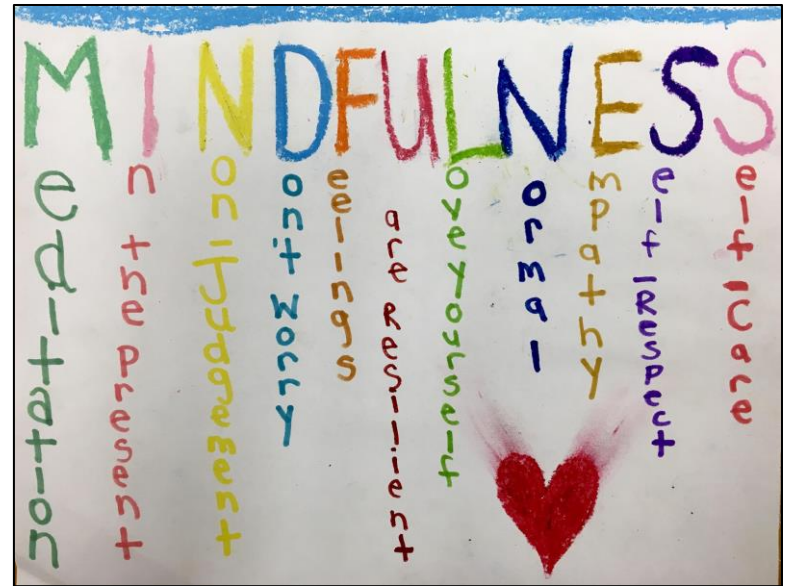


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*Arts-Based Mindfulness  
Methods II*

Webinar for CASW  
April 15, 2020



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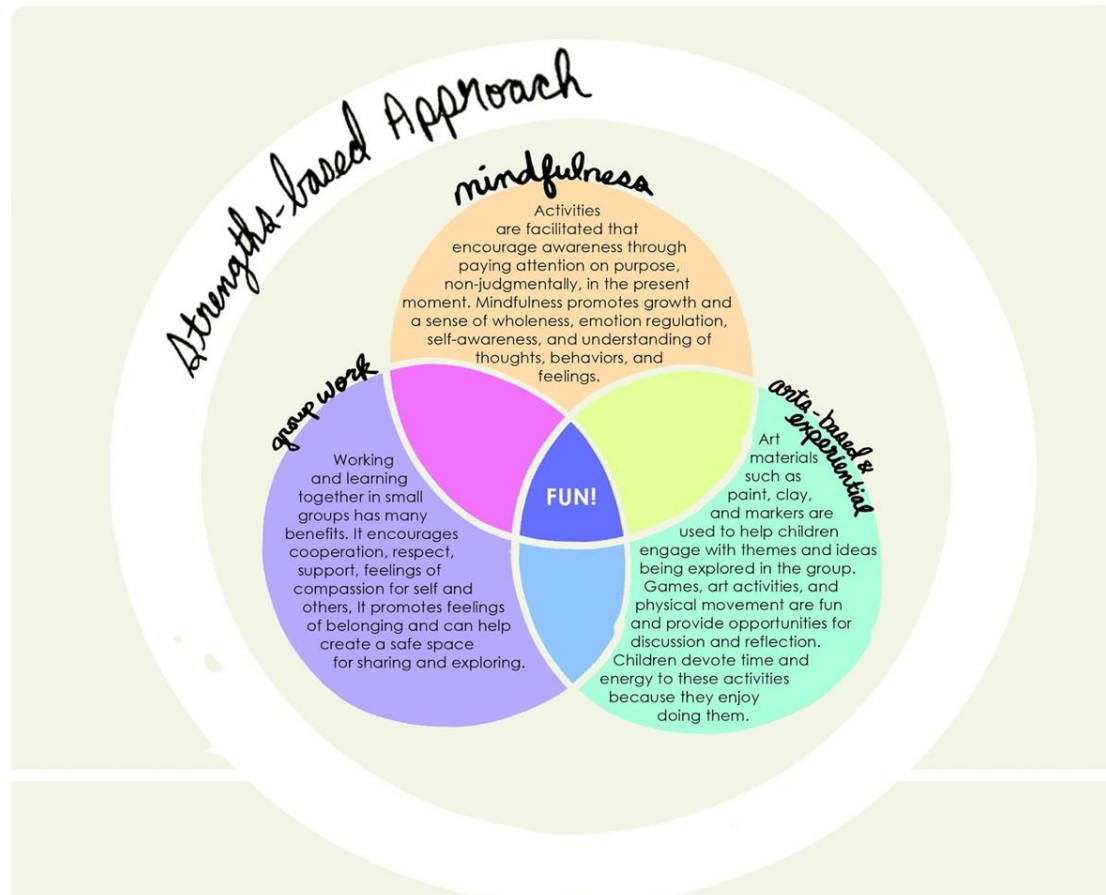


