

# Using the Mindful Attention Awareness Scale to Evaluate an Extension Program

Melinda Hill, Shannon Carter, Patrice Powers-Barker, Pat Holmes, Kathy Tutt, Marie Economos, Christine Kendle

Family and Consumer Sciences, Ohio State University Extension

## Introduction

Educational methods used in mindfulness trainings should “draw on educational principles that are experiential, interactive, participatory, student-centered and relationship-centered” (Crane, Brewer, Feldman, Kabat-Zinn, Santorelli, Williams, & Kuyken, 2017). It is also imperative that Extension professionals use evaluations to help determine if the curriculum and lessons are meeting the needs of the participants and reflecting the goals of the lessons.

## Background

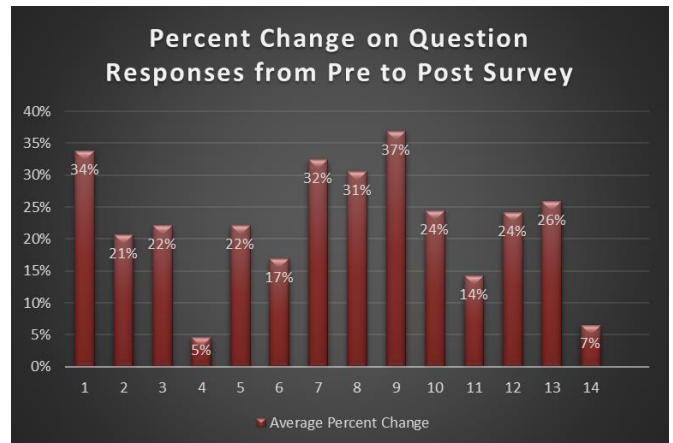
The authors of the Mindful Wellness curriculum reviewed evaluation methods to best complement an educational class and chose the Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (Brown and Ryan, 2003). This tool best captured the intent of “paying attention at a particular moment” as a focus point of the classes. The tool is self reporting, brief but thorough and can work for a series of lessons as a pre/post participant survey.

## Mindful Attention Awareness Scale

The Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS) is a survey with 15 statements about everyday experiences, with a scale of 1-6 to reflect frequency or infrequency of each experience.

How MAAS has been used with the Mindful Wellness curriculum:

- Used as a pre and post survey for a mindfulness series that included at least three separate classes
- Demographic questions were added to the pre-program survey
- Additional, open-ended questions were added to the post survey to capture participant satisfaction and intentions to use the information in the future
- Two additional questions were added to both the pre and post surveys to assess the days and minutes spent on mindfulness exercises



This graph shows the average percent change for the participant responses to pre and post survey questions. The higher the percent, the more change indicated by participants.

## Summary

- Plans for continued use of the updated MAAS as the evaluation tool for the state mindfulness curriculum
- Will continue to ask about mindfulness practice and the number of days per week and minutes per day with future plans to compare amount of time practicing and changes in pre and post surveys on the MAAS
- Will continue to ask open ended questions and offer space for open responses.
- Address low-literacy reading levels on future evaluations
- Although one premise of mindfulness is non-judgmental, it is possible that participants will still attach “should” or “shouldn’t” to the MAAS statements.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Brown, K. W., & Ryan, R. M. (2003). The benefits of being present: Mindfulness and its role in psychological well-being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 4, 822-848.

Crane, R., Brewer, J., Feldman, C., Kabat-Zinn, J., Santorelli, S., Williams, J., & Kuyken, W. (2017). What defines mindfulness-based programs? The warp and the weft.

*Psychological Medicine*, 47(6), 990-999. doi:10.1017/S0033291716003317  
Kemper, Kathi. *The Mind-Body Skills Training for Resilience, Effectiveness, and Mindfulness (STREAM)*, Ohio State University, online at <https://mindbodyhealth.osu.edu/>

Ritter, M., Kandiah, J., & Saiki, D. (2018). Stress management through the lens of Family and Consumer Sciences. *Journal of Family and Consumer Sciences*. 110(2), 49-54.



# About the Mindful Wellness Curriculum

## Overall Goal

The Mindful Wellness curriculum is designed to equip healthy adults with practice and skills to strengthen the mind and body connection, and promote holistic health and wellness across the life span.

## Target Audience

Healthy adults

## Participant Learning Outcomes

- Define mindfulness as an intentional practice beneficial to mind-body health.
- Describe different benefits of mindfulness practice for different people.
- Practice sample exercises with the learning group.
- Engage in self-reflection to determine a personal mindfulness plan.
- Identify personal plan to practice mindfulness outside of the class (SMART goals).
- Adopt at least one new behavior to practice mindfulness to support a healthy lifestyle.

## Components of Mindful Wellness Lessons

Each individual lesson includes:

- PowerPoint slides including instructor guide.
- at least one recommended script for the instructor to direct a mindfulness group practice during the lesson.
- additional suggestions and resources for individual practice on the specific lesson topic.
- references specific to that lesson.
- each lesson is designed to be 45 minutes to one hour and all complement one another to offer a comprehensive series of classes.

The following are individual lessons. Educators are encouraged to use them as a series.

1. Introduction to Mindfulness (can be a stand-alone, one-time lesson or the first lesson of the Mindful Wellness series)
2. Mindful Foundations (this is the first lesson of a series unless Introduction to Mindfulness is also used)
3. Mindful Breathing (recommended to follow Mindful Foundations in a series)
4. Mindful Eating (additional/optional lesson to the series)
5. Mindful Living (last lesson of the series)

This curriculum is educational, and the content is informational. It is not a substitute for medical care, counseling, or treatments. This is designed as prevention education.

## Evaluation

The MW curriculum comes with a suggested evaluation. This evaluation includes the MAAS as written by Brown and Ryan, 2003. Since the publication of this online, downloadable curriculum, the Mindful Wellness team has made minor changes to the MAAS. If you are interested in a copy of the updated version currently being assessed by the Mindful Wellness team, please email Patrice Powers-Barker at [powers-barker.1@osu.edu](mailto:powers-barker.1@osu.edu)

## For More Information

Link to Mindful Wellness Curriculum, digital download: <https://extensionpubs.osu.edu/mindful-wellness/>

Link to information on the 2019 *Using the Mindful Attention Awareness Scale to Evaluation and Extension Program* poster, Ignite and Subject Matter Networking table discussions: [go.osu.edu/maas](https://go.osu.edu/maas)

