mild forms of depression are fairly common and diminish with time
- T F A person with depression sees the world completely differently than a person who is not depressed
- T F Talking to a person about their suicidal feelings is likely to cause them to attempt suicide
- T F A very high percentage of young people who make suicide attempts experienced depression and alcohol abuse at the time of the attempt
- T F When teenagers have a problem with depression, they go first to their friends for help
- T F Sometimes it's better to be a good listener than to try to solve the problem for another person
- T F If a depressed person is really upset one minute and then says, "It's no big deal," accept that and go about your business

I know the names of two other people in our community to whom I can refer troubled teenagers. They are:

a) _____

b) _____

Test Yourself- Adolescent Depression

(Formatted for small group discussion with youth from 3rd – 9th grade)

T F Stress has negative consequences and should be avoided whenever possible (1)

- Stress can be positive or negative. If we do not expose ourselves to moderate amounts of stress then we do not develop an ability to manage our emotions and responses when we do encounter a stressful event.

What is depression?

- Depression is when you feel sad or irritated for most of the day nearly every day for a few weeks. You can also have little motivation, have problems sleeping, wanting to be alone a lot, crying without knowing why, feel bad about yourself, being tired, not hungry, not wanting to do things you used to like to do.

What causes depression:

- Depression comes from a mix of many things:
 - Genetic/Family history
 - Physical health
 - Chemicals in the brain acting differently than they should
 - Life events
 - Daily environment
- Depression is NEVER your fault.

T F Mild forms of depression are fairly common and diminish with time (2)

- Studies show that if someone has mild depression and we do not do anything to address it, it will most likely resolve itself in about 18 months.
- So why still address mild depression?
 - The child still needs care and support. This care and support can help lessen the effects that the depression has on the child's life. It can also help prevent the depression from becoming worse.

T F Teenagers with depression are easy to identify because they are quiet, withdrawn, alone and sad (3)

- Depression can be very sneaky and show up in ways we don't expect like we talked about earlier.
- Gender differences:
 - Girls- typical symptoms
 - Boys- anger, aggression, defiance, oppositional behavior
 - Revenge movie analogy:
 - If someone dies at the beginning of a movie, the woman is often crying (sad). The man spends the rest of the movie getting revenge (feels sad but shows as anger).

from the Circle of Support training materials
used by Michael K. Huntley, M.A., LP

Youth Service Bureau, Inc. www.ysb.net

- Also, people put on masks. Who wants people asking about why I am so sad all of the time, why I never want to do anything, or why I am such a “debbie downer”? If we put on the mask and pretend that everything is ok, we look normal, and of course everyone wants to be normal.

T F Teenage girls report more depression than do teenage boys (4)

- Yes girls REPORT more depression than boys however this does not mean that they experience depression more.
- Actually 50/50

T F A teenager who threatens suicide is only trying to get attention (5)

- I know it may really feel this way sometimes and you might hear adults say it.
- Threatening suicide means- I am hurting.
- SUICIDE DOES NOT MEAN I WANT TO DIE, IT MEANS THAT I WANT TO END THE PAIN
- If they tell you they are thinking of suicide then they are telling you that something is wrong in their lives that they can't handle. Maybe they have no intent to commit suicide but by threatening it they can tell people about the pain that they feel. They may feel like there is no other way to get help, support, or for someone to take their pain seriously. They may not really know how to talk about their pain in any other way, they just know that they hurt and want the pain to end.
- Everyone has a suicidal thought at least once in their lives. In fact, some suicidal thoughts are normal.

T F If a depressed person is really upset one minute and then says, “It’s no big deal,” you should accept that and go about your business (6)

- If they were really upset about something, then yes it is a big deal.
- People with depression often wear masks. The mask may come off accidentally when something stressful happens and they show their true emotion. They then realize that they did this and believe that by saying it is “no big deal” that people will forget about it and walk on with their day.
- They do this when they don't want people to see their depression because they don't want to feel judged.
- When this happens, tell an adult and ask them to talk to them. This shows that you noticed them hurting and you care enough to see if they are ok.

T F Suicide attempts usually happen without warning and with no apparent cause (7)

- There is always a cause. No one kills themselves for no reason.
- THE PURPOSE OF SUICIDE IS NOT TO DIE

- THE PURPOSE OF SUICIDE IS TO END THE PAIN
- Ask a kid if they want to die or if they want to just end the pain, they will say to end the pain.
- There are also always symptoms, however we might not recognize them, especially if we are not looking or we are interpreting what we see to be something other than a symptom of depression.