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- Q: Do you ever have mandated kids or adults come and how does that work out?

# Caution

- Learning and practicing mindfulness is not going to appeal to everyone and it is not a panacea for all of our challenges.
- Importantly, there may be people who need to learn grounding and containment techniques first before they will be comfortable focusing on their breathing or meditating.
- Burrows (2018) stated that we need to better understand the potential drawbacks of introducing mindfulness as some people may feel worse as a result of meditating. She found that for students who were dealing with emotionally charged issues, meditation could bring about feelings of disconnection, feeling emotionally overwhelmed, and heightened self-criticism.

# The HAP Map: A Conceptual Diagram



## Program Goals

1. Teaching and facilitating mindfulness skills and concepts in accessible, relevant and meaningful ways
2. Improving self-awareness and understanding/expression of feelings, thoughts, and behaviors
3. Developing self-compassion and empathy
4. Recognizing and shoring up strengths

These objectives lead to the development of other abilities and skills such as improved mood and coping/social skills, better emotion regulation and self-esteem, and more effective performance at school.

# HAP and Resilience

- Participating in HAP can improve mindfulness and resilience, which includes self-awareness, emotion regulation, feelings of confidence, self-esteem, and improved mood and coping skills.
- The participants enjoy the arts-based approach and experience it as non-threatening, inclusive, and fun.
- Creative methods with youth have long been accepted within helping professions as it is understood that youth communicate many of their thoughts/feelings nonverbally through creative activity. The methods are engaging.
- The most important element of a program might be that it involves activities youths (and adults) enjoy.

- An art-based approach focused on strengths can accommodate diversity in capacities and can create a safe context wherein participants who feel vulnerable can be helped over time to take risks to share aspects of their lives, thoughts, and feelings.



# Strengths-Based Approach

- Perspective/world view that determines how we view people & their challenges
- A focus on abilities rather than deficits & problems = success
- Equality & collaboration are emphasized rather than hierarchy & expert (top-down) approach.



RESPECT  
Others  
Non-JUDGMENT

Be  
Trustworthy

Patience

Support  
each other

Kind

Acceptance  
(self, others)

