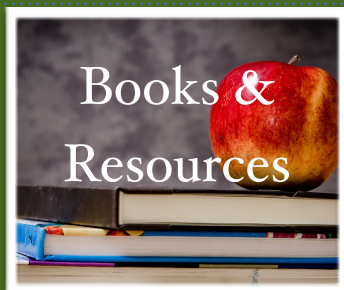


# COUNSELING CORNER

Monthly school newsletter from Lutheran Counseling Services

## Word of the Month: Peace

### Resource Highlight:



*Purchasing a book through our link supports expansion of our school counseling program. Thank you!*

Consider the following books highlighting peace:

**I Am Peace: A Book of Mindfulness**, by Susan Verde is great for young children to understand mindfulness and how it is important.

For teens or adults, Ann Voskamp's **One Thousand Gifts: A Dare to Live Fully Right Where You Are**, addresses finding ways to be present daily with God in everyday life, even amidst difficulty.

LCS is doing an online book club in November for this book. Information is on the Lutheran Counseling Services Facebook page. Join today!

Peace is defined by Merriam-Webster as "a state of tranquility or quiet" and "freedom from disquieting or oppressive thoughts or emotions". For many parents and teachers, this word does not describe daily life. How can more peace be added to a regular day?

Infants gain peace and emotional regulation abilities from their caregivers. A fussy baby may calm down in the arms of caregiver who is peaceful. New research into the function of the human nervous system continues to explore how this happens (Polyvagal Theory by Dr. Stephen Porges), and we have seen that this extends throughout the lifespan in that safety and peace can come from being around someone who is calm under the right circumstances.

This makes it very important for parents, teachers and all who work with children to build their inner peace. One way is through mindfulness, which is "the practice of maintaining a nonjudgmental state of heightened or complete awareness of one's thoughts, emotions, or experiences on a moment-to-moment basis" (Merriam – Webster dictionary). Research supports the many benefits of mindfulness, including reduced feelings of depression, anxiety, stress and emotional reactivity. Mindfulness also





## Car Conversations

*Whether in the car, store line, or at the dinner table, here are some ideas to build this trait in your child.*

- Implement Mindful Mondays as a family: Take a nature walk, slowly eat a new food, or do a series of stretches together. Notice the thoughts, emotions and sensations that arise and discuss them after the activity.

- Consider the following Bible verses about peace & discuss as a family what they mean to you. Pick one to serve as a guide for mindful moments this month:

*Matthew 5:9 ESV - "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God."*

*Romans 12:18 ESV - "If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all."*

*Colossians 3:15 ESV - "And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful."*

- Make a daily time for a few minutes of mindfulness & let each family member find a place for this at home. Add pillows, blanket, stuffed animal or a plant to make it special.

leads to a better working memory, focus, relationships, self-awareness, ability to suppress distractions, and greater cognitive flexibility. (Davis & Hayes).

Mindfulness comes from finding ways to tune in to the present moment to notice thoughts, emotions and sensations without any judgement. Consider the following ways to do this:

- ❖ Check in about how you feel throughout the day- connect with the feeling of sitting, standing, walking and what it feels like in your body at different times throughout the day. Consider shifting a habit, such as when you would pick up a device, practice mindfulness instead. Use your lock screen/ screen saver to remind you to tune in.
- ❖ Make something mindful: Consider a daily practice that you might normally rush through or not focus on fully. Maybe drinking your morning drink, taking a shower, sending an e-mail or even walking to the mailbox. Tune in to the activity and the sights, scents, sensations and be present in that moment.
- ❖ Be present in person. When talking with someone be fully present. Listen deeply. Notice details like eye color, voice tone, word choice, how you feel about what is discussed. Dial back your urge to think of a response and fully listen.
- ❖ Breath check. Check in on the sensation of breathing. Notice the air flowing in and out. Deepen the breath so your abdomen moves in and out and notice thoughts that pop up, let them be and then let them go.

Remember a time when you were very mindful, noticing small details, slowing down, eliminating judgement and finding peace in yourself. Maybe it was being around a new baby, an important day, or watching your child engaged in an activity. Channel what it feels like to be connected to the present moment and the peace it can bring. Find small ways to carve out time to increase your mindfulness today!

Davis, D. M. & Hayes, J. A. (2012) *What are the benefits of mindfulness*. Retrieved from <https://www.apa.org/monitor/2012/07-08/ce-corner.aspx>



## COUNSELOR CONNECTION

A counselor is at your school weekly to help build this and other mental health traits in your child. Reach out to your school to contact your school counselor or contact us at LCS at (407) 644-4692 or [lcsfl.com](http://lcsfl.com).

## MISS A MONTH?

Find previous [newsletters here](#).



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