



## More Than Mindfulness Conference 2016:

*Exploring Education As A Sacred Art*

### **Session 1 Workshops: 1:15-2:45 PM**

#### ***What If We All Just Led With Compassion?***

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, welcoming climate and culture. We will also 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 through the lens of mindful expression.

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

#### ***Religion & Spirituality: A Conversation for the Post-Modern Classroom and Counselor***

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***

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 structure through 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***

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: 3:00-4:30 PM***

#### ***The Magic and Mystery of the Natural World: Exploring Core Routines of Deep Nature Connection***

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 through 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 grow over time into meaningful and enduring environmental action. In this workshop we will investigate rituals and activities that help infuse a love and appreciation of the natural world into our lesson plans and classroom culture even for our "littlest" learners; setting a primary stage of development for lifelong environmental stewards.

Suggested Audience: Preschool-2nd Grade Educators, Parents

#### ***The Art of Storytelling and The Hero's Journey***

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 condition, 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***

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 all too often taboo topics 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***

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