T F A person with depression sees the world completely differently than a person who is not depressed (8)

- Depression more likely than not leads to pessimistic thinking.
- “rose colored glasses” means that you see the good in everything.
- “gloomy glasses” means that you see the negatives in everything. When you wear these, the small bad things seem really big (skyscrapers) and the positive things seem really small (gnome houses).
- However, the “cure” to depression is NOT to “just think more positively”. Individuals with depression often not have the ability to do that on their own at the moment. They need help learning how to see the positives again and believe that the positives are true.

T F Talking to a person about their suicidal feelings is likely to cause them to attempt suicide (9)

- Suicide is about ending the pain. This is why they go to see a therapist, to talk about how they feel. Letting a child talk about and express that pain outwardly will help them in their healing process and it gives adults the opportunity to support them. It is hard to support you when the adult does not know if there is something bothering you.
- **Suicide contagion-** belief that if one child commits suicide then others will do it too. This belief is based off of fear.
 - Yes this does occur, however there are several factors that are very important to consider.
 - Talking about it does not increase the likelihood of it happening.
 - What does increase it is glamorizing it.
 - If want to have a type of memorial- rather than decorate locker, have kids who would like (not required or expected) to sign a card for the family- or something like that.
- Repeat again: Talking about things that bother us, that scare us, that emotionally consume us actually decreases these symptoms. That is why going to talk therapy does not increase the possibility of suicides (even group therapy).

T F A very high percentage of young people who make suicide attempts experienced depression and alcohol abuse at the time of the attempt (10)

- This does not mean ALL young individuals who make suicide attempts had alcohol involved.
- This correlation is seen because: alcohol is consumed to numb the pain, alcohol also decreases inhibitions and ability to think rationally, decreased inhibitions leads to more impulsivity, this

impulsivity leads to thoughts that suicide is the only way to end the pain, and without thinking about it further the individual makes the choice to kill themselves.

T F When teenagers have a problem with depression, they go first to their friends for help (11)

- If a student comes to you and tells you that they struggle or a friend struggles with depression or suicidal thoughts, talk to an adult immediately.
- The last person a child will tell about their depression is an adult so if they tell you, it means something.
- Sometimes kids fear that if they tell an adult, the person will not want to be their friend anymore.
 - First thing- which is more important, your friendship or their life?
 - Second thing- although they might be mad at you at first, more likely than not, they will probably thank you after they start to feel better.

T F Some common methods of coping with stress can make the situation worse instead of better (12)

- Harmful coping methods (drinking, drugs, bingeing on food, extreme use of computer or tv, taking it out on others, avoiding-withdrawing from family/friends, sleeping, skipping school, caffeine, too much exercise)

T F Sometimes it's better to be a good listener than to try to solve the problem for another person (13)

- Sometimes a person just needs to be heard and to not get advice. Just being heard can really make a difference for a lot of people.
- If we care about the person, we might want to try and fix things. It is best for kids to simply listen to their friend, tell them that they care about them, and to tell an adult.

BREATHING BASICS

Rebekah Windschitl M.A., LPCC, Youth & Family Therapist

Breathing Basics:

- Put yourself in the correct posture.
 - Sitting tall (like a string pulling your head to the ceiling) in a chair with feet flat on the floor
- Place hand on rib cage and breathe “low and slow”
 - You should feel your ribs expanding as you inhale and contract as you exhale
 - Your chest should move little and your shoulders should stay away from your ears
 - Focus on feeling the air as it comes into/out of your nose and throat
- Also notice how your body feels against the chair/floor, where your body touches the chair/floor and where it does not.

If you are emotionally upset and wish to calm down, try these techniques:

- Count as you inhale, pause when your lungs are full, count as you exhale, pause when your lungs are completely empty.
 - Often when we are upset we don't let all of the air out of our lungs. This can lead to feeling as though it is hard to catch your breath.
 - When counting, count to a certain number as you inhale. When exhaling, try to count at least 2 more numbers.
 - i.e. Inhale for 4 counts, exhale for 6 counts.
 - Count slow, no faster than the second-hand ticks on a clock
- Trace a figure 8 or stop sign with your finger, changing your breath as you go (see handout)
- Blow bubbles or blow up a balloon- this makes you control your breath

- If still having trouble controlling breathing, then sing. Inhale deep, feeling your ribcage expand, shoulders and chest moving little, and exhale singing any note, any words, until all of the air is out of your lungs. Pause, then repeat.

