

# Northeast Independent Schools Mindfulness Conference Report

June 16, 2017



INDEPENDENT  
SCHOOL · HEALTH  
ASSOCIATION

Hosted by Middlesex School in collaboration with the  
Independent School Health Association

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## —About the Conference—

On June 16, 2017, the second Northeast Independent School Mindfulness Conference was hosted by Middlesex School in collaboration with the Independent School Health Association. In attendance were over 60 faculty members, school health professionals, and administrators from various independent schools. The attendees were interested in:

- *integrating* mindfulness into their schools (grades K-12 and 9-12)
- *progressing* their own mindfulness programs
- *continuing* an ongoing dialogue about mindfulness and education
- *learning* different strategies for the implementation of mindfulness in school settings
- *promoting* health and wellness in schools and communities

Attendees also heard from presenters who discussed their own efforts to bring mindfulness into their communities. They shared a variety of models for integrating mindfulness into the independent school setting and some of their presentations are accessible via hyperlinks in this report.

## —Acknowledgements—

Thank you to **Middlesex School** and to **Kathy Giles** for hosting and supporting the conference.

Thank you to the presenters who shared their time, insights, enthusiasm, and expertise.

Thank you to **Doug Worthen** and **Miguel Marshall** for their efforts in making this conference possible.

Lastly, *thank you* to all of the attendees who shared their inquiry, experience, and energy the day of the conference.

## —Presentations—

### **The Role of Mindfulness in Navigating Power, Privilege, and Race**

The conference began with a panel discussion on “The Role of Mindfulness in Navigating Power, Privilege, and Race.” The panel discussion was moderated by Doug Worthen, Director of Mindfulness at Middlesex School, and included three speakers:

- Charisse Minerva Spencer, Mindfulness Coordinator at Friends School of Virginia Beach (VA);
- Jessica Morey, Executive Director of Inward Bound Mindfulness Education (iBme); and
- Lama Rod Owens, core teacher with Natural Dharma Fellowship in Cambridge, Massachusetts and an authorized Dharma teacher in the Tibetan tradition of Buddhism.

The discussion began with each speaker talking about their experience with mindfulness. The panel was initially asked to discuss an experience in which they used mindfulness to navigate issues of power, privilege, and race. The three panelists shared experiences in which they used mindfulness to manage difficult conversations and uncomfortable situations. They reflected on the usefulness of different aspects of mindfulness, including practices such as “curious attention”, “awareness”, and “patience” in responding to difficult and uncomfortable experiences. The panelists emphasized that these different practices can help people gain important insights about a particular conversation and environment by converting a difficult situation into a productive and useful one.

#### **Takeaways from Charisse**

Members of the panel also discussed the ways in which people of color experience suffering as different from the suffering experienced as a result of physical pain. The panelists emphasized a distinction between systematic suffering and individual suffering, suggesting that while all people feel individual suffering at points in their lives, systematic suffering more accurately reflects the suffering experienced by people of color. Systematic suffering was described as a perpetual hardship that comes from understanding that the body of a person of color is used as capital—that our society is not built for the “black body”. Charisse suggested that in our current social structure, all people are victims of oppression and thus all experience different degrees of suffering; however, Charisse advised that all people can use mindfulness as a way of becoming more aware of situations which can help them change the system that causes people systematic suffering. Mindfulness can be a tool for building connection and unearthing the truth of reality.

#### **Takeaways from Jess**

The panelists also discussed how mindfulness can be useful for becoming more in touch with one’s own situation—specifically, their privilege. Jess suggested that people can use mindfulness to deepen the way they experience emotions related to suffering such as rage, helplessness, and despair in order to more closely identify with the experiences of others; in doing so, people can become more aware of both the suffering of others but also their own privilege. Jess went on the talk about how this practice of mindfully trying to listen to and better understand the experiences of others has been essential in her own work with iBme. She constantly questions how her organization can change the ways they conduct teen retreats with the hope of better accommodating others. Recently she has been focusing community building during her retreats as a means of fostering interconnectedness.

