

Can Mindfulness Training and Practice Reduce Stress and Increase Levels of Well-Being and Self-Compassion for Secondary School Staff?

EIS Action Research Project 2019

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EIS 2018 Member Survey, (largest in the last decade, with 12,250 responses)

76% of teachers felt stressed “frequently” or “all the time.”

88% believed stress levels were the same, or worse, than in the previous year.

64% reported working more than 5 hours above their contracted hours each week.

82% were dissatisfied with workload levels.

78% struggled to meet the needs of young people requiring additional support.

But teaching's a brilliant job!





MYRIAD Project

*“Has **mindfulness training (MT)** in adolescence the **potential to shift** the secondary school-age population away from psychopathology and **towards improved mental health** by addressing key processes of mental regulation and executive control that operate across the spectrum of risk/resilience?”*



Grange Staff Team - MBCT for Life Training



5 Teachers trained in .b (young people) by MiSP (Mindfulness in Schools Project) June 2018





AN INTRODUCTION TO MINDFULNESS

.b

LESSON ONE

PLAYING ATTENTION

TRAINING THE MUSCLE OF YOUR MIND

LESSON TWO

TAMING THE ANIMAL MIND

CULTIVATING CURIOSITY AND KINDNESS

LESSON THREE

RECOGNISING WORRY

NOTICING HOW YOUR MIND PLAYS TRICKS ON YOU

LESSON FOUR

BEING HERE NOW

FROM REACTING TO RESPONDING

LESSON FIVE

MOVING MINDFULLY

KEEPING YOUR HEAD ON YOUR SHOULDERS

LESSON SIX

STEPPING BACK

WATCHING THE THOUGHT-TRAFFIC OF YOUR MIND

LESSON SEVEN

BEFRIENDING THE DIFFICULT

MANAGING STRONG EMOTIONS

LESSON EIGHT

TAKING IN THE GOOD

BEING PRESENT WITH YOUR HEART

LESSON NINE

PULLING IT ALL TOGETHER

DOTBE.ORG

We know what we want for young people ...



And we know our professional responsibilities

- **Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act (2000)**
- **Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004**
- **Equality Act 2010**
- **Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) 2014**
- **Children and Young People Act (Scotland) 2014**
- **Donaldson Report, (Scottish Government 2010)**
- **GTCS Professional Standards (2012)**

Dedicated colleagues who've taken on ...

- **NIF priorities**
- **Re-design of curriculum in line with young people's needs**
- **Restorative practice**
- **Improvements in pedagogy – e.g. Tapestry (AifL), EEF advice**
- **Relational-based behaviour management – e.g. Pivotal**
- **ASN, Nurture, MHWB, ACES training ...**

The demands on teachers

- **Developing a nurturing learning environment; being emotionally responsive to learners; working effectively in partnership with parents; relating professionally to colleagues and managers; managing assessment; demonstrating the highest degree of emotional regulation; teaching learners to manage relationships with their peers, and addressing challenging behaviour in a respectful and effective manner.**
- **Jennings and Greenberg (2009)**

The dangers

- **emotional exhaustion, leading to depersonalisation: “a callous, cynical attitude towards students, parents, and colleagues” (Jennings and Greenberg, 2009, p.498)**
- **“exhaustion, cynicism, and sense of inefficacy” characterised as “burnout” by Maslach (2003) and “empathic distress” (Halifax, 2018)**
- **Mental Health Foundation - most Britons (65%) say they have experienced a mental health problem, and the problem is most acute in the working-age population.**

'I've had to close my classroom door and cry'

Despite supporting children in harrowing circumstances, teachers receive little help – this has to change, urges charity

By Emma Seith
17 February 2020

Share this



Our experience of adult mindfulness training ...

- **Dedicated time for ourselves**
- **No expectation of immediate implementation with young people – “just for us”**
- **Noticing sensations in our bodies**
- **Beginning to understand what we need to be well**
- **Learning to respond rather than react**
- **Savouring the good**
- **“You are not your thoughts” – addressing negative habits of mind**
- **Accepting and letting go – self-compassion and common humanity**

The research question . . .