Listen  
to others and  
take turns

Always

be

Positive

Have  
fun

Have  
Hope  
in  
Others

Have  
Faith  
in  
Others

Try  
★  
your  
BEST

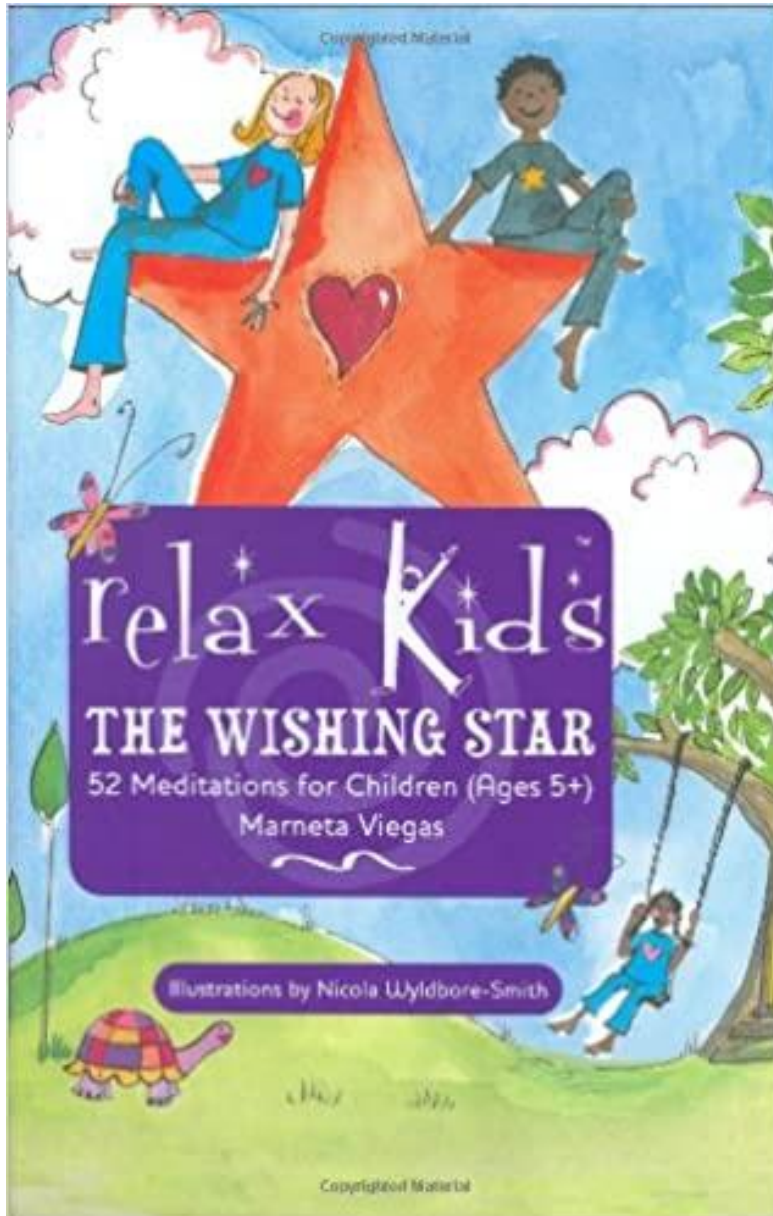
Have  
faith

Confidentiality

BE  
YOURSELF



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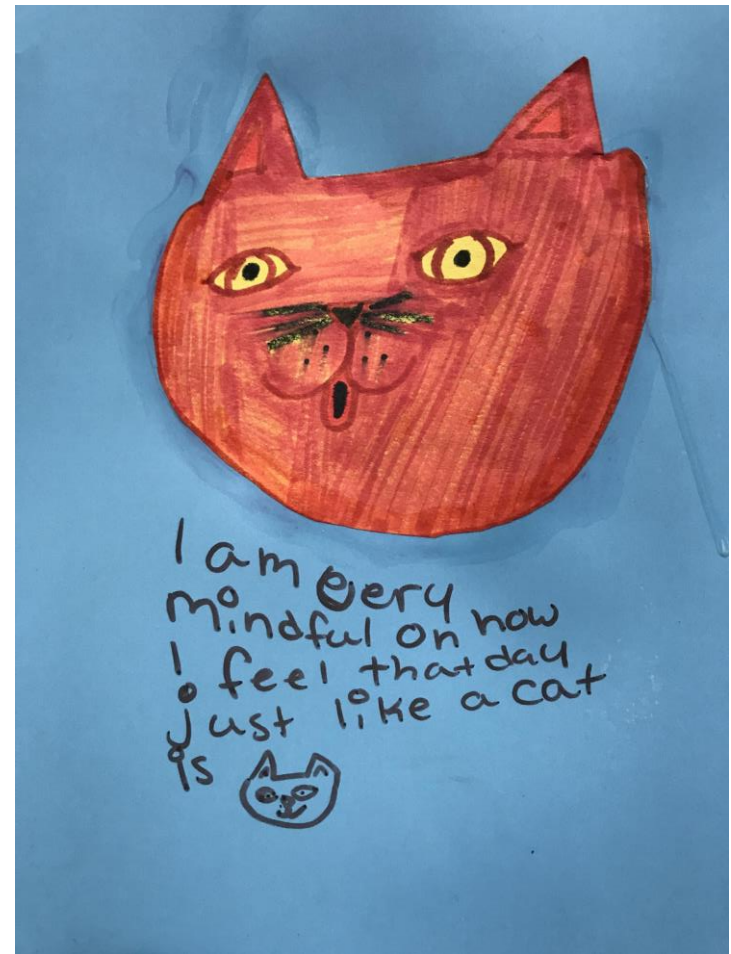
## Marneta Viegas, 2004

