



More Than Mindfulness Conference:

Exploring Education As A Sacred Art

Session 1 Workshops: 1:45-3:15

What If We All Just Led With Compassion? (Susie and Jill)

In this workshop we will explore techniques that empower our families and students to collaborate with the classroom teacher in order to create a nonjudgmental and welcoming climate and culture and foster conversations that give rise to the benefits of facing one another with honesty and trust.

Methods such as listening conferences, State of Grace documents, class meetings and selective online communication will be explored via a lens of mindful expression.

Suggested Audience: Preschool-8th Grade Educators and Administrators, Parents, School Counselors other Mental Health Professionals, Exceptional Education Teachers

Religion & Spirituality: A conversation for the Post-Modern Classroom and Counselor (Renee and Will)

We live in a society where it is not the “norm” to talk about spirituality. Yet, the most recent research from multiple fields, especially neuroscience and psychology, are proving that spiritual development is as important as cognitive, physical, and social/emotional development. For example, healthy spiritual development can reduce the likelihood of depression by as much as 80%. This session will discuss some of this landmark research, and discuss why spiritual development is critical in the lives of children, and critical for a post-modern, complex world, where most of our problems are created by humans, and could be solved, as the Dalai Lama says, “with a spiritual revolution.” We make the assumption that the reason spirituality is avoided in society and in public schools is because it is confused with religion. We will discuss some of these implications and define the difference between spirituality and religion..

Suggested Audience: Anyone interested in exploring the impact of Spirituality and Religion on our youth.

Learning Through a Holistic Lens (Eddy)

In this workshop we will explore how teaching the whole child enhances the learning path of all children, but can positively and powerfully impact students with diverse learning needs. We will share strategies, lessons, and activities to engage children of all ages in facing their challenges, while reinforcing their strengths and self-concept. Our Seven Domains model is the foundational component in which RCS approaches learning and teaching.

Suggested Audience: K-8 Educators and Administrators, Exceptional Education Teachers, Parents

Mindfulness and Movement: Grounding Learning in the Body (Ange, Rachel, and Mark)

Today we will explore the connections between body, mind, and heart, as we discuss, practice, and debrief activities that can bring awareness to our physical selves. Children crave movement throughout the day, and these tools are designed to both nurture their need to be in their bodies while also helping them to become more aware of how to self-regulate and re-engage in focused activities. Our bodies contain a wealth of intelligence and when our students funnel that energy in creative and intentional ways they can transform their restlessness into attentive purpose. Children's desire to move comes from the authentic need for self-expression. In this workshop we will explore not only the connection between the physical and mental domain, but also the connection between the physical and the emotional domain. How can we integrate the body in conflict resolution dialogues, during morning centering practices, within classroom transitions, and while reflecting on main lessons? Children are already deeply in tune with the language of the body. It is our job as educators to activate that resource and to provide plenty of opportunities for our students to appreciate and realize the full potential of their bodies for communication, healing, learning, and self-actualization. All are welcome! We are eager to share our activities and experiences as well as a handout detailing specific exercises to try with the children in your life.

Suggested Audience: Preschool-8 Educators, Parents, School Counselors, Exceptional Education Teachers, PE Teachers, Theater & Dance Teachers

Session 2 Workshops: 3:30-5:00

The Magic and Mystery of the Natural World: Exploring Core Routines of Deep Nature Connection (West)

In this day and age, an understanding of the human impact on the environment is virtually impossible to ignore. Likewise, these environmental problems impact our daily lives and will continue to do so for generations. We know that human impact on the environment can be curbed by increased education, making thoughtful choices, acts of stewardship, and developing deeper connections with nature. At RCS we believe that environmental stewards are birthed from a learning atmosphere that sees nature as sacred and divine. The culture, climate and programming at RCS aims to nurture an intimate and empathetic bond with the natural world specifically during the formative years of childhood that will over time grow into meaningful and enduring environmental action. In this workshop we will investigate rituals and activities that help to infuse a love and appreciation of the natural world into our lesson plans and classroom culture for our littlest learners, so that they are primed to develop into life-long environmental stewards.

Suggested Audience: Preschool-2nd Grade Educators, Parents

The Art of Storytelling and The Hero's Journey (David and Justin)

Come join us for a fun session designed to bring back the sacred art of storytelling to the classroom. Learn how the ancient act of gathering for fellowship around the fire can lead to relevant learning in all classroom settings, today. Children young and old can be inspired by story to understand history, gain perspective of the diverse human experience, experience gratitude for the magic and science of the natural world, and much more.

Explore a classroom curriculum designed around the Hero's Journey! Discover how students can recognize personal transformations in their lives, acknowledge and embrace the unknowns ahead of them, and realize the hero within themselves. Through mythologies old and new, we discover archetypes that may be paralleled in our own students' struggles and successes, setting a platform for growth and resiliency.

Suggested Audience: Preschool-8th Grade Educators, Parents

Inner Alchemy: Different Spiritual Traditions of Self (Will)

Coming of age is often a special time in many cultures marked with celebration and ceremony. However, it can also be a time of confusion, questioning and growth as our youth explore ideas of ethics, peer relations, puberty, gender, intimacy and much more. In this workshop we will share the curriculum, conversations, and learning moments from Rainbow's implementation of a social/emotional curriculum designed to embrace and encourage open dialogue around these topics that can feel taboo in our society.

Suggested Audience: 4-8th grade Educators and Administrators, Parents, School Counselors and other Mental Health Professionals

The Practice of Mindfulness for Presence, Love, and Peace (Lucy)

In this workshop we will take a look at how teachers can bring presence, love, and peace into their classrooms through mindfulness practice. We will engage in a variety of contemplative exercises, reflect on our personal experiences, and explore the impacts of neuroscience on each activity.

Participants will leave with the understanding of how to bring mindfulness into their classrooms in a way that fits easily into the busy daily schedule, that supports various needs in the classroom community, and is reinforced by research.

Suggested Audience: Educators and Administrators, Parents, School Counselors and other Mental Health Professionals

Mindful Creativity: Using Music and Art as a Medium for Conscious Contemplation (Susie and Sue)

For many, there is a natural connection between the creative experience and spiritual discovery. In this workshop, we will embrace various artistic mediums as an avenue for self discovery, reflection, and mindfulness. Using a piece of music as our muse, we will meditate, paint, move and more as a way to embrace original interpretation and point of view.

Suggested Audience: Anyone interested in igniting their creative energy and exploring a pathway to mindful expression.