### **Takeaways from Rod**

In the final part of the panel discussion, the panelists further explored the ways in which secular mindfulness, if utilized in the wrong way, can be a form of further imposing American values on communities—a form of colonization in Rod’s words.. Improperly integrating mindfulness into communities and schools runs the risk of mindfulness being used as a tool to control rather than a practice of liberation. Thus, the panelists emphasized that in order to spread mindfulness as a practice, people must pay attention to the ways we teach and the ways we think we are going to help people; if we focus on creating a community—a joint learning experience—and approach situations from a place of curiosity, of focusing on what a community needs and responding to those needs, then we can bring mindfulness to communities not as a means of colonizing but as a practice of emancipation.

## **The Integration of Mindfulness & Community Wellness: Creating a Compassionate School Culture**

*Frankie Engelking*

Frankie Engelking, Director of Student & Community Wellness at the McLean School, presented on the ways that her school has integrated mindfulness into the school culture. Frankie highlighted what she called McLean’s “three-prong approach to mindfulness”, which includes:

- *Education:* What is mindfulness and how does it work?
- *Training:* How to experience mindfulness.
- *Practice:* Creating a personal and or group practice.

This approach describes McLean’s method of integrating mindfulness into their school’s curriculum. In addition, the McLean school has integrated some of the tenets of mindfulness—including compassion, gratitude, listening, and communication—to both their English and History curriculums. Additionally, students participate in mindful yoga and mindful breathing exercises.

Frankie focused on demonstrating the ways that mindfulness has become part of the school culture. The school holds mindfulness classes for parents and faculty members and provides students with opportunities to become involved with community service.

For a complete copy of Frankie’s presentation, please visit:  
[http://www.mcleanschool.org/MindfulnessWorkshop\\_06\\_16\\_17](http://www.mcleanschool.org/MindfulnessWorkshop_06_16_17)

## Creating a K-12 Mindfulness Program

*Adam Ortman*

Adam Ortman, Mindfulness Director at St. Andrew's Episcopal School, a K-12 independent school in Austin, TX, presented on the process of building a mindfulness program in his school. The mindfulness program began when some of the faculty members of the school asked Adam's wife (also a teacher at St. Andrews) if she could pull together some resources for bringing mindfulness to the school's chapel. Having gained the support of some of the faculty members at St. Andrew's, Adam proposed a pilot program to the headmaster of the school. In his proposal, Adam asked that the headmaster allow him to teach mindfulness as a volunteer to as many different audiences as possible (students, faculty, parents...) for a few months. Over the course of two months, Adam's pilot program included:

- six mindfulness lessons to the lower and middle school during their chapel time
- a nine-session mindfulness course for the upper school faculty during chapel
- four mindfulness lessons in a freshman English class
- evaluations at the end of the program

In the evaluations, the students and faculty members with whom Adam had worked almost unanimously reported that mindfulness was something they thought would be useful at school. With these results, Adam then approached the headmaster with another proposal:

- integrate a school-wide mindfulness curriculum for students, faculty, and parents
  - in the first year, the school paid Adam 25% of a half-time position and a grant paid Adam 75%
  - second year, the school paid 50% of Adam's ¾-time position and a grant paid 50%
  - third year, the school paid 75% of Adam's full-time position and a grant paid 25%

With the approval of Adam's proposal by the headmaster, Adam developed the program based on the interest of faculty members and students. Many faculty members approached Adam, including the 6th grade and the 9th grade teaching teams. Thus, Adam offered a nine-session intro to mindfulness course for all 6th graders, 9th graders, and interested faculty. Adam's curriculum for faculty classes was loosely based off MBSR, and "Mindfulness" by Mark Williams. For students, however, drew more heavily on the ".b curriculum", which was developed by the Mindfulness in Schools Project. After half of a year, the 3rd grade teaching team approached Adam to develop a course for the 3rd graders. The program developed organically and Adam would develop courses for all those that expressed interest:

- two visits for 7th and 8th grade advisories to help with test anxiety
- mindfulness test-stress-reduction courses for upper school
- weekly guided drop-in sessions for faculty
- "Holy Work, Holy Rest" course and retreat for high school seniors
- websites with guided practices & resources

Adam then discussed his plans for the next 2 years, which included:

- continue to offer courses to 3rd, 6th, and 9th graders
- add intro course for parents
- offer consistent small group opportunities (clubs, drop-in groups for faculty)
- continue to work with support faculty (Diversity Director, Chaplains, counsellors, SEL Director)

At the end of the presentation, Adam highlighted the important takeaways from his presentation. He stressed the usefulness of a pilot program as a means of slowly introducing the school to mindfulness and figuring out what the school needs; he urged that it takes time to develop a successful program; but if we trust in the process and take our time then we will be more successful in introducing a successful mindfulness program that fits the school culture.