# Use Clay to Promote Attention & Use of Imagination



# Example – Mindful Eating

- Using a script versus facilitating a conversational dialogue about mindful eating



# Example – We Are All Connected



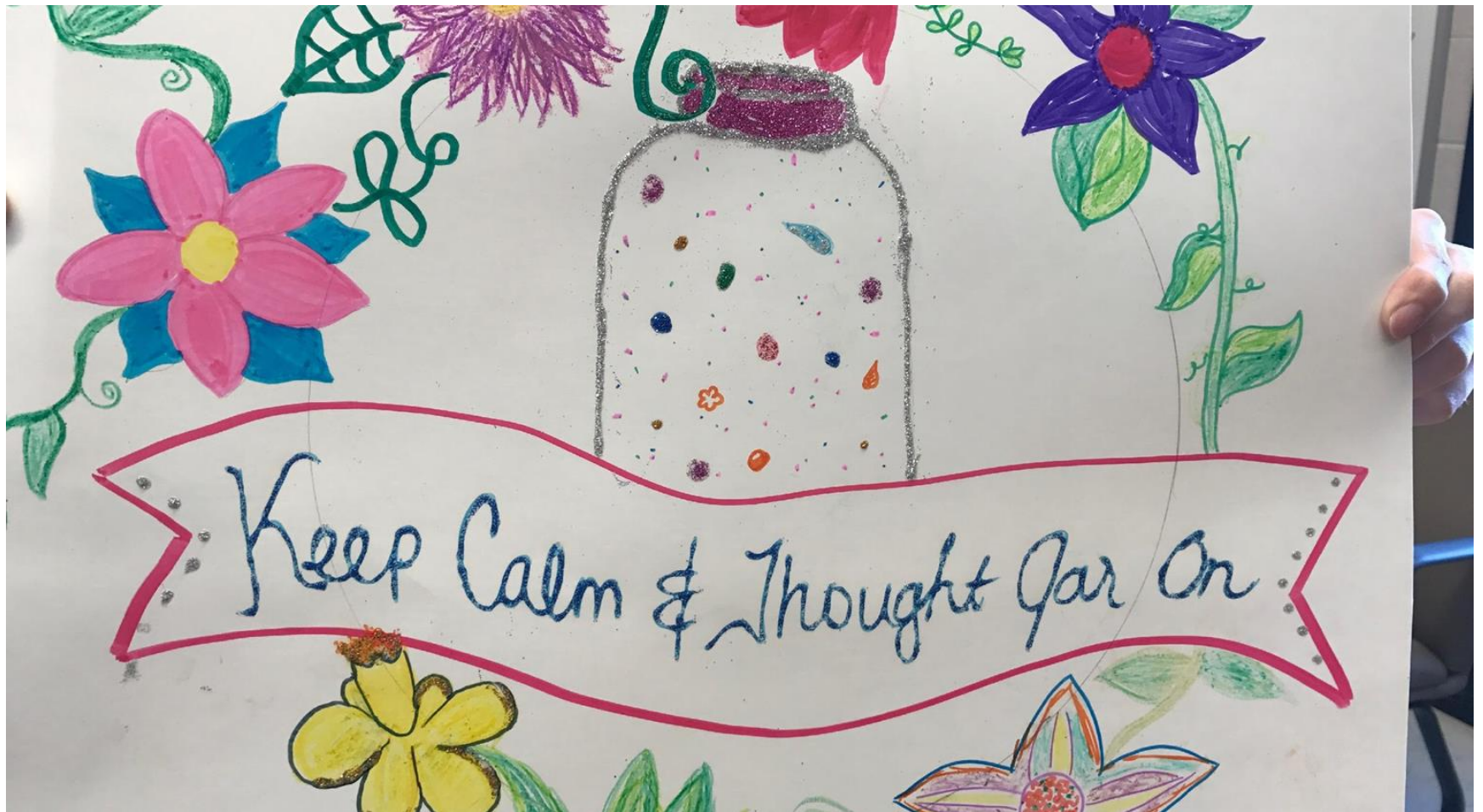
*“The colors...represented something that I was feeling in my life. The red is because I love lots...I tell my daughter all the time how much I love her. And the green represented the jealousy I tend to have when it comes to my relationships...the blue is because I was sad, I have lost a few good men in my life this year...then being so young made me realize that I don’t want to die tomorrow and leave this world miserable...*

