

MINDFUL STUDIES SYLLABUS

OVERVIEW

Mindful Studies class is for you and about you. Together, we'll build a strong, aware, and compassionate community. We'll learn and explore different mindfulness tools to give us important life skills — like how to manage stress, anxiety, and self-doubt. We'll explore how to be in relationship with our own hearts and minds from a place of friendliness and compassion. We'll support each other in living authentically and seeing possibility in life.

This class is a partnership between Portland Public Schools and Peace in Schools (www.peaceinschools.org), a local non-profit dedicated to bringing mindfulness to teens. In 2014, Peace in Schools launched the first for-credit, high school mindfulness course in the nation. In each Mindful Studies classroom, we establish an environment that is personal, inclusive, and supportive.

"The most inspiring thing about this class is that I've really been able to build a strong relationship with myself, and enjoy my own company." —Mindful Studies Teen

CLASS OBJECTIVES

Mindful Movement: We'll explore a variety of movement practices in the movement part of the class. We'll learn postures to improve strength, flexibility, balance, coordination, and to relax. We'll work with movement, breath, and body-awareness to relax and release tension and stress. Mindful movement creates pathways for deeper, clearer body-mind connections.

Mindfulness: Everything in this class, including the movement portion, is designed to support the practice of mindfulness. This class offers you mindfulness tools, concepts, and practices that you can use in both class and everyday life. You'll learn to focus your attention on the present moment with non-judgment, acceptance, and compassion. Mindfulness skills build self-awareness, support healthy relationships, reduce stress, and ease self-critical thinking. Mindfulness helps us live happy, kind, and authentic lives. It's an essential skill that connects us to ourselves and others.

GRADING

50% of your grade is Participation

10% of your grade is your Journal (to be checked monthly)

10% of your grade is an Intention Assignment

15% of your grade is a Community Movement Project

15% of your grade is an Individual Mindfulness Project

Participation: Honoring the Classroom Environment (50%) (2 points per day)

We'll all work together to build a community where each person feels seen and honored. Once we have created the guidelines (The Environment of CARE) for our classroom experience, it is important that all members honor it. This class is supported by everyone's participation. Please be on time and ready to participate. Students are expected to be fully engaged in both the movement and mindfulness parts of the class. If you're unable to fully participate on any class day, please let one of the teachers know ahead of time to discuss options that will allow you to participate at the level you are able. Some items you may lose 1-2 daily points for include:

- Being consistently tardy
- Using technology in class without teacher check-in
- Repeated side conversations

- Consistently not following bathroom policy
- Consistently not following cell phone and technology policy

Note: If you are absent, you will need to do a makeup sheet to make up your daily points. See the Attendance Policy below.

Class Journal (10%)

Not every class will have a journaling component. Students who demonstrate an authentic engagement with class material in their journals will receive full credit.

Intention Assignment (10%)

Community Movement Project (15%)

Individual Mindfulness Project (15%)

We'll explain the details of each assignment during the semester and give you handouts of the assignments.

EXTRA CREDIT OPPORTUNITIES

Leadership

You may lead the class in an activity. You will need to let the teachers know what you would like to lead in advance. We are happy to offer support and resources so you feel ready! Leadership extra must take place before winter break. Options include leading:

- A meditation
- The Mindful Minute
- The Lightning Round & Class Closing
- A community game
- A physical movement or series of poses
- Something else that you create and check with the teachers!

Final

Attending and participating in the final will earn you extra points.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Your attendance is important. If you miss a class (excused or unexcused), you'll receive a make-up assignment that will need to be returned within 1 week of the absence date. This will allow you to earn the missing points (2) for the day. This option is limited to 8 absences per semester. If you miss more than 8 classes you may need an additional contract to pass the class.

CELL PHONE POLICY

What kind of relationship do you want to have with technology? How might you bring mindfulness to your relationship with your phone? We encourage you to explore this in your life this semester. In our class, to support this practice and mindfully build community, the mats are a technology-free space. You may keep your phone in your backpack, locker or the basket provided in class. Please do not keep your phone in your pocket or underneath a cushion, mat, or blanket.

CLOTHING

Please come to class dressed in a way where you are comfortable sitting on the floor and moving around. Skirts, dresses, and tight pants can be difficult to move around in. We don't give time for students to change before and after class because the movement portion is usually not longer than 20 minutes, sometimes only 5, and doesn't always require special clothing. If you feel that you really need time to change, come check in with us. We expect you to come dressed in a way that allows you to fully participate.

BATHROOM POLICY

There will be one hall pass available for students to use. Please ask one of the teachers for permission to use it. Only one student will be allowed to leave the room at a time so it's important to be considerate of others' needs when you're using the pass.

CONTACT

We look forward to creating and experiencing Mindful Studies class with you! If you have questions, comments, or concerns, please reach out to us at any time.

Movement Teacher - Anne Meadows, ameadows@pps.net, tutorial in room 232 (A days), room 210 (B days)

Mindfulness Teacher - Andrew Archer, archer@peaceinschools.org

STUDENT RESOURCES

Peace in Schools - www.peaceinschools.org

Peace in Schools' Teen Mindfulness Night (Free, pizza provided) - www.peaceinschools.org/events/

Teen Mindfulness Retreats with Inward Bound Mindfulness Education - www.ibme.info

PARENT/GUARDIAN RESOURCES

Mindfulness Courses for Adults and Educators - www.peaceinschools.org/adult-courses/