



# Mindfulness in Schools: Strategies for Promoting Mental Wellness in a COVID Environment

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Presented by

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**eLuma**  
online therapy

Moderated by

George Dayton,  
Marketing Director, eLuma Online Therapy

# Agenda



**Introduction**

1:00 pm EST (5 minutes)

**Presentation**

1:05 pm EST (30 minutes)

**Q&A**

1:40 pm EST (10 minutes)

# Who is eLuma?

## eLuma Online Therapy

- ▶ FOCUSED on solving problems in special education
- ▶ Provide related services online
- ▶ Founded in 2011
- ▶ Team of 200+ dedicated team members
- ▶ Serving over 14,000 students in 36 states



# The Webinar

## A few facts:

- Part of our eLumanated Special Education series
- Focus on Social-emotional learning
- Recording to be sent out afterwards
- Slide deck to be sent out afterwards



# The Presenter

## Jason Basinger, M.S., Ed.S., NCSP

- School Psychologist, Salt Lake City School District
- Trauma Team, Utah Education Association
- Board of Trustees, Utah Association of School Psychologists



# MINDFULNESS IN SCHOOLS: STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING MENTAL WELLNESS IN A COVID ENVIRONMENT

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THE ELEPHANT IN THE  
ROOM:  
COVID-19

# WHAT ARE THE EMOTIONAL EFFECTS OF COVID-19

- Fear and Anxiety
- Stress Disorders
- Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Emotional Disturbance
- Sleep Disorders
- Mood Disorders
- Self-harm or Suicide



# OUR RESPONSE MATTERS

"I think it's important to acknowledge the reality of what we are currently facing and that **emotions like fear and anxiety and uncertainty are normal human responses**. But I also think it's equally important to not allow these feelings to overwhelm us or to commandeer our emotional state because there's very little that we can control about what's happening but **what we do have is agency**. Agency over how we decide to use this time, what we decide to consume, **the thoughts that we entertain**, the behaviors we indulge in, **and the choices that we make about how to respond**, not react but respond, to that which we can't control."

--Rich Roll, from the Rich Roll Podcast Episode #507

MINDFULNESS

# WHAT IS MINDFULNESS?

A mental state achieved by focusing **awareness** on the **present moment**, while calmly **acknowledging** and **accepting** feelings, thoughts, and bodily sensations

# 1-MINUTE MINDFULNESS ACTIVITY

When was the last time that you just sat still and did nothing except focus on your breathing?

Close your eyes, listen, and breathe

Bell/Attention: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZME0JKiweL4>

Headspace/Breathing: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c1Ndym-IsQg>

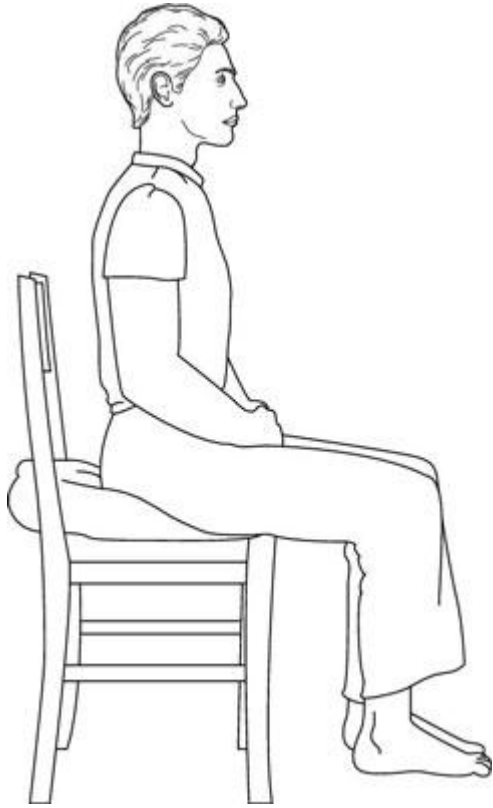
# THOUGHTS ON 1-MINUTE MINDFULNESS ACTIVITY?

- Did it feel short or long?
- Was it easy or difficult to maintain attention?
- Was the music helpful or distracting?

# WHAT TO DO DURING MINDFULNESS?

- Observe thoughts and feelings without judgment: are you worried, happy, restless?
- Body scans: adjust uncomfortable areas
- Breath awareness: breath deeply and evenly
- Meditative movement: purposeful movement

# MINDFULNESS SITTING



# MINDFULNESS ACTIVITY

## 5-minute Mindfulness Activity





# RECENT RESEARCH ON MINDFULNESS

# TEACHER MINDFULNESS STUDY

“[Teachers] who received mindfulness training showed improved ... emotion regulation skills and lower levels of personal stress. They also showed significant improvements in their observed instruction”

**(Jennings et al., 2013)**

# MINDFULNESS AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS

- Mindfulness can act as a buffer for some suicidal risk factors (**Collins et al., 2016**).

“The current findings suggest that mindful awareness increases zest for life and this heightened zest acts as a buffer to reduce the likelihood of suicidal desire in the face of risk and adversity” (**Collins et al., 2018, p. 104**).

# DECREASING EMOTIONAL CONCERNS

- A school-administered mindfulness-based cognitive intervention for elementary students with internalizing problems found that:

“panic, generalized anxiety and obsessive-compulsiveness, as well as overall internalizing problems, were **significantly lower after the mindfulness-based cognitive intervention**“ (Lam, 2016, 3304).

# YOGA AND MINDFULNESS

- A review of 39 randomized control studies found:  
  
“Yoga [with mindfulness activities] has **positive effects on a range of outcomes** in psychological/behavioral, cognitive, and physiological/physical functioning. Close to 90% of studies reported beneficial impacts on one or more outcomes” (Miller et al. 2020, p. **1348**).

# FUTURE RESEARCH AND QUESTIONS

- We still don't know exactly what is a “minimally effective dose” for mindfulness (**Miller et al., 2020**).
  - But there appears to be no indication that larger doses have better psychological outcomes (**Strohmaier, 2020**)
- There is room for improvement with kid-focused mindfulness apps (**Nunes, 2020**). Out of 36 apps, only five had “good” (4 out of 5 point) ratings:
  - Headspace
  - Breethe
  - Mindfulness with Petit BamBou
  - Serenity: Guided Meditation
  - Stop, Breath, and Think Kids

# QUESTIONS AND RESOURCES

## Some Questions

- What is the difference between mindfulness, meditation and yoga?
- What should you do if you're limited on time for meditation?

## Some Resources

- Headspace
- Calm
- Mindful.org

# **Jason Basinger, M.S., Ed.S., NCSP**

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Q&A



# Next Webinar



## Effective Change Management in Uncertain Times

Friday, October 16, 2020

Hear from Mindy Hintze, a PROSCI Certified Change Management Practitioner, who has been managing change in various organizations for nearly 20 years.

Mindy will break down change management into effective, actionable tasks to help you manage change in uncertain times.



**Thank You**

For more information contact:

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