Can mindfulness training and practice reduce stress and increase levels of wellbeing and self-compassion?

Pre-intervention measures – 2 weeks before

Post-intervention measures (T1) – 3 weeks after

Post-intervention measures (T2) – 17 weeks after

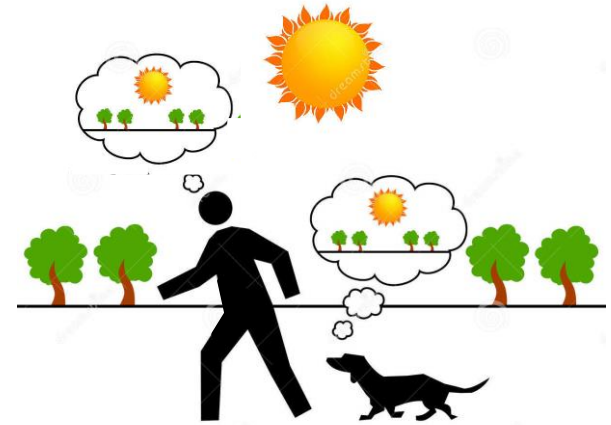
Mindfulness . . .



Awareness



Mind training

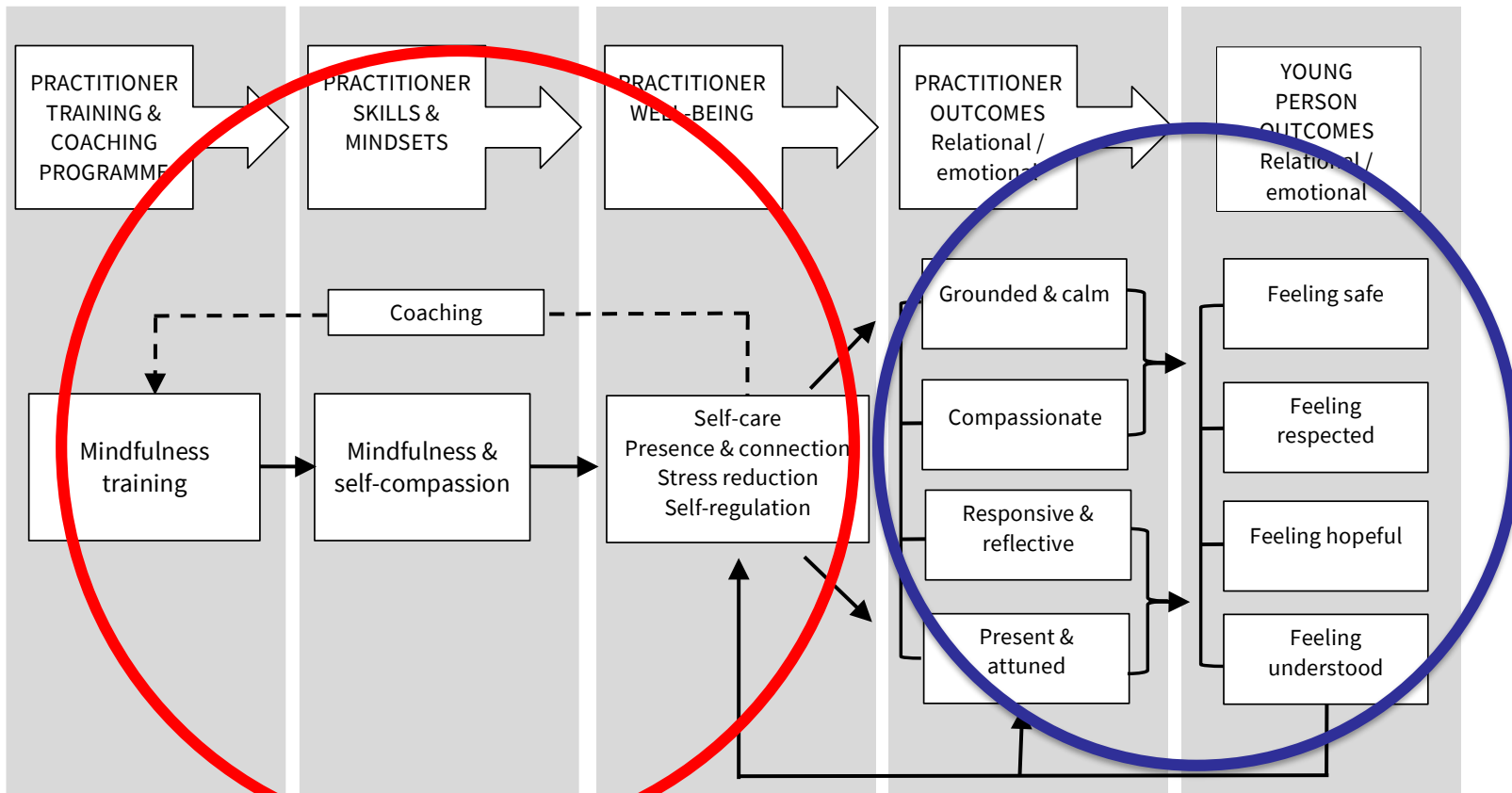


Way of being

Mindfulness and relational practice

MINDFULNESS-INFORMED PRACTITIONER FRAMEWORK

Practitioner mindfulness training and coaching – change and impact model

