

# THE POWER OF MINDFUL PARENTING

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Together, all the way.®



# Mindful Parenting



## Examining Ourselves

- Understand our automatic reactions and the true intention of our heart
- Raising awareness allows the dots to connect
- Put aside all judgements of self & others
- Let go of critical thoughts
- Mindfulness is an approach to daily life
- Energy will shift as you interact with your child



## Clear the Score

- Gently close eyes and settle in
- Visualize a scoreboard
- Stop tracking who is in the lead
- Take in deep breaths
- Imagine wiping off the scores
- Remember families are on the same team
- Make a fresh start with each interaction



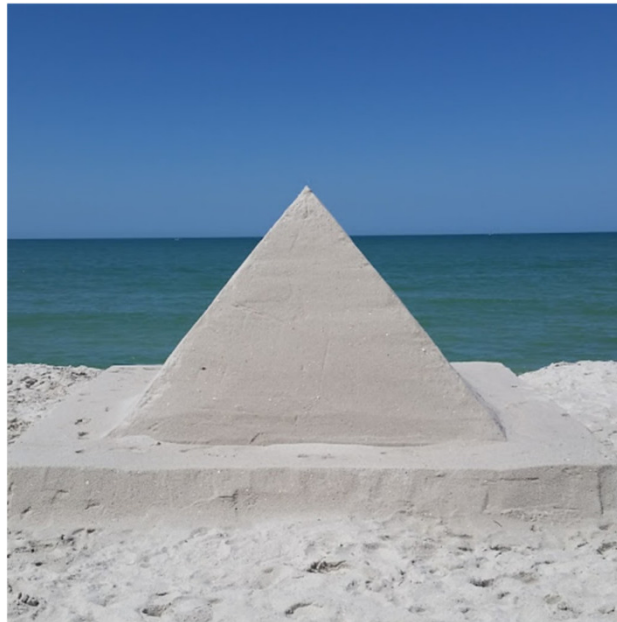
# Inventory

- How do we tune into ourselves?
- In seconds we can assess “Drop in” at key transition times



## Moving from external to internal- observing through the senses

- Move from external to internal
- Observe environment through your senses
- What do you see, feel, hear?
- Ground yourself
- Drop into yourself as you settle into your external surroundings



## Notice your thoughts

- Observe your thoughts, just note what is revealed
- No processing, analyzing, or problem solving
- Be honest without self criticism
- Return to your anchoring breath



## Notice your physical self

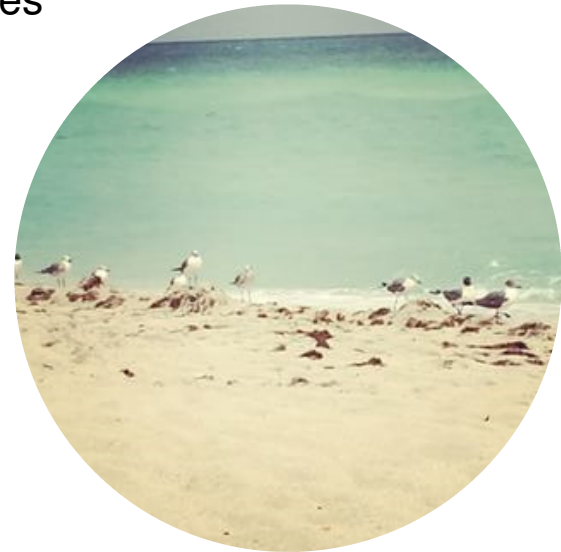
- What sensations come into awareness?
- Try breathing into those areas of pain or tension





## Notice your emotions

- Be completely transparent with yourself
- Try not to categorize as good or bad feelings
- Let go of the “shoulds”
- It’s normal to have all types of feelings, even intense emotions
- It’s ok to feel yet it’s not always ok to act on every emotion
- Feelings pass through just like a weather system does



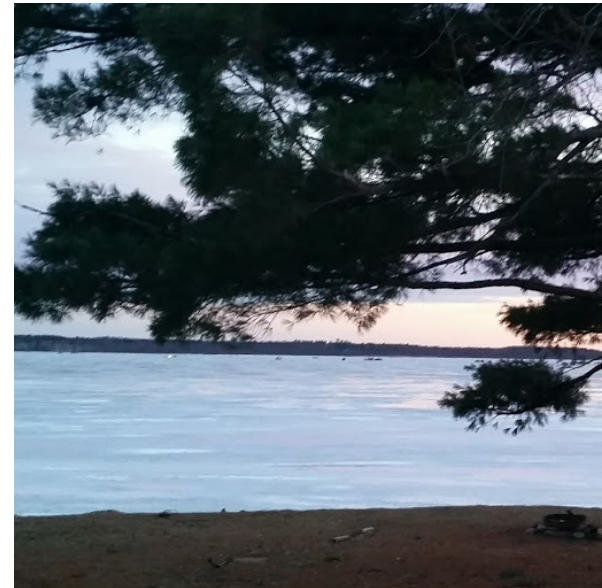
## Explore your heart state: open or closed?

