

I had just the other day my niece who lives down the road from me, she like 10 so she doesn't like know me as the adult business world person that I am, she just knows me as her uncle and she came up and said, I'm learning this thing called Mindfulness in school. Really, tell me explain what you're learning. And she started doing this, she showed me these different breathing practices and like the Spiderman breath which I believe I came up with and she was like, and I never even heard of the organization that was working in her school even though I live down the road, which I'm seeing all the time now, it's proliferating which is really good and also sometimes not so good, it's growing really quickly and so I'm really interested in really since it's evolving so quick, really understanding how do we keep it to its roots as well to be able to teach it in such a way where the first thing that I'm always interested when I'm teaching mindfulness is that we are practicing out mindfulness as teachers, so there's a few ways that mindfulness is really integrated into schools, just want to kind of do a little overview of the field .

When I first started working with mindful schools, what we were doing, we were doing direct service work, so we were going in to schools as outside mindfulness teachers going in and teaching these practices to students which was amazing, getting to just go, pollinate all of these different schools and work with all these different kids, but very often I'd start having these experiences where I'd be in a classroom and I'd be talking about like relaxation and compassion, I could really feel the kids with me and then I'd get up and I'd walk out and I hear the teacher like yell at the kids, get back in your seats! And I feel like, oh wait just a second, you know is that even helpful for me to be this person who comes in and like creates this moment of calm in the storm and then the they have it just go right back, and I know that it is beneficial but I very quickly realize like okay this needs to be more of a systemic operation, we need to teach teachers how to do this, teach administrators how to do this, we need to teach parents how to do this.

Then there is what I'm doing right here which is a teacher training, so for us to learn how to practice our own mindfulness and there's a lot of trainings out there which are purely just mindfulness for the teachers and don't even have any curriculum in there, anything about how to teach kids and I used to lead an organization called The Mindful Education Institute where we had a year-long training and the first six months was just practice for the teachers and when we said that the teachers were not happy at first because usually the paradigm of kind of professional development is like okay give me the curriculum, that for you and you have to do this and we're just saying you know we're just going to practice mindfulness, we're just going to learn how to communicate better, we're going to learn how to instead of trying to get our kids to calm down, we're going to see about calming down, instead of trying to regulate our kids, we're going to notice, oh maybe I'm really reactive and that's even part of the reason my kids are so reactive. And after those six months of just teaching teachers how to be mindful in the room other than teaching mindfulness we did a bunch of questionnaires and the teachers across the board were saying that their classrooms had actually become more peaceful and actually there was a transformation that was happening in the classroom not from teaching any of the lessons, just from the teacher being more relaxed. There's a little research think I learnt recently which has nothing to do with mindfulness but has to do with this, which is how there was this study around eating healthy food and the way did is was they had one group go in and give all these lectures to kids about how they should really eat more like healthy food and vegetables and have a better diet and they had another class room where they went in and the teacher just modeled, they just like had apples and like curds and things around in the class room and they'd eat them and the kids could eat them and it was just like it was just there. And then another one where just the control group went, they didn't do anything different and they found that both of the first two,

the kids ended up being more healthy after the six-week thing or something like that. And then they came back a couple of months later and the kids who'd been lectured at to eat healthy food, they'd just gone back to the exact same way, but the kid who had just been in the modeling they stayed in that diet. So that's really what we're wanting to start with, is what's it kind of look like if we show up and the kids walk in the classroom and we see them, what's going to happen if the classroom is really frenetic and we notice that our bodies are disregulated and we relax and maybe name to the kids, I need a moment just to settle here, what if we do that first.

Then the third thing, so I explained there's kind of direct service, there's teacher training and then there is more kind of curriculum based teaching at first when I started doing this movement I remember having lots of conversations with people like Jon Kabat-Zinn and Linda Lantieri and lots of these folks and we were saying we shouldn't give curriculum to teachers who haven't really trained in mindfulness because we don't want somebody going into the classroom and just saying, okay now sit and be quiet and like while the teachers are really stressed and disregulated and then MindUP which is a big presence in the field, they have a curriculum that you can just buy on Amazon and just get it and use it, and a lot of curriculum started population. Now I have a curriculum out that's there that anybody can buy and use, and it's because the curriculums are out there, the curricula are out there, so we might as well just try to make really good curricula that people can use and if you read my book and my workbook, I have you know the first whole section is this is how you practice this is how you use this yourself, don't go here before you go here.

And also the next one, those are the first three, I would say the fourth is that there's now all of these amazing technology coming out, it's like inner explorer which has it's just like press a button and there's a mindfulness lesson that you can listen to it, your classroom could listen to,

there's all these apps that kids were using, so it's all this different stuff. The real hope for me is the kind of integrated approach, how do we do all of this, how do we train teachers really well, how do we get some direct teaching to the kids, how do we do? We really wrap this around; we give them really good curriculum. I've been working in [0:06:08] San Francisco the last two years where I've been just really trying to understand how to model this, I've been working, I've been doing trainings for the parents, I've been doing trainings for the teachers, I've been working with the administration, I've been trying to just you know let's saturate the school and make it a really mindful school, and it's hard. It's been helpful for me to be able to, been having lots of folks kind of shadow me in the classroom when I'm working with kids, it's actually really helpful because they see like me the guy who like wrote the book on this and it's still, it's hard, like I go in and like listen to kids and being a little bit as kids are and distracted and needing to work with them and dance with them and play with them and do everything that I do and to come out and talk to the people I'm kind of training how to do it, saying yeah this isn't about me like following a direct curriculum, this is about me learning about these kids, meeting these kids, seeing what mindful looks for them.