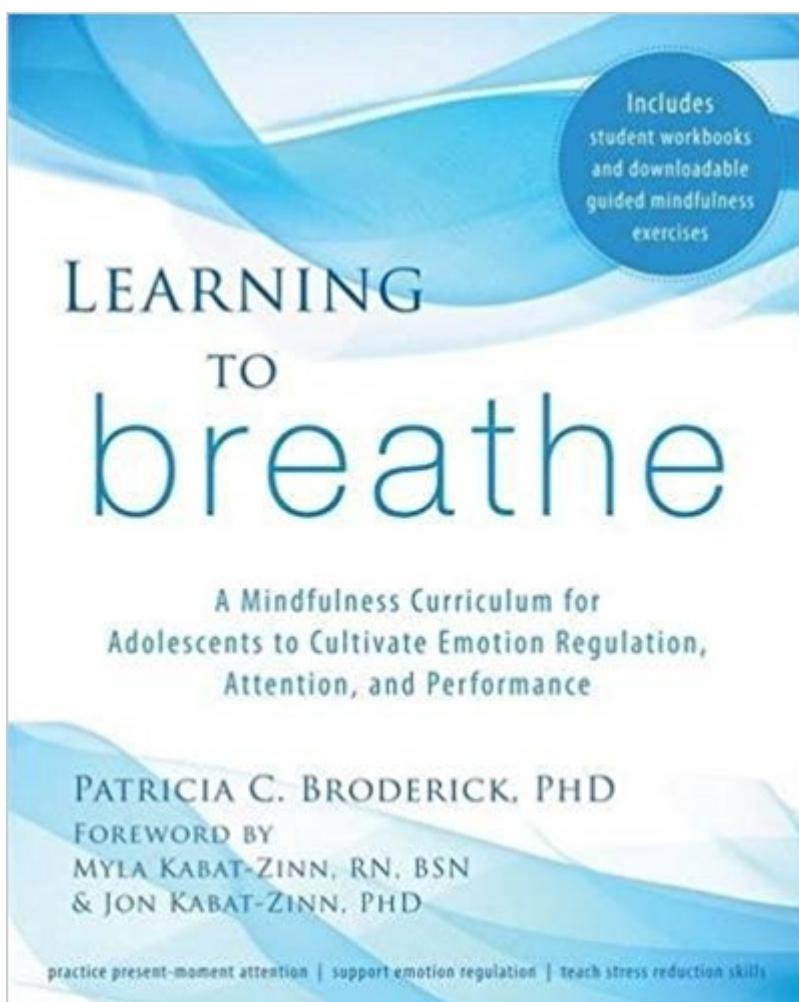


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# Learning To Breathe: A Mindfulness Curriculum For Adolescents To Cultivate Emotion Regulation, Attention, And Performance