*And when I did the purple it meant...being healthy and happy...the pipe cleaner, I have big issues with the way I look...then the arms here were because I always have my arms open, I’m always helping somebody...And then the black was just because my hair is long and dark...*

*not really knowing what I was feeling while I was doing [the exercise]...wow, I guess I was feeling a lot more than I thought when I was making it.”*

Coholic, D., Cote-Meek, S., & Recollet, D. (2013). Exploring the acceptability and perceived benefits of arts-based group methods for aboriginal women living in an urban community within northeastern Ontario. *Canadian Social Work Review*, 29 (2), 149-168.

# Examples - Group Symbol



# Group Symbol







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## Tai Chi: “Little Grass”

(a) Visualize yourself as a little blade of grass blowing in the wind. Your whole body is soft. (Inhale)

(b) Bow down from your waist. (Exhale)

(c) Dangle your arms down towards the floor and move your arms/hands from side to side. Breathe in and out slowly to match the movement.

Focus on how soft you can be. You can stand up against any big storm when you are flexible.



# Painting to Music



# Example – Camouflage activity



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# Example (Me as a River)



# Moving Forward...

- We need to do better within helping professions listening to youth about what they need and want.
- We have learned from the 300+ youth we have worked with in HAP that most are in need of spaces where they can join with peers and build positive relationships & they need to be engaged in activities that are strengths-based, engaging, and that foster success.
- In our experiences, many of the youth lack adults in their lives who really listen to them and places where they can be authentic.



# Social Group Work

- A deliberate use of group work means that facilitators are consciously encouraging the development of:
  - group cohesion
  - a sense of belonging
  - mutual aid where group members help one another.



# Belonging

- Experiencing a sense of belonging has its own benefits for improving aspects of resilience, self-awareness, and self-esteem.
- We need to create environments where people feel comfortable and engaged so that they are open to challenging themselves and learning new skills & abilities.

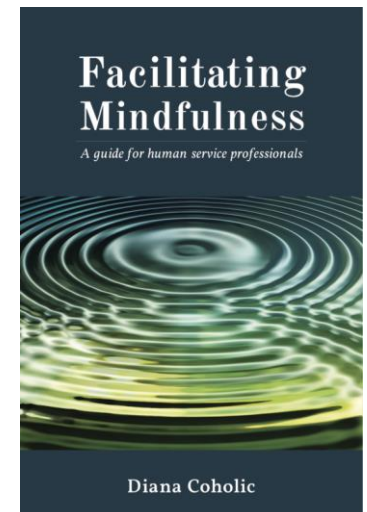
# Resources

*Facilitating Mindfulness* (2018): In this 12-minute video, the concept of mindfulness is discussed and HAP team members describe their experiences learning and practicing mindfulness:

<https://youtu.be/pNPTyG20YT0>

Book - *Facilitating Mindfulness: A guide for human service professionals*:

<https://www.northrose.ca/northrose-titles.html>



# Follow our Work

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