Welcome to Hidden Sparks Without Walls. We will be starting at 8:30pm.

To alleviate background noise and ensure a quiet session, your audio connection has been muted.

**Asking Questions & Sharing Thoughts:**
You are encouraged to ask questions and share your thoughts on the Chat.

Please activate the chat feature by clicking in the “Chat bubble” on the control panel on the bottom of your screen.

**Audio:**
If you would like to call in via phone for audio, please click on the phone icon, select “I will call in” and you will be provided with the call-in number.
About Hidden Sparks

Hidden Sparks is a non-profit whose purpose is to help children with learning differences reach their full potential in school and life. Hidden Sparks supports professional development for Jewish day schools to help increase understanding and support for diverse learners.

Hidden Sparks’ programs combine school-based professional development in learning and positive behavioral support, classroom observation and coaching. Our philosophy is that by helping teachers meet the needs of struggling students, ultimately all students will benefit.

Now in its 12th year, Hidden Sparks has trained 297 coaches and 465 educators in 108 Jewish day schools in New York, New Jersey, Baltimore, Chicago, Florida, Cleveland, Atlanta and 6 Israeli cities.

Please be in touch with our office to find out how to bring Hidden Sparks programs to your school!
Bringing Mindfulness into the Classroom

Presented by Matis Miller
February 5, 2020
As the founder and Director of The Center for Cognitive & Behavioral Therapy of New Jersey, Matis Miller is a licensed clinical social worker and certified cognitive behavioral therapist with over 15 years of experience. His educational and training background includes certification in CBT from the Academy of Cognitive Therapy and intensive training at the Beck Institute for Cognitive Behavioral Therapy. Matis has also been awarded certification from the DBT-Linehan Board of Certification in Dialectical Behavioral Therapy.

His expertise in CBT, DBT, and Schema Therapy compelled him to found the Center and he specializes in severe emotional and personality disorders, insomnia, and anxiety in teens and adults. And he is a seasoned lecturer addressing parents, clients, and professionals.

How does mindfulness relate to us?

• Following Mrs. Zell making arrangements for her sick child, she receives a call from her spouse that their car is having trouble again and the mechanic says it’s not worth fixing….all while running into class 10 min late.

• A child who takes Ritalin twice daily, came to school without his medicine, is struggling to maintain himself in class and his parents are unreachable.

• Mrs. Goldberg wants her child’s seat switched today!

• Rabbi Cohen is feeling extremely overwhelmed by the principal’s expectations regarding the pace of the curriculum and as he begins teaching he realizes he forgot today’s lesson worksheets at home.
Overview of the Session

1. Define Mindfulness
2. Research and Benefits
3. Methods to Increase Mindfulness
4. Mindfulness skills of Observe, Describe, and Non-judgmentally
What is Mindfulness?
Intentionally living with awareness in the present moment, with neither rejection, judgment, or attachment to the moment.
"Hey, wait a minute! This is grass! We’ve been eating grass!"
What are we?

Mind Full, or Mindful?

@forbesoste
• Mindfulness is widespread and being taught in many settings (i.e. corporations, medical schools, elementary and high schools)

• Mindfulness is both about focusing (putting on the spotlight) and expanding our minds

• Mindfulness is the quality of attention or awareness that one brings to their everyday life
Mindfulness Explained

• Taking control of your mind rather than letting your mind be in control

• We can’t control our thoughts, feelings, and environment but we can control what we choose to focus on

• It is not letting yourself be hijacked by your thoughts, emotions, sensations

• You can’t mess up mindfulness
Why Be Mindful?

- Reduce tension and stress
- Increase problem solving skills and effectiveness
- Decrease reactivity to internal and external events
- Increase happiness and joy
- Increase flexibility and understanding
- Experience the present fully
- Increase acceptance of life events
- Improve interpersonal relationships
- Improve physical health and well-being
Mindfulness Research

Research studies have shown Mindfulness to:

• Decrease depression and anxiety
• Decrease relapse for those with history of depression
• Decrease distractive and ruminative thoughts
• Decrease anger and emotional irritability
• Decrease confusion and cognitive disorganization
• Reduce pain symptoms and improved ability to cope with pain
• Increase activity in brain regions linked to positive emotions
• Increase sense of well-being
• Enhance immune response
How can mindfulness be practiced?