****Disclaimer-** These techniques may make you feel dizzy. If this happens, sit down for safety and when you are breathing don't breathe in as deep.

Coping and Calming Skills

Rebekah Windschitl M.A., LPCC, Youth & Family Therapist

Breathing and Body Awareness Skills

- Counting Breaths
 - Inhale 4 beats, pause, exhale 6 beats, pause, repeat.
 - Count no faster than the ticks of the second hand on a clock.
 - See attached sheet for Breathing Basic technique
- Square Breathing
 - Use your finger to trace a square. On each side of the square, alternate inhaling (1 side), pausing (1 side), exhaling (1 side), pausing (1 side)
- Figure Eight Breathing
 - Similar to Square Breathing, follow your finger in the shape of a figure eight/infinity symbol, alternating breathing each time your finger hits the center.
- Progressive Muscle Relaxation
 - Tense different areas of your body for about 5 seconds, release, and then tense them for another 5 seconds. This can be done with toes, legs, squeezing knees together, abdominal muscles, squeezing crossed arms in front of you, shoulders to ears, hands together, and scrunch up face.
- Body Scan
 - Mentally scan your body for tense muscles or uncomfortable feelings. Notice how your body feels against the chair/floor/wall you are against. Notice different textures of things that may be touching you. Notice if you can feel your heart beat in different areas of your body.
- Body Games
 - Try and slow your heart rate to a certain number (a good goal would be 60 beats per minute)
 - If feeling hyperactive and movement helps, “shake it out” for several seconds before resuming the activity
- Calm the 5 Senses
 - Identifying calming activities/objects that relate to the 5 senses.

Rational Thought Skills

- Number Games
 - Sudoku, math problems, etc
- Crossword puzzles
- Mind Games:
 - 1A, 2B, 3C..... each time you mess up you need to start over again!
 - Riddles
 - Problem Solving tasks
 - Tongue Twisters
- Creative writing
- Reading a book
- Drawing/artwork/art projects

Helping a Student Regulate Emotions

Rebekah Windschitl M.A., LPCC, Youth & Family Therapist

When a student is starting to become dysregulated:

1. Remember the Brain:

- When anyone reaches a certain emotion intensity, it becomes very difficult, sometimes impossible, to think rationally. Productive conversations cannot occur if emotions are too intense.
- When the amygdala is in control, you are acting based on your emotions and fight/flight/freeze/faint. The goal is to get the prefrontal cortex engaged by doing something that is calming or involves very rational thinking. By doing this, your prefrontal cortex takes control and your emotion intensity will decrease.

2. Identify how dysregulated they are becoming.

- If there is not an emotional outburst, try the Rational Thought skills first.
- If there seems to be intense emotions, start with Breathing and Body Awareness skills.

3. Calmly tell the student what you are seeing (objective, factual observations) and have them use the skill with you. Model with the student how to use the skill.

4. The student will show they are regulated when they can calmly discuss the situation that upset them. This will be different for each student. If they become upset when you try and discuss the situation, then they are not regulated enough to gain benefit from the conversation, so repeat the calming process and/or try a new skill.

Things to Remember:

- Identify the dysregulation as early as possible. Notice signs of annoyance, being easily irritated, worried looks, increased body activity, etc. If you know that a student struggles with something coming up in class, work on using regulating skills before transitioning to the new activity.
- **When using the skills, it is very important to NOT FOCUS ON THE PROBLEM THAT LED TO THE EMOTIONAL DISTRESS**
 - The brain needs to regulate its activity and focusing on the problem is not going to allow that to happen as effectively.
- When asking a student to “take a break”:
 - Make sure they know what to do on the break, having it written down or posted somewhere is best. Agree on a skill to use before sending the student on the break can also be helpful.
 - If the student does not know the skill, do it with them and model it for them a few times, prompting what to do and what to think about
 - Follow up with the student after the break to see if the skill worked and/or they need more assistance in calming down

Resources for Mindfulness

as posted on <http://mindfulnessforteens.com>

The Mindful Teen: Powerful Skills to Help You Handle Stress One Moment at a Time, by Dzung Vo MD (New Harbinger, 2015), is a mindfulness book for teens, with mindfulness instructions, guided meditations, examples, and youth voices.

Here are some more useful resources for mindful teens:

Mobile Apps

*[Stop, Breathe, and Think](#): When you check in, the app recommends meditations personalized to how you are feeling. There's a great Walking Meditation, "Drop the Storyline" (detaching from thoughts about something you're anxious or worried about) Body Scan, and even yoga videos. It also takes you through the basics of mindfulness through its Learn to Meditate feature.

