

SHAPE America Seattle 2015
National Convention & Expo

March 18, 2015
3:15-5:15

Mindfulness in PE

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Mindfulness practices are beginning to be implemented in a variety of settings across grade levels and subject areas. General education teachers along with their administrators are noticing positive changes with their students. Two years ago, I implemented mindfulness in my elementary PE classes carefully and slowly paced; evaluations at the conclusion of the first year demonstrated social emotional learning had increased in my 4th and 5th grade classes. Under the guidance and support of Susan Kaiser Greenland's Inner Kids Program, I was given the tools to begin cultivating mindful awareness in my students and creating my own self-practice. Once my practice became consistent, I realized the full potential in PE and that more teachers should give mindfulness a chance.

Mindful-ness...

...an ability to be aware of what is going on both inside us and around us
(Hanh, 2009)

...to remember (Greenland, 2013)

...is the cognitive propensity to be aware of what is happening in the moment -
-without judgment or attachment to any particular outcome (Napoli, 2005)

Aware-ness...

...is the mind that knows (Rinpoche, 2009)

...turning our attention to our inner world of thoughts & feelings (Goleman, 2014)

...to recognize the difference between a blueberry and strawberry with imagined tasting, visualizing them, and/or recalling from text.

Mindfulness and awareness always complement each other.

So? Why do it?

Our children today are experiencing stress resulting in anger and violent behavior, conduct disorders, and various types of anxiety, including competition and test anxiety in ways like never before. There is much literature indicating that anxiety can negatively impact students' school performance, disrupt their thinking, and interfere with their learning.

“Emotional well- being permeates all aspects of student’s school experience, and it has emerged as an essential element of mental health as well as a core component of health in general” (Lu & Buchanan, 2014).

As physical educators, it has been bestowed upon us to teach our students not only state standards as we learned them but to teach the ones as needed in a new innovative way.

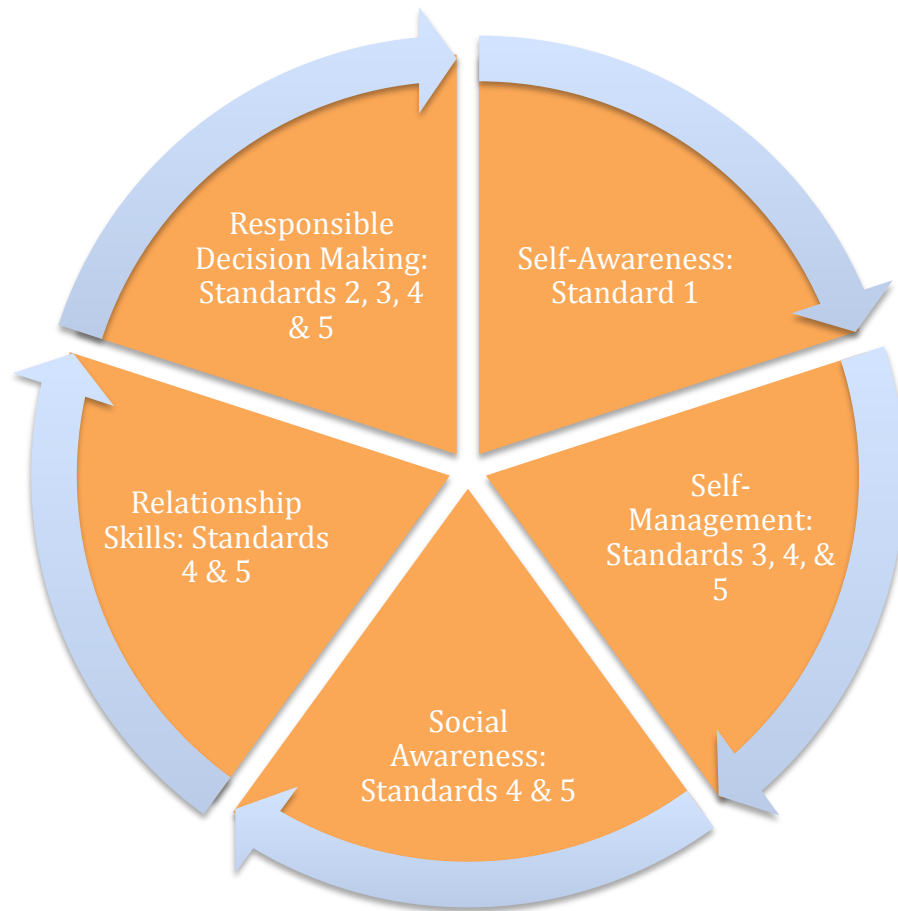
*“It’s the act of paying attention...that gradually slows the rushing river [of thoughts and emotions] that would allow me to experience a little bit of space between what I was looking at and the simple awareness of looking.
(Rinpoche & Swanson, 2009)*

A mindful PE class utilizes the standards, objectives and curriculum already in place. The activities chosen to meet those objectives are supplemented with mindful concepts/ universal concepts/ life long lessons.

When?

- at the beginning, middle and conclusion of your lesson
- each class meeting
- mindfulness during transitions is effective, too

Crosswalk of SEL and National Standards



Exercise & Activities

The breath

Strategies

Sensory Inputs

Walking Mindfully

Waiting with Awareness

Stretching

Reaching for the Stars

Group Juggle

Deck Ring Tennis

Sharks & Minnows

Oscar the Grouch

Literacy in PE

Balloon Arms

Compassionate Closures

References

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~ADDITIONAL NOTES~