



*****To use this document, either print, save as a Word Document to your own device, or click “File”, “Make a Copy”, and save it to your own Google Drive.

Lesson 3: Mindfulness and the Brain

Students will **learn** about the role of the brain in mindfulness, **practice** noticing their thoughts, and **discover** how their brains change during adolescence.

Practicing mindfulness helps to strengthen connections in the brain that allow you to focus and calm down. Click the link below to learn how this works.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aNCB1MZDgQA>

In moments where you feel stressed or threatened, learning to notice your thoughts without judging them can be helpful. Try this in the 10-minute mindfulness practice below.

<http://mindfulnessforteens.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/8.-Mindfulness-of-Thinking.mp3>

Reflection:

What are some situations where your amygdala might react to feeling threatened?

What strategies do you use, besides practicing mindfulness, to help your brain calm down?

What did you notice about your thoughts in the mindfulness practice? Were there any common themes?

Stretch Activity 1: When you feel threatened, your amygdala may overreact and gain control of your brain. Try this 15-minute yoga class to practice calming it down.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R4I1Uck8nzi&list=PLtKFn2-K_dbAGVRVg6Yd98zPbhHb8JPRE&index=4&t=0s

Optional Daily Practice:

1. Find a comfortable, quiet space to practice mindfulness.
2. Practice any mindfulness technique you have learned so far. Check the landing page for additional mindfulness resources (Stop, Breathe, Think is a great app for practicing mindfulness).
3. Check in with your mind after practicing mindfulness. How do you feel? Is it different from how you felt when you started?

Additional resources:

Dr. Dan Siegel is a psychiatrist and a mindfulness scholar. If you are interested in biology or neuroscience, this video explains how your brain changes during adolescence.

<https://mindup.org/myths-adolescent-brain-dr-dan-siegel-video/>

If you would like to, use the spaces below for any notes or reflections from your mindfulness practice.

Monday	
Tuesday	
Wednesday	
Thursday	
Friday	