



Take a Break with PASE Session 10 – Mindfulness Fundamentals

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Session Notes

Mindfulness fundamentals with Chia-Ti Chiu, Senior Teacher & Trainer with Lineage Project

Lineage Project teaches mindfulness practices to young people navigating incarceration, homelessness, school suspension, and academic challenges. Lineage also teaches organizations to develop mindful and trauma-aware cultures and practices, supporting staff sustainability, building community, and improving climates within facilities and schools.

What is mindfulness?

- Mindfulness is about being aware of your environment, but also your *internal* environment. But with a quality of kindness, non-judgment, and curiosity. To be aware, with kindness and care.
- Mindfulness is a way to dismantle oppression in ourselves and in our society. Helps to combat the fight or flight tendency, so that we don't get overwhelmed and can digest what is happening around us.
- Our mindfulness practice invites us to lean in, to not look away, to deal with what's uncomfortable, to deal with suffering and to hold space for it as best as we can.
- We can in our own selves and our own lives and also collectively, because we have that collective responsibility to each other.

Tangible Mindfulness Practices – Five Techniques

[Download one-pager from Lineage Project](#) with practice descriptions. See additional pointers below.

1. GO = Ground and Orient

- In order to become aware, we need to pause, otherwise we are on autopilot mode, or focused on the past or future.
- The idea of pause is not to stop. But the idea of pause is to come back to the body. Come back to the present moment. So often our minds are in the past or the future.
- When we ground ourselves, it reminds us that we're here, and that we matter.



2. Deep abdominal breathing (hand on stomach, inhale and fill stomach like a balloon, on exhale, balloon deflates)

- This exercise is not to change our breathing, but just to notice - How am I breathing? Am I breathing?
- These practices are not to make us calm and complacent, but to boost our internal resiliency. To counter our fight or flight and boost our parasympathetic nervous system.

3. Asymmetric hug

- Grounding, bringing a connection with your body
- Can be done with an affirmation - For example: "This moment is difficult and I'm strong." "I'm doing the best I can."
- If our nervous systems are agitated, it's very difficult for us to not be reactive. Mindfulness gives us that space so that we can learn how to best respond instead of just be reactive.

4. Tapping (above the lip, below the lip, under the collar bone, the side of your hand; these correlate to acupressure points)

- Tapping comes from a technique called Emotional Freedom Technique
- Organized or focused energy, as opposed to disorganized energy that promotes fight or flight.
- Can also include an affirmation here.

5. Anchor Meditation

- We are trying to focus the mind on something. We usually focus on breath. But it is often not easy to focus on breath or silence. For folks who have experienced trauma, sometimes the breath is not a comfortable space. So, we offer 3 different anchor points, and you can pick one of them.
- You can anchor on sound, or on a neutral place on the body, or breath. Turn your focus to one of them with kindness and non-judgment.
- Bringing ourselves back to our anchor is strengthening the mind - when we can notice distraction and gently bring ourselves back.

The parasympathetic system

- Our nervous system tries to self-regulate already, but we need to recondition the connections in the brain, to ground us rather than take us further into fight or flight.



- The parasympathetic system is known as the 'rest and digest' or 'tend and befriend' system. It's what we use to care for ourselves. We want to nurture this system.
- When we feel overwhelmed, our tendency may be to isolate. But we need social connection and we need to reach out to others.

Practice and application with young people

- Teens can take a leadership role when working in mixed age group settings.
- Lineage Project uses a 3 part model: Discussion (around a theme), Movement, Meditation. Students may not do all 3, but may do at least 1
- Not to convince them, but frame as a potential benefit
- Example of professional NBA or NFL players doing yoga to improve their professional performance.

When you're in a difficult or stressful situation, you can touch each finger to your thumb as a way to ground yourself. This is a more subtle technique, for example, if you are on Zoom.

An emotion can change in 90 seconds. But you have to be willing to be with the emotion. It's not about pushing away anger for 90- seconds and thinking it's going to go away. It's being with it, holding space for it, breathing, tapping, reaching out for support. That helps an emotion shift. It doesn't go away, but it shifts in intensity.

Mindfulness practices can be woven throughout your day so you can feel a moment of groundedness, a moment of regulation. Knowing that it can be just one moment and life will keep throwing challenges your way. But you increase your resiliency when you are able to string together these moments together.

PASE Opportunities

Mediation 101 June 2 <https://bit.ly/pasemeditation101>

PASE/Landit Women's Leadership Program Apply by June 7 <https://bit.ly/womenleadership20>