

# Collection of Musing on Mindfulness and Teaching

Collected by Angela Newport  
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## ELA CCSS in support of Mindfulness as a Learning Tool

Highlighted words are those necessitating ones ability to mentally focus on the task at hand and determine a possible course of action in order to accomplish a task.

CCSS: English Language Arts

Production and Distribution of Writing:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.9-10.4 : Produce **clear and coherent** writing in which the **development**, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.9-10.5 : **Develop** and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or **trying a new approach, focusing** on addressing what is most **significant** for a specific purpose and audience.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1.D : Respond **thoughtfully** to diverse perspectives, summarize points of agreement and disagreement, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their **own views and understanding and make new connections** in light of the evidence and reasoning presented.

### Anchor Standards

Note on range and content in student writing: To build a foundation for college and career readiness, students need to learn to use writing as a way of offering and supporting opinions, demonstrating **understanding** of the subjects they are studying, and conveying **real and imagined** experiences and events. They learn to **appreciate** that a key purpose of writing is to communicate clearly to an external, sometimes unfamiliar audience, and they begin to **adapt** the form and content of their writing to accomplish a particular task and purpose. They develop the **capacity** to build knowledge on a subject through research projects and to respond analytically to literary and informational sources. To meet these goals, students must devote significant time and effort to writing, producing numerous pieces over short and extended time frames throughout the year.

### Text Excerpts

Philosophy -

"If I tell you about the sweetness, the softness, and the fragrance of the mango fruit, it won't mean much. When you try it, taste it, and experience it for yourself, only then will you know what a mango is. Wisdom cannot be communicated in words or concepts or theories; it has to be discovered and experienced by yourself. My teaching you is like pointing a finger to the moon. My finger is not the moon. Forget my finger and look at the moon." (*The Buddha and the Terrorist*, pg. 68)

Definition -

"Mindfulness is a way of being, a practice we can engage in. It's not an abstract state; it's a kind, curious, non-judgemental awareness that we try to bring to each moment...it is a continual journey towards greater awareness and understanding." (*Teach Breathe Learn*, pg. 18)

Life is precious, and mindfulness gives us the tools to live deeply, to connect authentically, and to open our hearts fully...Most educational settings will only support initiatives that are research-based, and

the good news is this: the science behind mindfulness is expanding daily. Studies with K-12 students demonstrate "improvements in working memory, attention, academic skills, social skills, emotional regulation, and self-esteem, as well as self-reported improvements in mood and decreases in anxiety, stress, and fatigue.

Although rigorous scientific research findings are of course important, many people find their own experiential results of dedicated practice to be the most convincing proof that such practices are worthwhile. For them, the deep sense of presence and resilience they gain is far more powerful than the measurable results of mindfulness. It is this "heartfulness" that teachers then transmit to their students. (*Teach Breathe Learn*, pg. 25- 26) 1

#### Language -

The Sanskrit root, *cit*, refers to the mind, consciousness, and heart, and it is the experience of many that an experience of mindfulness is one that occurs with a deep connection of heart. In several languages, the word for mind and heart are the same.

#### Article

Sustainable Happiness - Six Ways to Get There

Catherine O'Brien

<http://www.yesmagazine.org/happiness/sustainable-happiness-6-ways-to-get-there>

#### Podcast

On Being interview with Eve Ensler, March 5, 2015 2

Krista: "Western culture is so built around this way overly-cerebral, disembodied way that we've created all of our institutions and we are so impoverished for it."

Eve: You get into this mindset that keeps you from opening your heart.

Krista: I was at a gathering...and there were some neuroscientist there...and we talked about language, how the Buddhist word for heart-mind, it's the same word for the same thing. When these Western neuroscientists began studying the brains of meditating Buddhist monks, the monks thought it was so hilarious that they were putting electrodes on the head as opposed to the heart! But actually, the science is helping us understand that the brain is an organ, right. And that what we experience as feelings lodge in our bodies as well."

Eve: Nothing is separate! Everything got separated! But they're not separate! There's a direct line that goes from and to. That is to me is the most exciting thing about being alive right now...understanding that this is all connected...Not only here, but outside of us. You can't dominate people without separating them from each other and themselves...The more people that get back plugged in to their bodies and each other, the more impossible it will be for them to be dominated. How in our daily lives are we connecting?

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- 1 Meiklejohn et al., "Integrating Mindfulness Training into K-12 Education: Fostering the Resilience of Teachers and Students," *Mindfulness*, Springer 2012: 1-2.
- 2 Tippet, Krista, "On Being: Interview with Eve Ensler," Krista Tippet Public Productions, March 5, 2015
- 3 <http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/W/9-10/#CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.9-10.1>