



# Counselor's Corner

March/April 2019

## Utilizing Mindfulness in the Face of Stress: External Demands vs. Internal Resources

Written by Dave Smith

**What is Stress?** Stress is the thought, feeling or attitude that I don't have the internal resources to meet the external demands. If we are honest, our lives might feel like one external demand after the other. So, let's just acknowledge that, and start building some internal resources.

If we take a moment to honestly reflect on recent events in our lives, how often do we feel as though we don't have what it takes to get through a particular challenge or struggle? What is the range of stress in your daily life? How could you be better resourced to manage it?

**Moments of Stress** Moments of stress, accompanied by the onset of overwhelm, typically begin with three thoughts:

1. Something is wrong.
2. There isn't enough \_\_\_\_\_. (fill in the blank)
3. I need to do something.

Does this sound familiar? Let's bring mindfulness into this equation and see where our agency lies.

## Mindfulness: Our Greatest Internal Resource for Stress Reduction

Mindfulness is our greatest internal resource.

With the development of short moments of awareness, we can find a pause. If we can remember to recognize that we have the ability to bring presence and ease to any circumstance, we are better able to reevaluate and respond rather than react. We begin to acknowledge that a great deal of our stress is perceived, assumed or forecasted. Finding moments where we can wake up from the ruminations and the predictions of our wanderings minds is our greatest tool for stress reduction.

The steady development of this mindful intervention gives rise to confidence and resilience in our own abilities to do well, and to do better. Each small victory becomes the seed for future possibilities and we should feel encouraged by this.

**Reframing Stress** We can revisit these common themes of stress and see if we can offer ourselves a reframe.

1. Nothing is wrong, I am facing a challenge.
2. I do have the resources to meet this experience.
3. I need to take a pause and ground myself in this moment, just as it is.

By grounding ourselves in presence, we develop the potential to respond, rather than to react.

Adapted with permission from Mindful Schools

For further details or information, please contact your child's guidance counselor:

**Mrs. Kelly B. Maire**

Angelo L. Tomaso School  
(908) 753-5300 x 5305  
[kblessing-maire@warrentboe.org](mailto:kblessing-maire@warrentboe.org)

**Ms. Alyssa Pech**

Central School  
(908) 753-5300 x 5205  
[apech@warrentboe.org](mailto:apech@warrentboe.org)

**Dr. Kelly Stankiewicz**

Mount Horeb School  
(908) 753-5300 x 5405  
[kellystankiewicz@warrentboe.org](mailto:kellystankiewicz@warrentboe.org)

**Ms. Alexandra Pranzo**

Woodland School  
(908) 7730-5300 x 5505  
[apranzo@warrentboe.org](mailto:apranzo@warrentboe.org)

**Ms. Melanie Maida**

Middle School - 7<sup>th</sup> grade  
(908) 753-5300 x5009  
[mmaida@warrentboe.org](mailto:mmaida@warrentboe.org)

**Ms. Helen Scully**

Middle School- 8<sup>th</sup> grade  
(908) 753-5300 x 5007  
[hscully@warrentboe.org](mailto:hscully@warrentboe.org)

**Mrs. Midge Johnson**

Middle School – 6<sup>th</sup> grade  
(908) 753-5300 x 5005  
[mjohnson@warrentboe.org](mailto:mjohnson@warrentboe.org)

**Mrs. Carol Brown**

Warren Middle School  
908-753-5300  
[cbrown@warrentboe.org](mailto:cbrown@warrentboe.org)