A Taste of Mindfulness for the CCOE

How can mindfulness positively impact you?
What is mindfulness?

• Paying attention in a particular way:
  • On purpose,
  • In the present moment, and
  • Non-judgmentally

- Jon Kabat-Zinn
How can mindfulness be practiced?

With focus on:

- Breath
- Whole body/body scan
- Body movement
- Feelings
- Senses
- Thoughts
- Intentions
- Observations
Mindfulness of our Inner Stories
Attentiveness to Inner Stories About Ourselves

- Take a few moments to write down your beliefs about yourself and your identity.

- Examine each item on the list and ask yourself the following series of questions:
  - Where did this story come from?
  - Is this my story or someone else’s?
  - Is this story true of me now?
  - Is this story contributing to or undermining my happiness?
  - Do I choose to continue to live this story or is it time to write a new one?

- Be sure to observe your thoughts objectively and without too much attachment. Everyone has stories like this.

Source: [https://www.mindful.org/stop-stories-running-life/](https://www.mindful.org/stop-stories-running-life/)  
Extension: Consider doing an activity similar to this, but about stories of others who are in your life.
Why attend to our stories?

- Keeps us from falling victim to what might be false stories
- Helps us thus avoid reacting impulsively and destructively to them
- If we wish, we can challenge the truth of these stories
- Note: Teacher burnout is linked to poor teacher self-efficacy (a self-story)

Boorstein (1996); Brouwers & Tomic (2000)
How do we attend to our stories?

• Assume an empirical stance toward our thoughts.

• Listen for cues: “I always…” “She is just like that…” “He never…”

• Note when we are following a common, personal story, and identify it as such – is there empirical truth to it, or is it simply a story?

• If it is a story, notate it as such. Notice the frequency of this story when it comes to mind.
Attention to our thoughts, including inner stories, can (when part of a more comprehensive program):

- Increase positive perception of a partner and that relationship
- Improve social skills and perspective taking
- Increase cooperative response patterns
- Improve a deeper sense of self that becomes protective against negative social interactions

Brown, Ryan, & Creswell (2007)