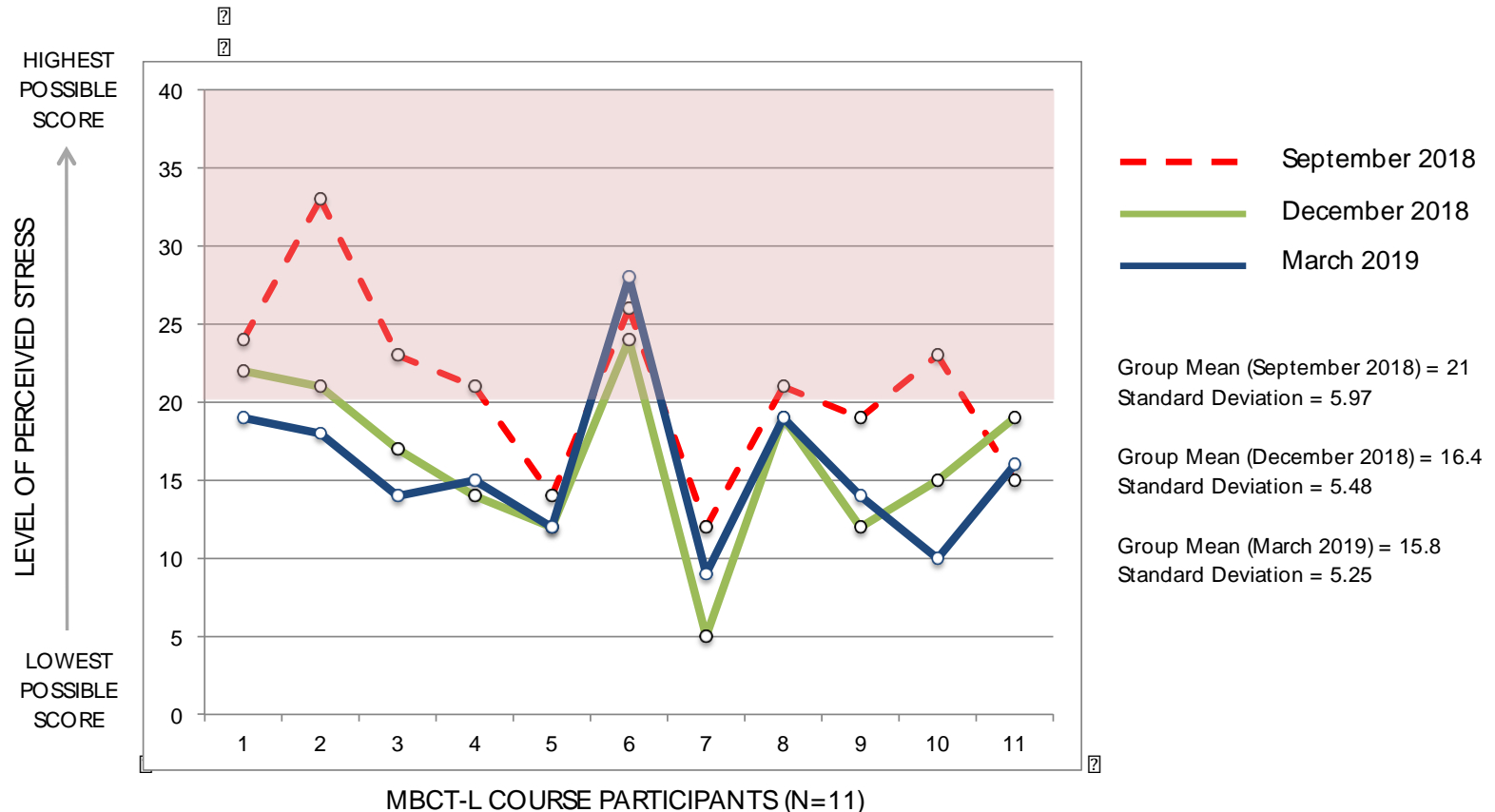


Mindfulness and stress

PRE/POST INTERVENTION MEASURES – PERCEIVED STRESS SCALE (PSS)

Distribution of pre-course (Sept 2018) and post-course (Dec 2018 and March 2019) PSS total scores

Cohen's perceived stress scale is based on questions about feelings and thoughts during *the past month*. Cohen's research suggests that scores of around 13 should be considered average and that high stress groups usually have a stress score of around 20 points. Scores of 20 or higher (in the shaded zone) are considered to indicate high levels of stress.

