

# Greentree Elementary Counseling Newsletter

The way we talk to our children becomes their inner voice.

PEGGY O'MARA

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## Mindfulness

As parents, we have moments when we are hyper mindful, for instance, when our children are too quiet and we're wondering what they're up to. And then we have those moments when we aren't as mindful as we could be, for instance, when we'd rather have screentime as opposed to kidtime. Mindful.org (2017) defines *mindfulness* as "the basic human ability to be fully present, aware of where we are and what we're doing, and not overly reactive or overwhelmed by what's going on around us." Easy to say, hard to do!

Some quick tips for mindful parenting include:

- ❖ **S – Stop:** when in highly stressed situations, become aware of your surroundings, your activities or your feelings and just take a moment to pause.
- ❖ **T – Take a breath:** "Breath awareness actually harmonizes the cardiovascular systems in the body, while also calming the "alarm" centers in the more primitive parts of the brain, restoring full brain function. When we are stressed, we can't think clearly or see any situation accurately." (adapted from *The 5*

*Main Tenants of Mindful Parenting)*

- ❖ **O – Observe:** Notice your surroundings, how your breath flows in and out of your body, your feelings and emotions, how your body feels in this moment.
- ❖ **P – Proceed:** Having shifted to a more mindfully responsive mode, take an action that is more skillful, appropriate and best attuned to your situation.

Studies into *mindful parenting* have shown "that parents who reported more mindful parenting engaged in more positive and less negative parenting behavior, which was then linked to more positive behavior in their kids—meaning less anxiety, depression, and acting out" (mindful.org, 2017). It's important to remember that we model behavior for our children, and what better behavior to model than this? As this year comes to a close and we reflect on what went well in 2017 and what we could improve in ourselves for the benefit of our children, let's think about incorporating mindfulness practices into our lives. In fact, you're probably already doing it and didn't know it had a fancy term to it! 😊

Counseling Contact Information

Website: <http://web.iusd.org/gt/counselorscorner.html>

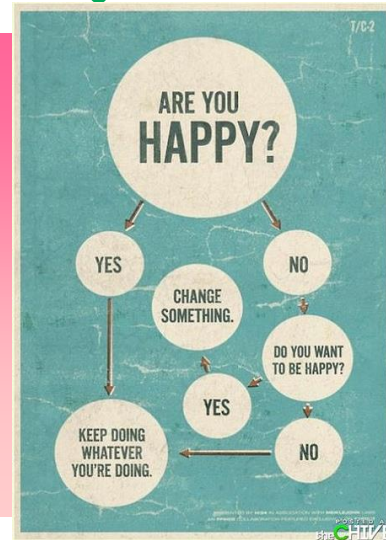
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## Funny parenting tweets:

How to Decorate a Christmas Tree with Kids:

1. Unpack ornament
2. Drop repeatedly until it shatters into a million pieces
3. Repeat



## How To Create The Perfect Family

You will need:

- 1 large house
- 3-6 people, depending on how long you want to wait for it to be done
- 3 cups of pets
- 2 cups of patience
- 3 ounces of anger/frustration
- 3 quarts of laughter
- 4 teaspoons of trust
- And last but definitely not least,  
Lots and lots of love

First, open the house, and make sure that it will be the right size for your family. Mix the desired amount of people with the pets, carefully so you don't damage them. In a separate bowl, stir the love and laughter together. Set aside. Taking each person separately, evenly distribute the patience and trust, making sure that each one gets an equal amount (Failure to distribute evenly may lead to different recipe! See recipe for "My impatient family" for details...). Carefully open the bottle of anger/frustration. Using a Q-tip, dab small portions of the anger/frustration onto each person. Lastly, take the love and laughter and sprinkle it all over the house, pets, and people. Let sit until all parts of the recipe are thoroughly combined, and voila! Your Perfect Family is complete

**Source:** <https://www.familyfriendpoems.com/poem/recipe-for-perfect-family>

-Dr. Pacheco

## Free Parenting Classes

Just a friendly reminder that Stonegate Elementary School is offering free parenting class/workshops at 8:30am or 5:30pm once a month. January's topic is: **Mindful Meditation** and it will be presented on January 11<sup>th</sup>. If interested in attending or would like more information, please contact Dr. Pacheco via email at [marielapacheco@iusd.org](mailto:marielapacheco@iusd.org). We look forward to seeing you there!

## In case you're wondering...

How easy it can be to incorporate mindfulness into your life, try an app! The following are some recommendations:

- ✓ Breathe, Think, Do with Sesame (Free: iTunes/Android)
- ✓ Calm (Free: iTunes/Android)
- ✓ HelloMind (Free: iTunes/Android)
- ✓ Smiling Mind (Free: iTunes/Android)
- ✓ Headspace (Free: iTunes/Android)

Most of these apps are adult and kid friendly, which means you can also encourage your kids to try them!

*Have a topic/subject/concern that you'd like to learn more about or see discussed, please let us know.*

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