*[Calm.com](#): Calm features special Sleep Stories, (because, hey, you're never too old for a good bedtime story), 7-Day programs for specifics like Loving Kindness, Gratitude and Self-Esteem, (everyone knows daily practice makes perfect) and the Breathe Bubble that guides your breath from inhale to exhale. Also, really pretty videos of nature-scapes with calming sounds as the backdrop to their home screen and meditation experiences.

*[Insight Timer](#): Insight Timer is entirely free, and offers nearly 4,000 guided meditations (and chants, and guided movements, and nature sounds) from nearly 1,000 teachers, some of the most renowned of our time, like Eckhart Tolle and Tara Brach. You also have the option to join groups and leave comments on everything you watch or listen to, and read other people's feedback, too.

*[MindShift](#): Free mobile app for teens developed by AnxietyBC, with mindfulness and other coping skills for anxiety

*[Smiling Mind](#): Free mobile mindfulness app for young people, from Australia

*[Headspace](#): "Meditation made simple." This app has a free introductory period, after which it requires a paid subscription to continue to use.

*[Breathr](#): This mindfulness app for youth is currently in development by the [Kelty Mental Health Resource Centre](#) (British Columbia, Canada). Dr. Vo is consulting on the development of this app. Learn more [here](#), and stay tuned!

*[Aura](#): Ideal for students who struggle with schoolwork or trouble focusing or struggle with negative thoughts. A pop-up notification reminds them to take a moment. Sends 3 minute meditations. Also features for mindful breathing, gratitude journal, and list of daily goals.

*[Inscape](#): Sleep library and sound baths, futuristic and carefully curated soothing sounds that accompany detailed guided meditations that get very specific when it comes to what to focus on and how to guide



your breath. When you open the app each day, “Today’s Inscapes,” a curated list of five different suggested meditations for morning, afternoon, evening, and late night.

*Simple Habit: Simple Habit features super-specific meditations like getting ready for a test, interview, or public speaking, your commute home (on the bus, train, or car are all options you can select from) taking a break (specifically, taking a bath, a work break, or eating lunch) or even dealing with PMS. The meditations are also pretty short and sweet.

*SAM-Self-help for Anxiety Management: This app is an all-in-one and practical workbook for managing anxiety. Use SAM to track worrying thoughts and combat them through both physical and mental exercises. An in-app forum also offers a safe space to talk with other SAM users about coping with anxiety.

*Centered: This app recognizes the power of physical activity in battling anxiety. Not only does Centered encourage you to take time to breathe and meditate, it also wants you to get up and get moving. Apple Watch users can also have notifications sent to their wrists reminding them to take a few minutes for a mindful walk or meditation.

*Relax App- This app focuses on relaxation and sleep assistance. It features an interactive screen that changes colors and shapes with different touch as calming music plays in the background. It is quite mesmerizing!

*PTSD Coach: This app provides you with education about PTSD, information about professional care, a self-assessment for PTSD, opportunities to find support, and tools that can help you manage the stresses of daily life with PTSD. Tools range from relaxation skills and positive self-talk to anger management and other common self-help strategies. You can customize tools based on your preferences and can integrate your own contacts, photos, and music. This app can be used by people who are in treatment as well as those who are not.

*Sleep Pillow- This app is focused on helping you sleep. It provides a large variety of ambient sound, from white noise, to calming music, to rain sounds and more. The music quickly brings you to a relaxed state that is optimal for sleep.

*BioBreathing- This app is a breath pacer that allows the user to keep count of inhale and exhale breathing cycles. The lengths of the inhale and exhale phases can be changed along with the tone that accompanies each phase. Very helpful when counting breaths is too difficult.

Social Networking

Facebook: Like “[The Mindful Teen](#)” on Facebook to receive regular inspirational quotes, poems, and articles to help you keep your mindfulness practice fresh and alive.

Twitter: [Follow The Mindful Teen \(@TheMindfulTeen\)](#) for mindful tweets.

Other mindfulness and positive teen Twitter feeds: See the feeds that The Mindful Teen (@TheMindfulTeen) is following, and follow some of those. The more mindful feeds you have on Twitter, the more opportunities you’ll have to practice mindfulness!