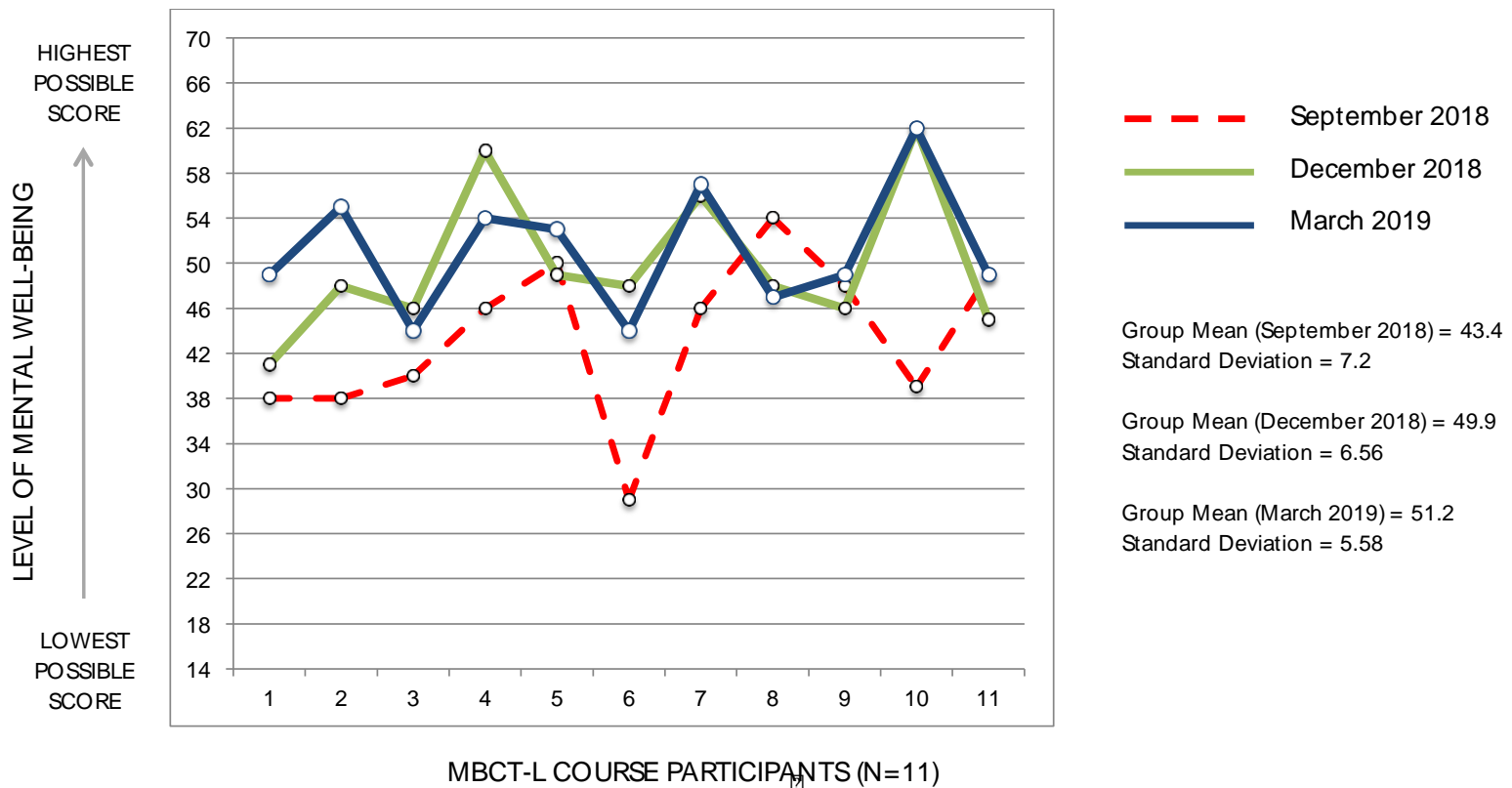


Mindfulness and mental well-being

PRE/POST INTERVENTION MEASURES – WARWICK-EDINBURGH MENTAL WELL-BEING SCALE (WEMWBS)

Distribution of pre-course (Sept 2018) and post-course (Dec 2018 and March 2019) WEMWBS total scores

WEMWBS is a widely used scale that has been validated for the measurement of mental wellbeing among adults in the UK. Increases of between 3 and 8 points are considered to demonstrate a meaningful improvement in mental wellbeing.

