Integrating Mindful Awareness Strategies to Support Well-Being and Resiliency in the Child Welfare Workforce
Speakers

SPEAKER
Maria Gehl
ZERO to THREE

SPEAKER
Jenifer Goldman Fraser
ZERO to THREE

MODERATOR
Jean Swift
CANTASD

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1 Minute Self-Reflection

- Think about a recent really hard work day. Note one word that describes how you felt.
- What sort of physical response do you typically experience under stressful situations?
Well-Being

• The presence of positive emotions and moods (contentment and happiness), the absence of chronic negative emotions (depression, anxiety), satisfaction with life, fulfillment, and positive functioning.

• Judging life positively and feeling good. Physical well-being is also viewed as a critical component.

Centers for Disease Control
Resilience is the learned capacity to cope and recover from any level of adversity.

Resilience is a function of:
• What you do to take care of yourself
• Social connections
• Concrete support in times of need
• Caring environment
Conditions that can lead to Burnout

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Passionate Commitment

- Emotional Labor
- High Workloads
- Few Resources, Little Support
- Complexity of Caseload
- Compassion Fatigue / Vicarious Trauma / Secondary Traumatic Stress

Burnout
The subtle impact of vicarious trauma

- Feeling helpless and hopeless
- A sense that one can never do enough
- Minimizing
- Chronic exhaustion/physical ailments
- Inability to listen/deliberate avoidance
- Guilt
- Anger and cynicism
- Inability to empathize/numbing

From “A Trauma Exposure Response.” Copyright 2010 van Dernoot Lipsky
Self-care through mindfulness

• The awareness that arises from paying attention in a particular way – on purpose, in the present moment, non-judgmentally.

(Kabat-Zinn)

• Intending and developing the capacity to come back to center; to pay close attention to the internal experience of sensations, thoughts, and emotions and the surrounding environment, with engaged curiosity, equanimity, deep compassion, and acceptance.

(Shahmoon-Shanok & Carlton Stevenson 2015)
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MINDFULNESS IS THE ABILITY TO KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON IN YOUR HEAD WITHOUT TAKING THE BAIT AND ACTING ON IT.

- Elisha Goldstein

http://elishagoldstein.com/a-course-in-mindful-living
Self-compassion

- Offering self-kindness instead of self-judgment and criticism
- Recognizing the shared experience instead of feeling isolated
- Practicing mindfulness instead of being consumed by our situation
Pause for Practice
The Massachusetts experience:

Building a trauma-informed, resilient child welfare system

MCTP: Massachusetts Child Trauma Project
Massachusetts Child Trauma Project

- Massachusetts Child Trauma Project – Mindfulness Workshops
  - 14/31 Area Offices + Central Office
  - Regional Family Resource Centers
  - 12 Early Intervention programs across state

- DCF Statewide Health and Wellbeing Leadership Team – Mindfulness and mindfulness sessions integrated staff wellness events
  - Calming the Chaos Statewide Supervisor’s Forum
  - Regional Resiliency Summits

- Reached approximately 1,000 child welfare professionals across all activities
Voices from the field: Reflections on learning about mindfulness...

- “Ways to find times during the day to be present in the moment. Taking the time to stand next to the stress or the problem...not ignoring something but not drowning in it either.”

- “Helped me to more readily access meditation as a daily tool.”

- “Reminder to check in daily with myself.”

- “Helpful to remember to mind my inner voice and how I speak to myself.”
Your Brain on Mindfulness

• Buffers against the normal age-related declines in cognitive functioning

• Increases functioning in regions of brain associated with social emotions, learning, and memory

• Sets new ‘default mode’ focused on what is happening in the present moment
Benefits to the Child Welfare Workforce

- Mindful awareness and self-compassion practices prevent the negative impacts of emotional distress in professional settings.
  
  \textit{van Mol et al., 2015}

- A brief, mindfulness-based intervention significantly decreased perceived stress and demonstrated positive changes in work related attitudes and behavior.
  
  \textit{Crowder and Sears, 2017}

- Trauma-informed self-care prevented burnout and increased compassion, satisfaction.
  
  \textit{Salloum et al., 2015}
## Finding mindful moments in daily life

### Bringing focused awareness to daily activities...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brushing your teeth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the shower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drinking your coffee, eating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking from your car, bus, train to/from work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading to your child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening intently to music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petting your cat, walking your dog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooking, washing the dishes, doing the laundry</td>
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### Brief in-the-moment practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hand to heart</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feet on the floor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engaging your senses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deep breaths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STOP practice</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brief guided meditations (audio/video)</td>
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</tbody>
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Practicing mindfulness at work

• Begin your workday with the intention to be present
• Experiment with being a ‘single tasker’
• Use mindful reminders
• Practice feeling gratitude
• Be open to new possibilities about yourself and others
• Take meaningful breaks that truly relax
• Find small ways to give to others
• Take items to work that can help you engage in mindful moments

https://www.mindful.org/10-ways-mindful-work/
Making time and space for meditation

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THE KEY TO MEDITATION IS LEARNING TO STAY

Maria Sorivan

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Pause for Practice
Discussion

What does it feel like to be well?

What did the practices feel like for you?

What other questions do you have?
Resources

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Getting Started

• **ZERO TO THREE Mindfulness resources:**
  http://www.zerotothree.org/mindfulness

• **“Mindfulness: 10 Lessons in Self-Care for Social Workers”**:

Simple, helpful mindfulness meditation apps (free)

• **Aura**: Mindfulness – Stress & Anxiety Daily Relief
• **Insight Timer**
• **Stop, Breathe & Think**
• **Mindful**: Daily practices
• **UCLA Health**: Guided meditations
Thank You and Next Steps

Thank you for your participation!
How useful was this session?

Additional Comments:
hello@CANTASD.org

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NCCAN April 24-26th
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• 5 Master Sessions