## Synopsis

Disruptive behavior in the classroom, poor academic performance, out-of-control emotions: if you work with adolescents, you are well-aware of the challenges this age group presents. What if there was a way to calm these students down and arm them with the mindfulness skills needed to really excel in school and life? Written by mindfulness expert and licensed clinical psychologist Patricia C. Broderick, *Learning to Breathe* is a secular program that tailors the teaching of mindfulness to the developmental needs of adolescents to help them understand their thoughts and feelings and manage distressing emotions. Students will be empowered by learning important mindfulness meditation skills that help them improve emotion regulation, reduce stress, improve overall performance, and, perhaps most importantly, develop their attention. The book also includes a website link with student handouts and homework assignments, making it an ideal classroom tool. The book integrates certain themes of mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR), developed by Jon Kabat-Zinn, into a program that is shorter, more accessible to students, and compatible with school curricula. Students will learn to pay attention in the moment, manage emotions as they are perceived, and gain greater control over their own feelings and actions. These mindfulness practices offer the opportunity to develop hardness in the face of uncomfortable feelings that otherwise might provoke a response that could be harmful (e.g. acting out by taking drugs, displaying violent behavior or acting in by becoming more depressed). This easy-to-use manual is designed to be used by teachers, but can also be used by any mental health provider teaching adolescents emotion regulation, stress reduction and mindfulness skills. The author is a graduate of the MBSR advanced practicum at the Center for Mindfulness in Massachusetts, led by Jon Kabat-Zinn. She is also a clinical psychologist and a certified school psychologist and counselor for grades K-12. In the book, Broderick calls on her years of experience working with adolescents to outline the best strategies for dealing with disruption in the classroom and emotions that are out of hand. The book is structured around six themes built upon the acronym BREATHE, and each theme has a core message. The program allows for themes to be delivered in 6 longer or 18 shorter sessions, depending upon time and needs of students. The 6 core lessons are: Body, Reflection, Emotions, Attention, Tenderness, and Healthy Mind Habits. *Learning to Breathe* is the perfect tool for empowering students as they grapple with the psychological tasks of adolescence.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I have had an opportunity to use the BREATHE program with a cohort of first semester college undergraduates. The move to college creates unique challenges, and the BREATHE program, which can be adapted for this population, provides powerful tools to help emerging adults manage this transition. Learning the basics of mindfulness, strengthening emotion recognition and emotion management skills, and developing compassion for self and others, are all extremely important skills for college students. . . . As Broderick writes, "there is a difference between knowing about emotions and knowing your own emotions as they are experienced." The BREATHE program allows this distinction to emerge brilliantly. • Sandra Kerr, PhD, professor in the department of psychology, West Chester University, PA "Learning to Breathe is an invaluable resource for those looking to share mindfulness with adolescents. Broderick has carefully crafted a professional and wonderfully straightforward mindfulness curriculum that can be used in a variety of settings. Highly recommended!" • Doug Worthen, mindfulness teacher at the Middlesex School in Concord, MA "Learning to Breathe couldn't have come at a better time! Educators are seeking new ways of meeting a rising tide of societal challenges. Compelling new research supports the benefits of learning a mindfulness practice. With a focus on adolescents, Broderick has intelligently created a flexible mindfulness curriculum that is user-friendly, evidence-based, and age-appropriate. Through this achievement she offers the opportunity to "experience burgeoning self-awareness, self-regulation, and the emotional balance that supports fully engaged learning and well-being." Ideally, all schools would teach these practices." • Marilyn Webb Neagley, education consultant, coeditor of Educating from the Heart, and author of Walking through the Seasons "Engaging, varied,

and user-friendly lessons make this an essential resource for any educator who wishes to bring mindfulness into the curriculum. From theory to practice, this guide provides teachers with the necessary information to make mindfulness come to life in their classrooms and in the lives of their students.Â A must-have for all those committed to the social and emotional health of adolescents.â • &#151;Karen Bluth, research fellow at the Program of Integrative Medicine at the School of Medicine at University of North Carolina, NC Â &#147;Learning to Breathe is an extraordinary curriculum, grounded in a deep understanding of adolescent learning, adolescent growth, and the daily experience of adolescent life. The brilliant design of the BREATHE program provides teachers with ease in implementation and flexibility to adapt for the uniqueness of each class, while at the same time providing the quintessential elements of mindfulness-based well-being in each lesson. Educators and school systems that adopt this creative program will be giving a gift to themselves and to the adolescents in their care for a healthier, more positive and productive future. &#151;Irene McHenry, PhD, licensed psychologist, author, international speaker and workshop presenter, and currently executive director of Friends Council on Education Â &#147;The unfolding field of mindfulness education for tweens and teens is most fortunate to be gifted with Broderickâ ™s theoretically grounded and pragmatically written step-by-step guide. Broderick offers first-hand experiences and clear insights to encourage teachers and therapists teaching mindfulness practices to deepen their own practice while teaching and learning alongside youths. When offered in the spirit with which it is written, the Learning to Breathe curriculum opens a conversation around the often overwhelming stressors that are simultaneously unique and universal to preadolescents and adolescents while offering them an array of exercises to meet the stressors with more clarity and care. In doing so, these exercises for youths can introduce a new way of being in the world that frees young people from automatic avoidance and risk-taking behaviors that often compound their stress&#151;thereby decreasing experiences of distress and increasing experiences of empowerment. Let the exploration begin!â • &#151;Laura J. Pinger, MS, senior outreach specialist at the Center for Investigating Healthy Minds at the Waisman Center on the University of Wisconsin-Madison Â &#147;I have seen first-hand the transformational potential Learning to Breathe has for a wide range of students in the high school setting.Â Broderick has done an amazing job of creating a mindfulness-based universal prevention program for high school applications.Â Those looking for a program to use to bring mindfulness to high school students in a curricular way need not look further than Learning to Breathe.â • &#151;Todd D. Cantrell, house principal at Central Bucks High School West in Doylestown, PA Â &#147;I am delighted to provide an unequivocal endorsement of Broderickâ ™s Learning to Breathe. This program for adolescents