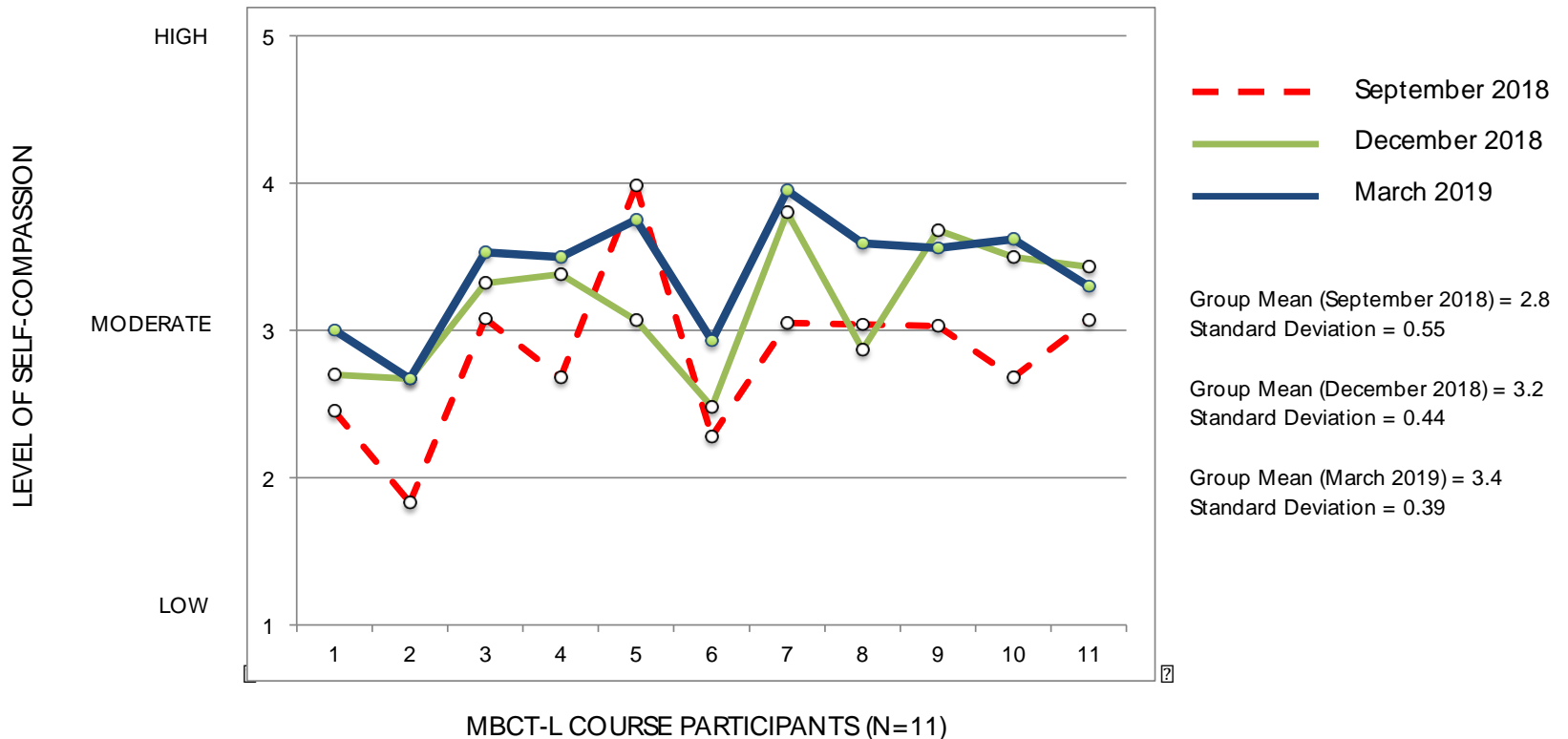


Mindfulness and self-compassion

PRE/POST INTERVENTION MEASURES – SELF-COMPASSION SCALE (SCS)

Distribution of pre-course (Sept 2018) and post-course (Dec 2018 and March 2019) SCS total scores

The SCS (Neff, 2003) is a widely used scale that measures self-compassion as a system-level balance between compassionate self-responding (self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness) and reduced uncompassionate self-responding (self-judgment, isolation, and over-identification). Subscale scores combined into a total SCS score provide a measure of self-compassion as a holistic state of being. Research using the SCS suggests that self-compassion is a key indicator of wellbeing.



Teachers talking about impact ...

- **“10 gratitudes ... it’s so simple ... but such a big impact on your mindset, ... wee things you can do quickly are really important ... and that surprised me.”**
- **“Sitting for a few minutes quiet contemplation and focusing on my breathing ... allows me to refocus ... and it’s that, ‘respond don’t react’... The premise of being kind to yourself, not too hard on yourself and self-critical.”**
- **“The ability to ... step aside ... and say ... you did the right thing ... there’s a recognition that it was done with good intention. That’s more than it would have been before.”**

Grange Academy - Becoming a Mindful School

- **Teaching .b curriculum in S1-3 PSE; mindfulness-based interventions with pupils/small groups; developing in Senior Phase PSE.**
- **40+ adults trained in MBCT for Life, and we're continuing! Refreshers for trained staff, and shared practice. Aiming to train more staff to teach mindfulness in PSE.**
- **Colleagues from other schools visiting.**
- **Workshop for parents at our FutureFest 2020 event.**
- **Strategic planning: mindfulness as professional learning underpinning other SIP objectives; mindfulness beginning to inform our everyday interactions**

Handout

- Free subscription from Headspace for all teachers
- <http://www.headspace.com/educators>
- Invitation to visit our PSE classes to observe us/join in.
- audrey.brotherston@east-ayrshire.gov.uk

MiSP (young people)

<https://mindfulnessinschools.org/>

OMC Mindfulness Sessions on You Tube (adults)