1. **Mindfulness skills**
   - Engaging in specific behaviors, that when put together, make up mindfulness
   - Can be used anywhere, anytime, and while doing anything

2. **התבודדות (Meditation)**
   - Setting up specific time to focus the mind while sitting, laying, or standing quietly
   - “Opening the Mind” or “Focusing the Mind” during practices
   - Carrying practice into everyday life

3. **Mindfulness Movement**
   - Walking, Hiking, Martial Arts
MINDFULNESS 101: WHERE AND WHEN TO PRACTICE
Mindfulness Skills
# Skills Building

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Observe
Observe

- Noticing and paying attention on purpose

- **Attending** to events, emotions, and behavioral responses without necessarily trying to terminate when painful and prolong when pleasant

- Being awake and alert. “It’s not a DOING activity.” It’s the opposite of letting your mind drift

- Observing is different from the event itself (thinking vs. observing thinking, heart beating vs. observing heartbeat)

- It’s the opposite of multi-tasking
Why Observe?

• Observe is turning on the “light” so you can see the “furniture” and be more effective

• We need to live our lives with our eyes wide open in order to do what is necessary and be effective

• We are living in the present, and observing helps us to be there fully

• It brings us into contact with the real and the factual

• Helps to decrease impulsivity and regulate emotions

• It gets us “unstuck” from problematic thoughts and emotions
Observe: What can we do

• Observe both within and outside of self

• Observe outside through your five senses (taste, smell, touch, sight, sound)

• Observe inside yourself through your sensing thoughts, emotions, bodily sensations

• Control you attention, what you’re focusing on, but not what you see

• Taking a step back from the event and be alert
Observe: What can we do

- Wordless watching
- Neither pushing away nor holding on
- Having a Teflon mind. You are not trying to keep things out of the skillet, rather have them slide off
- Observe thoughts as clouds in the sky, birds flying in and out, flowing down the stream, trains riding by, on a hill looking down at yourself
- Observe emotions and urges as they come and go
Observe: How do we do it

• With a “beginner’s” mind. Each moment is new and unique

• With a curiosity and openness

• Extremely difficult to stay focused on one thing at a time

• When other things will arise, notice them, and then bring attention back again and again

• Takes a lot of energy

• Our minds are often untrained and does as it pleases

• Observing is simple yet can be quite difficult
Describe
Describe

• Giving verbal labels – putting words on what was observed

• Unglue your interpretations and opinions

• You can only describe what is observed

• We can’t describe thoughts, emotions, and intentions of another person

כפי האדם يوسف לא עラインיו וה, פרשת לךבה: (שמות יא, טו,' 2')
What do you see?
Why Describe?

Describing is essential for both **self-control** and **communication**

A. **Self-Control**
   - Just naming an emotion helps with regulation
   - It places distance between self and emotion
   - It requires that one notice a thought as a thought rather than a fact. Problems arise when thoughts are often taken as an absolute truth
   - Thought “I am a loser” becomes confused with acting like a loser, thought “I’m unloved” becomes confused with feeling unloved
   - Helps with differentiating between precipitating events and emotional responses
Why Describe?

B. Communication

- Ensure that everyone is on the same page
- People feel less threatened and attacked
- Decreases judgment and blaming
- Demonstrates an openness and allows for feedback
Describe: What to do

• Describing with words what was observed

• Imagine you are telling someone how to draw a picture or design a scene

• “I’m noticing I'm feeling anxious”, “Your eyes are focusing towards the other side of the room”

• Stick to the facts!
Non-Judgmentally
Non-Judgmentally

- Non-evaluative approach, viewing things as neither good nor bad (towards self and others)

- Letting go of our judgments that evaluate and keeping judgments that discriminate

- Not putting our own demands on reality

- Not going from negative to positive judgment

- Nonjudgmental does not mean you APPROVE or DENY the consequences of a behavior

- Nonjudgmental does not mean we do not express our preferences or desires
Our Education System

“Everybody is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid.”

- Albert Einstein
Why be non-judgmental?

• Damaging effects on relationships
• Judgments often lead to negative emotions
• Being judgmental can interfere with effectiveness and ability to make change
• Most positive consequences of being judgmental are short-term
• Individuals use judgments as shorthand language for consequences
• This only allows for part of the experience and leads to treating judgments as facts
Nonjudgmental: What to do

• Observe with mindset to change but not to label

• Let go of “shoulds”

• Telling self “everything is as it should be” and “everything is caused”

• Focus on consequences of behaviors and events

• There is a place for judgement

• Don’t judge your judging
Thank You for Participating!

Matis Miller, LCSW, ACT
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DBT-Linehan Board of Certification,
Certified Clinician™

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### Upcoming Hidden Sparks Without Walls Sessions

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| Tuesday, February 25, 2020| **For Teachers**  
Teaching with Tech  
Presented by Monica Brandwein |
| Wednesday, March 18, 2020 | **For Teachers**  
Multisensory Math Instruction for ALL Learners  
Presented by Adrianne Meldrum |

If you are interested in bringing Hidden Sparks to your school or city, please contact us:  
**212-767-7707 or sara@hiddensparks.org**
Contacting Hidden Sparks

Contact Presenter:
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