is beautifully designed and hits all the right notes for teaching mindfulness as a tool to navigate the ups and downs of adolescence. Grounded within a developmental framework and clinical understanding of adolescent issues, Broderick's book is user-friendly and will resonate with clinicians, educators, and parents alike. As a school social worker with experience of successfully implementing [the program] within a very diverse population, it is gratifying to have a program of this integrity that is compatible with multiple areas of the curriculum. • Marjorie James, MSW, RSW, social worker with the Toronto District School Board

• School reform is doomed to failure until it faces the reality of kids as they come: stressed-out, overwrought, and inattentive to school work. This marvelous book fills this gap with a curriculum that helps teenagers reduce stress, handle their emotions, and master their attention. A step-by-step guide for teachers and clinicians, Learning to Breathe is clear, inventive, and practical, and it can be implemented starting tomorrow. This inspiring book is also a timely wake-up call for the nation. • Jerome Murphy, Dean Emeritus at Harvard Graduate School of Education

• As a longtime instructor of mindfulness-based stress reduction, currently teaching instructors in two school districts, Broderick's book, Learning to Breathe, is a welcome gift. It is filled with clear information about mindfulness, from both the educational and neurological perspectives, and presents an excellent, thorough, and complete curriculum for adolescents. This book will be welcomed, used, and gratefully received by teachers and students. • Ferris Buck Urbanowski, MA, mindfulness instructor, South Burlington, Vermont School District, and Washington West School District, Waitsfield, VT

Help Adolescents Thrive in the Classroom & in Life

Disruptive behavior in the classroom, poor academic performance, and emotional highs and lows: if you work with adolescents, you are well-aware of the challenges this age group presents. What if there were a way to help these students focus while equipping them with the mindfulness skills they need to excel in school and in life? Learning to Breathe is a research-based curriculum designed to help adolescents reduce stress, improve their attention, manage emotions, and gain greater control over their own thoughts and actions; essential skills for optimizing classroom learning and promoting well-being. This breakthrough mindfulness-based program is structured around six themes that form the acronym BREATHE, and each theme has a core message. This book is the perfect tool for teachers, mental health professionals, or anyone who works with adolescents. Bolster academic performance and positive behavior with these six core lessons: Body Reflection Emotions Attention Tenderness Healthy Mind Habits Empowerment

Mindfulness can be a bit hard to pin down. This curriculum is clear - concise and easy to teach and follow. There are clear lessons - expanded lessons - workbooks and website supplements (I've not tried the last yet). I also appreciate the purely secular content. I'm so glad I purchased it and am using it. It has been so gratifying to work with teens and hear their immediate feedback of "wow - that really cleared my mind."

