



A note from our Founder on

Mindfulness

According to Dr. Ronald Siegel, mindfulness is “awareness of present experience with acceptance.” (Siegel, 2010, p. 27) Mindfulness, a form of meditation used in our school-based programs, is a method of remembering to be aware and pay attention. Mindfulness can help us see and accept things as they are, to regulate emotions, to experience richness in the moments of our lives, and wisely and skillfully make everyday decisions with greater clarity and calm. Perhaps most significantly, it facilitates our capacity for one-pointed focus.

While mindfulness and meditation may have stemmed originally from 2500-year-old Buddhist teachings, today hundreds of techniques are employed for the primary purpose of enhancing the functions of the brain and fostering resilience and well-being through the brain-body connections. Studies by Dr. Sara Lazar, a researcher at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston, have shown that meditation can increase the thickness of the cerebral cortex, including the prefrontal cortex which is involved in working memory, decision-making, and problem-solving. Dr. Lazar’s research has also shown that meditation can improve the production of serotonin, a mood-regulating neurotransmitter that effects depression, anxiety, anger, chronic pain, and stress-related illnesses. (Siegel, 2010) Meditation is also effective for down-regulating the stress response, activating the parasympathetic nervous system (the calm down mechanism of the body) to improve management of behavior (self-regulation), mental processes (focus), and physiological state (self-control) and enhance social-emotional learning. (Porges, 2009)

According to Louis Komjathy (2015), meditation is a form of secular contemplative practice absent subject-object distinctions while prayer has devotional, relational, and communicative characteristics. Meditation is an internal process of making the mind one-pointed while prayer is an attempt to direct thoughts and will to compassionately influence the outer world. (Antman, 2019) Meditation is a means of inward focus that can often facilitate prayer, but in and of itself is not a direct form of religious contemplation. (Komjathy, 2015)

Create Calm has developed a yoga and mindfulness curriculum that is anti-bias, inclusive, and secular with the primary mission of cultivating intuition, developing empathy, practicing kindness and acceptance, and creating calm.

If you have any questions or would like to learn more about our programs, please contact us at info@CreateCalm.org or 240-532-CALM (2256).