Guided Mindfulness Meditation Recordings

In addition to mindfulnessforteen.com's [free guided meditations](#), here are a few more recordings:

Amy Saltzman, MD, [Still Quiet Place: Mindfulness for Teens](#) (CD)

Gina Biegel, LMFT, [Mindfulness for Teens: Meditation Practices to Reduce Stress and Promote Well-Being](#) (CD, MP3)

Larry Rosen, MD. "The Buddha and the Fig Tree." (CD, MP3)

Mindful.org's "[Audio Resources for Guided Meditations](#)" collection: Online, free guided meditations.

Free online Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) course.

Stressed Teens

<http://www.stressedteens.com/>

Mindfulness Books for Teens

-Gina M. Biegel, *The Stress Reduction Workbook for Teens: Mindfulness Skills to Help You Deal with Stress* (Instant Help Books, 2009)

-Joseph V. Ciarrochi, Louise Hayes, and Ann Bailey, *Get Out of Your Mind and Into Your Life for Teens: A Guide to Living an Extraordinary Life* (Instant Help, 2012)

-Mark C. Purcell and Jason R. Murphy, *Mindfulness for Teen Anger: A Workbook to Overcome Anger and Aggression Using MBSR and DBT Skills* (Instant Help, 2014)

-Christopher Willard, *Mindfulness for Teen Anxiety: A Workbook for Overcoming Anxiety at Home, at School, and Everywhere Else* (Instant Help, 2014)

-Christopher Willard and Mitch Abblett, *Growing Mindful: A Deck of Mindfulness Practices for All Ages* (Growing Mindful Games, 2015). A deck of cards with short mindfulness practices to "cultivate mindfulness on the go." Available [here](#) and [here](#).

Mindfulness Books for Parents, Educators, and Health Care Providers

-Patricia C. Broderick, *Learning to Breathe: A Mindfulness Curriculum for Adolescents to Cultivate Emotion Regulation, Attention, and Performance* (New Harbinger Publications, 2013)

-Valerie Brown and Kirsten Olson, *The Mindful School Leader: Practices to Transform Your Leadership and School* (Corwin, 2014)

-Sam Himelstein, *A Mindfulness-Based Approach to Working with High Risk Adolescents* (Routledge, 2013)

-Sam Himelstein and Stephen Saul, *Mindfulness-Based Substance Abuse Treatment for Adolescents: A 12-Session Curriculum* (Routledge, 2015)

-Susan Kaiser Greenland, *The Mindful Child: How to Help Your Kid Manage Stress and Become - Happier, Kinder, and More Compassionate* (Free Press, 2010)

-Jon Kabat-Zinn, *Full Catastrophe Living: Using the Wisdom of Your Body and Mind to Face Stress, Pain, and Illness* (rev. and updated ed.) (Bantam Books, 2013)

-Jon Kabat-Zinn, *Mindfulness for Beginners: Reclaiming the Present Moment—And Your Life* (includes audio CD) (Sounds True, 2012)

-Amy Saltzman, *A Still Quiet Place: A Mindfulness Program for Teaching Children and Adolescents to Ease Stress and Difficult Emotions* (New Harbinger Publications, 2014)

-Daniel Siegel, *Brainstorm: The Power and Purpose of the Teenage Brain* (Jeremy P.



Tarcher/Penguin, 2013)

-Bob Stahl and Elisha Goldstein, A Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Workbook (New Harbinger Publications, 2010)

-Meena Srinivasan, Teach, Breathe, Learn: Mindfulness in and out of the Classroom (Parallax, 2014)

Thich Nhat Hanh, The Miracle of Mindfulness: An Introduction to the Practice of Meditation (Beacon Press, 1999)

-Thich Nhat Hanh, Happiness: Essential Mindfulness Practices (Parallax Press, 2009)

-Christopher Willard, Child's Mind: Mindfulness Practices to Help Our Children Be More Focused, Calm, and Relaxed (Parallax Press, 2010)

-Christopher Willard, Growing Up Mindful: Essential Practices to Help Children, Teens, and Families Find Balance, Calm, and Resilience (Sounds True, 2016)

-Christopher Willard and Amy Saltzman, Eds, Teaching Mindfulness Skills to Kids and Teens (Guilford Press, 2015)

-Mark Williams, John Teasdale, Zindel Segal, and Jon Kabat-Zinn, The Mindful Way Through Depression: Freeing Yourself from Chronic Unhappiness (Guilford Press, 2007)

Websites and Organizations

Association for Mindfulness in Education

<http://www.mindfuleducation.org/>

“A collaborative association of organizations and individuals working together to provide support for mindfulness training as a component of K-12 education.”

Center for Adolescent Studies

www.centerforadolescentstudies.com

Founded by Sam Himelstein. Offers trainings for professionals in all disciplines, in mindfulness and building authentic relationships with adolescents.