I successfully used Patricia Broderick's Learning to Breathe curriculum in my SAT Prep Class in the Spring of 2013. My goal with using the program was to show my 11th graders how to practice mindfulness, or present moment awareness, both in the classroom and in their daily lives. Ideally, after practicing mindfulness frequently, students will learn strategies for focusing on the task at hand. In this case, the task I was preparing them for was a major, high-pressure test- the SAT. Instead of being consumed with stressful thoughts or feelings that could affect their performance, students learn how to acknowledge and accept these feelings and thoughts but let them go. After completing the Learning to Breathe curriculum over the course of nine weeks, my students had the tools they needed to face and overcome those stressors. The content of the Learning to Breathe is excellent. Broderick makes the topic of mindfulness very accessible to students by dividing it into six themes. Within each theme she provides interesting, practical exercises that really allow students to tangibly see how mindfulness can help us in our daily lives. One thing I also liked about the exercises is that they were clearly targeted towards the age group I teach (16-17 year olds). 11th graders can be a tough audience, and the minute they feel like what they are being asked to do is trivial or childish, they shut down. However, I never experienced any push back or complaints from my students about this program because the exercises Broderick designed have real significance and meaning to young adults. The curriculum is also very easy to use. In addition to arranging the content into six themes Broderick allows flexibility for teacher implementation. For example, she offers two ways to deliver instruction-through six longer sessions or eighteen shorter sessions. Within each theme there are options for activities and practice that the teacher can adapt as necessary. In addition Broderick provides introductory chapters giving background information about mindfulness and tips about how to use the manual. Finally, there are student workbooks available for download, copies of which can be found in the appendix. Overall, I have nothing but praise for the Learning to Breathe curriculum and recommend it for any teacher looking to introduce mindfulness strategies into his or her classroom.

I am excited about the potential L2B holds for improving the lives of stressed teenagers, and also for cultivating a greater sense of calm in the school environment as a whole. I have been reading and learning about L2B for the past several months and have grown increasingly impressed by the multitude of ways Broderick makes mindfulness practice accessible and real. I like that I can teach it in a variety of ways, from twice a week for three weeks to once a week for 18 weeks. I will begin my first round of teaching L2B with a pilot group of high school juniors and seniors in two weeks. They keep asking - "when are we starting that mindfulness group?" an indication of how eager today's teens are to slow down and learn to be in the present moment, free from ruminating about the past and worrying about the future. THANK YOU for this wonderful adaptation of Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction---what a wonderful gift to today's teens.

For in-school group learning, Learning to Breathe provides some excellent material for group activities that can be referred to again and again as the school year progresses. It is an experiential, user-friendly social and emotional learning tool for teaching Mindfulness practices to adolescents. Our students obtained a deep understanding of mindfulness from the interactive scenarios, role-playing activities and short meditation techniques. These lessons increased our students' ability to comprehend and incorporate mindfulness into their lives. The use of the acronym BREATHE, as a foundation for the each theme provided a "go-to" set of concepts that were triggered every time they saw the letters BREATHE on the wall or thought to bring them up in their own minds.

Patricia Broderick's, Learning to Breathe, is a comprehensive, engaging, mindfulness curriculum for teens. The flexibility of the program, allowing it to be taught in six full-hour periods or 18 shorter segments makes it convenient to implement in different settings. The curriculum cultivates students' awareness of bodily sensations, thoughts, and feelings, and empowers them to relate to unpleasant internal and external events more skillfully and effectively, while also helping them to recognize, savor and appreciate the good in themselves and others. The students I have used the curriculum with responded well to the various mindfulness practices and activities, welcomed the opportunity to settle into being during their busy schedules, and shared that it helped them to regulate their emotions, and improve their attention and athletic performance outside of school. Pre-test, post-test measurements reflected these changes showing increased ability to calm oneself and regulate feelings, increased attention and awareness, and decreased negative rumination. I strongly recommend the curriculum for helping teens learn to anchor and be kind to themselves during the turbulent storm of adolescence. The curriculum is a gift that keeps on giving.

I found L2B by researching Jon Kabat-Zinn's MBSR program. I am working in an adolescent hospital setting and need something evidence-based. I found this book and was able to discuss it with the author, Dr. Broderick immediately after I found it. I have been implementing it for about 3 months in a twice a week 45 minute group. It has been an AMAZING resource and I am very thankful for the research and time that went into it. I am excited to get all the materials and attend the specific L2B training.

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