- Vulnerability may be felt when examining our heart state. Do you feel open or closed?
- Check in with your level of compassion
- Feeling overwhelmed or depleted is a sign for needed self-care



## Meditation

- Determine four-word phrase to center yourself
- Example: Role Model Loving Kindness
- In midst of interaction, this can be a grounding tool
- Allows you to regain perspective
- Gives opportunity to take ownership ones reactions



## Acceptance: Let go or be dragged

- Non-attachment takes constant practice
- Life is full of “speed bumps” beyond our control
- What if we embraced the unexpected?
- Acceptance requires reconditioning ourselves
- We conserve our energy the less we resist things outside of our control



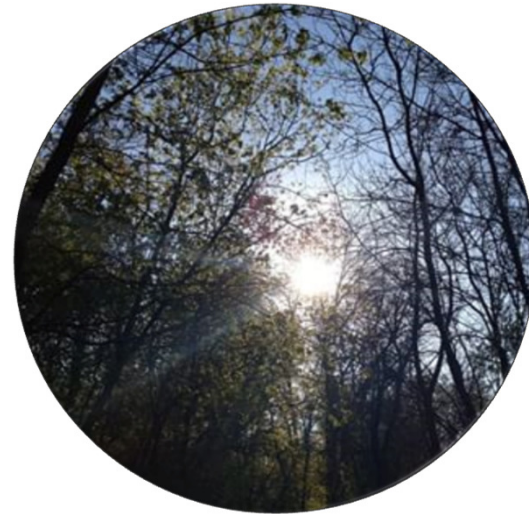
## Minimizing, Disregarding and Invalidating

- Assess your child's emotion—know that body language and tone often reveal more than words
- Make direct eye contact, use physical touch if appropriate
- Touch is one of our most powerful senses
- Refrain from advice giving
- Honor your child's thoughts and opinions without disregarding their perceptions



## Tuning into your child

- You know your child better than anyone
- You know their expressions, gestures, posture, etc.
- Their actions and non-verbals reveal more than their words can express
- Tune into what you sense about your child and the situation
- Pause. Observe. Feel.



## Final Exercise

- We can mindfully choose our reactions to stress.
- In this exercise, we will see 2 distinct examples of how an individual handles a stressful day.
  - In Scenario #1 Jill is merely reacting.
  - In Scenario #2 Jill is remaining in awareness.



## Scenario 1: Can you notice these?

- Trying to control circumstances
- Ruminating
- Blaming
- Rushing to judgement
- Anticipating the worst
- Judging ones emotions
- Negative self-talk
- Worrying
- Scorekeeping
- Judging others





## Scenario 2: Can you notice these?

- Naming the emotion
- Awareness of one's surroundings
- Using the senses as a portal
- Savoring something positive/ recalling a pleasant time
- Gratitude/ compassion
- Addressing what the body reveals to us
- Extending grace to yourself/others
- Not feeling you have to have all the answers
- Collaborating
- Asking for what you need/ not expecting others to be a mind reader
- Not personalizing circumstances
- Adapting/ being flexible
- Checking your internal temperature before you simply react



## Takeaways from Today

- Watch out for scorekeeping
- Take transition times to tune into your surroundings, thoughts, body, emotions and your heart
- Always remember you are the role model , step away if you need to reset
- Your child/ teen is in a continual state of development, they aren't an adult
- Be adaptable, practice acceptance, and let go
- The little moments with your child are golden opportunities to connect
- Observe your child and trust what your intuition reveals
- Connect through eye contact, touch, try to have a warm tone of voice, ask for their input, and value their opinions
- Refrain from immediately giving advice, connect on an emotional level



## Recommended resources:

Visit Cigna.com for the following resources:

- Stress Management Tool Kit

[www.cigna.com/individuals-families/health-wellness/stress-management-toolkit](http://www.cigna.com/individuals-families/health-wellness/stress-management-toolkit)

- Mindfulness-Stress Management recordings

[www.cigna.com/individuals-families/health-wellness/climb-mindfulness-podcasts](http://www.cigna.com/individuals-families/health-wellness/climb-mindfulness-podcasts)

- Explore Medical Topics, A-Z

[www.cigna.com/individuals-families/health-wellness](http://www.cigna.com/individuals-families/health-wellness)



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