

International Conference
University of Alicante
July, 16° 2021



Preventive strategies in working with highly sensitive children and adults: evidence-based mindfulness, mindful movement and embodiment practice

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4 MIND BODY PRINCIPLE FOR LEARNING

1. Start with your comfort zone and make it even more comfortable
2. Not too easy not too hard: pick an interesting challenge within your reach
3. Move away from your desired place and come back to it from different angles
4. Play with it, connect it, make your own

PRINCIPAL BEHIND THE PILOT

- 1 Equitable use – useful and accessible to all
- 2 Flexibility in use – accommodates a wide range of abilities and preferences
- 3 Simple and intuitive – easy to implement for all ages/stages
- 4 Perceptible information – user information is clear and accessible for all
- 5 Tolerance for error – minimizes unintended adverse consequences
- 6 Low physical effort – not tiring to implement
- 7 Size and space for approach and use – able to be implemented in spaces small and large and for children/adults of all sizes and physical abilities

PRINCIPAL OF UNIVERSAL DESIGN

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MINDFULNESS

“The awareness that emerges through paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally to the unfolding of experience.”

Jon Kabat-Zinn

The embodied paradigm

The embodied paradigm views mind, which is not only the brain (Siegal, 2007, 2015), and body as inseparable, having a bi-directional relationship as opposed to being disconnected as in conventional Cartesian dualistic thinking which views body and mind as isolated from each other.

Embodied cognition challenges this view claiming cognitive representations that constitute our knowledge are grounded in both sensory and motor experiences (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999; Barsalou, 2008). Varela et al. (1992, 172-3) define 'embodied' to mean that 'cognition depends upon the kinds of experience that come from having a body with various sensorimotor capacities' and that individual sensorimotor capacities are embedded in a biological, psychological and cultural context.

From applications in philosophy (Gallagher, 2005) and robotics (Paradowski, 2012), for example, embodied cognition states thinking is dependent on bodily feedback and the environment (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999). This view has



**What do you do is
NOT a habit**



SELF REGULATION

Cognitive self-regulation involves focused attention, decision making and executive functioning, emotional self-regulation refers to the ability to recognise and respond helpfully to one's emotions and behavioural self-regulation can be demonstrated through behaviours such as following rules, impulse control, working towards goals, and conflict resolution (Murray et al., 2015).

Self-regulation has been found to be positively correlated with psychological wellbeing including aspects of personal growth and relatedness, life purpose, and self-acceptance (Singh & Sharma, 2018). In line with the research finding that self-fulfilling prophecies have a significant impact on educational and wellbeing outcomes for children and students, using a proactive model should impact positively on both schools and preschools as well as children and students (Zyngier,

The pilot



12 week Mindful
embodied
education practice
with children



9 week Mindfulness
for parents and
teachers (90 mins)



Pre and post
assessment of
executive functions
– self regulation in
pilot and control
groups

Testimonials



Facets of Mindfulness Practice



Cultivating concentration/focus

- Kindness – kind attention
- Non-judgemental attitude
- Developing 'Beginner's Mind'
- Noticing when we are distracted
- Patience
- Allowing & Letting Be. Not trying to change or manipulate experience
- Practice – takes time
- Willingness to begin over and over

Facets of Mindfulness Practice



Week One: Introduction - Mindful Bodies & Mindful Listening

Week Two: Mindfulness of Breathing Part 1

Week Three: Social skills: Sending Kind Thoughts

Week Four: Mindful of bodies - Body Awareness

Week Five: Mindfulness of Breathing Part 2

Week Six: Social skills: Generosity

Week Seven: Mindful of thoughts

Week Eight: Mindful Seeing

Week Nine: Social skills: Kind and Caring on the Playground

Week Ten: Mindful of emotions

Week Eleven: Mindful Movement

Week Twelve: Social skills: Gratitude