Center for Mindful Learning

<http://www.centerformindfullearning.org/>

Based in Vermont, CML's vision is “To build a mindfulness-based educational system that produces powerful, just, selfless leaders.”

Dalai Lama Centre for Peace and Education

<http://dalailamacenter.org>

Inspired by the Dalai Lama, and operating in a non-sectarian framework, this center (based in Vancouver, British Columbia) has as its mission “to educate the hearts of children by informing, inspiring and engaging the communities around them.”

Kelty Mental Health Resource Centre, Healthy Living Toolkit

<http://keltymentalhealth.ca/toolkits>

Toolkit for youth and families, with practical information on healthy sleeping, eating, exercise, and stress management.

Kelty Mental Health Resource Centre, mindfulness page

<http://www.keltymentalhealth.ca/healthy-living/mindfulness>

Check out the three-minute “Mindfulness: Youth Voices” video to learn more about mindfulness for youths, from youths themselves.

Also contains more information and resources on mindfulness for youths.

Learning 2 Breathe

<http://learning2breathe.org/>

Resources related to Patricia Broderick's Learning to Breathe mindfulness curriculum and book (see also “Books” section, above)



The Still Quiet Place

<http://www.stillquietplace.com>

Mindfulness resources from Dr. Amy Saltzman for parents, teens, teachers, and service providers.

Mindful Magazine

<http://www.mindful.org>

A bimonthly magazine available in print and digital editions. The website features many informative articles and videos.

Mindful Schools

<http://www.mindfulschools.org/>

This organization (based in Oakland, California) has as its mission to “lead the integration of mindfulness into education,” through training courses and research.

Mindfulness Without Borders

<http://mindfulnesswithoutborders.org/>

This organization, based in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, provides “educational programs in mindfulness-based social and emotional learning that help individuals to flourish socially, emotionally, academically and professionally.”



Faith and Suicide FAQ's from an ELCA Lutheran Perspective

Is mental illness a sin?

No. Mental illness is not somebody's fault. Just like cancer, it is a tragic sickness of the body and brain. This is not God's will, but the reality of an imperfect world.

Is death by suicide an "unforgivable sin"?

No. Suicide is the tragic consequence of the sickness of mental illness. Like cancer, it sometimes ends in death. Sometimes it does not. Lutherans also don't believe in "unforgivable sins." God's forgiveness is complete, without exception, in Christ.

Is suicide like self-murder?

No. The point of suicide is NOT to die. The purpose is to END THE PAIN. Suicide means that someone felt such deep despair that they could not imagine life getting better. This is a sickness, not a sin.

Does suicide mean that God needs another angel? Or another rose in the garden?

No. God does not intend illness or death. God insists and stands on the side of life, "on earth as in heaven." God doesn't need any more angels or roses in heaven, but works for angels and roses to thrive on earth.

If someone dies by suicide, will they go to hell?

No. We believe that God conquers all death, including death by suicide and other diseases, in Christ's resurrection. In baptism, God promises to never let us go. No matter what happens in life, we are God's.

Does God abandon those who are mentally ill or die by suicide?

No. In the promise of baptism, God will never leave us. The Psalms are a great resource for hope and understanding in the midst of mental health questions or concerns:

Psalm 139:7-12 (Message Translation)

Is there any place I can go to avoid your Spirit? To be out of your sight? If I climb to the sky, you're there! If I go underground, you're there! If I flew on morning's wings to the far western horizon, you'd find me in a minute—you're already there waiting! Then I said to myself, "Oh, God even sees me in the dark! At night I'm immersed in the light!" It's a fact: darkness isn't dark to you; night and day, darkness and light, they're all the same to you.

From the ELCA Message on Suicide Prevention

"Suicide testifies to life's tragic brokenness. We believe that life is God's good and precious gift to us, and yet life for us ourselves and others sometimes appears to be hell, a torment without hope. When we would prefer to ignore, reject, or shy away from those who despair of life, we need to recall what we have heard: God's boundless love in Jesus Christ will leave no one alone and abandoned. We who lean on God's love to live are called to "bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ" (Galatians 6:2). Our efforts to prevent suicide grow out of our obligation to protect and promote life, our hope in God amid suffering and adversity, and our love for our troubled neighbor" (2012)

More Help

If you are in need of immediate support, questions or concerns, please contact Pastor Chris or Pastor Peter.

If you are in need of additional resources, for you or a loved one, visit: <https://suicidepreventionministry.org>