



Mindfulness in the Secondary Classroom

PATRICIA C. BRODERICK

Reflecting on Chapter 1 (see p. 11)

Mindfulness: Educational Fad or Effective Practice?

Try journaling your responses to the following questions:

- What was my original understanding of mindfulness before I read this chapter?

- How has my understanding changed (if at all) by reading this chapter?

- How might the quality of my own attention affect my students and their performance?

- In which circumstances am I most mindful? Most mindless?



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Reflecting on Chapter 3 (see p. 48)

Attention: The Foundation for Teaching and Learning

Try journaling your responses to the following questions:

- How do I view attention? Is it fixed or malleable? Has my view altered after reading this chapter? How might this information affect my teaching?
- How might my students respond to practicing mindfulness in the classroom?
- What concerns do I have about bringing mindfulness to my students or school?
- Choose an activity of daily life for your own practice. What is it? What can you do to help yourself remember to practice?



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Reflecting on Chapter 4 (see p. 69)

Motivation and Engagement: The Contribution of Mindful Interest

Try journaling your responses to the following questions:

- What kinds of events or experiences am I interested in? Not interested in?

- What is the quality of experience that accompanies my interest and my lack of interest? Is it pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral (give some examples).

- What is my particular way of approaching things that are not interesting to me?

- How do I usually try to support student interest (e.g., through intrinsic or extrinsic methods?). To what degree are these ways effective?

- What would change if I altered my mindset to consider interest a trainable skill rather than a fixed quantity?



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Reflecting on Chapter 5 (see p. 93)

Skillful Responding: The Mindful Way of Dealing with Challenges

Try journaling your responses to the following questions:

- Write a short description of a stressful classroom experience. What are some thoughts, feelings and physical sensations you notice when stress is triggered in the classroom? Use an example from your personal life if you wish.

- How strong is my tendency to fix things just because they are unpleasant?

- What might change in my work if I could be more present and less reactive to the unpleasant parts of my life?

- What might change for my students if they could be more present and less reactive to the unpleasant parts of their lives?



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Reflecting on Chapter 6 (see p. 116)

Connecting with Myself and My Students

Try journaling your responses to the following questions:

- What do I remember most about my experience as a student in high school (or middle school)? What would I have appreciated from my teachers at that time in my life?

- As I allow myself to be more open to the possibility of practicing mindfulness and compassion more deliberately, what, if any, concerns do I notice about losing control of the classroom? About disliking some of my students? About my students disliking me? About getting too close to the students? These concerns may or may not arise, but it's useful to explore which assumptions might be an obstacle to connecting with students as a responsible and caring adult. Include, if you can, some thoughts about what might underlie these assumptions (e.g., expectations of yourself and others, confusing perception of roles, fear of vulnerability). After this exploration, see if you can bring some kindness and acceptance to these emotional states. Which student behaviors might signal the need for a stronger emotional connection with me?

- In which situations or with which particular student do you wish to practice kindness? What form will this take?



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Reflecting on Chapter 7 (see p. 138)

Claiming Leadership Through Mindful Teaching

Try journaling your responses to the following questions:

- What are my deepest hopes for my students? Is my teaching in line with these hopes? How can I use my leadership in an authentic way to make my hopes more explicit in my classroom?

- What are my intentions for making my teaching more mindful? How can I make my mindfulness practice a regular part of my day?

- What possibilities exist for bringing mindfulness to others in my school (teachers, administrators, parents)? How can we support each other?