Adam has been practicing mindfulness for 10 years and has been on two 10+day retreats per year for the last 8 years; on this point, he highlighted that although he still feels a beginner when it comes to mindfulness practice, he has acquired an extensive tool-kit for various audiences that perhaps has allowed him to bring mindfulness to all different age groups at St. Andrew's.

For a complete copy of Adam's presentation, please visit:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/90dczit4kx524ry/AdamOrtman.Building%20a%20K12%20program.final.pptx?dl=0>

## **Teaching Mindfulness as Play whether in an Independent School or Community Program**

*Charisse Minerva Spencer*

Charisse Minerva Spencer, Mindfulness Coordinator at Friends School of Virginia Beach, gave a presentation on teaching mindfulness as play. Charisse discussed the many ways in which mindfulness and play are similar suggesting that the two might be support. Charisse shared her experiences teaching mindfulness in the form of games, storytelling, making music, coloring mandalas, “things that connect to our inner child.” She often uses instruments such as drums or meditation bells to practice mindful listening and paying attention to the sensations of sound. She also has created games related to movement such as dancing or mirroring a partner’s actions as a practice of mindful walking.

Charisse uses play as a method for building community in the different groups she works with whether they be 3rd graders in a school or adults in a community center. She emphasized the ways in which her students have taken the mindful aspects of the games they have been playing and use them in their everyday lives to handle stressful or difficult situations. For Charisse, teaching mindfulness as a form of playing is a natural and effective way to bring mindfulness to communities of all age groups.

For a complete copy of Charisse’s presentation, please visit:

[https://drive.google.com/a/mxschool.edu/file/d/0Bwj-F3OSQmIJVFIUTEx1bEhmcUE/view?usp=drive\\_web](https://drive.google.com/a/mxschool.edu/file/d/0Bwj-F3OSQmIJVFIUTEx1bEhmcUE/view?usp=drive_web)

## **The Evolution of a JK - 12 Mindfulness Program: From the Classroom to the Community**

*Alex Peavey*

Alex Peavey, Upper School Counselor at Collegiate School of Richmond, VA, presented on the development of the mindfulness program at his school. Peavey initially brought mindfulness to Collegiate as the head basketball coach. After a couple of seasons, Alex was approached by the Chair of the Health & Wellness Department and asked to bring the mindful practices he had been doing with the basketball team to all of the upper-school students. The program began as a 2-week intro to mindfulness course taught as part of the Health & Wellness curriculum. This 2-week intro course has become mandatory for all 9th graders and is loosely based on MBSR.

Alex emphasized that part of reason the program has been successful is because it developed organically rather than top down from the administration. Peavey brought mindfulness to those who asked for it; in this way, although the program grew slowly, it grew naturally and made a greater impact on the community over time.

The program has advanced in many ways:

- Summer Online Course for Faculty
- Coaches' Training
- Lower School Mindful Mondays
- Summer Mindfulness Course
- Mindfulness for facilities
- Parent programs that have consistently attracted over 60 parents
- 1-day health and wellness retreat for sophomores, juniors, and seniors that includes a mindfulness component

One recent development that Alex was especially excited about was the beginning of a senior elective on Mindful Leadership. This elective—a graded course—focuses on how students can apply their own mindful practices to their lives outside of school and become compassionate leaders.

For a complete copy of Alex's presentation, please visit:

[https://drive.google.com/a/mxschool.edu/file/d/0Bwj-F3OSQmIJTEFYcWFDcGNYdVE/view?usp=drive\\_web](https://drive.google.com/a/mxschool.edu/file/d/0Bwj-F3OSQmIJTEFYcWFDcGNYdVE/view?usp=drive_web)

## **Student Q & A**

Panel: Katianna Conde, Jon Luke Tittmann, Cam Parker

Alan Brown, Class Dean and humanities teacher at Grace Church School in Manhattan, moderated a panel discussion of three students (two in college, and one currently attending Middlesex) about their experience with mindfulness. The students discussed their experience with mindfulness and the ways their practices have developed over their lives. Each student shared how they found time in their busy lives to meditate and offered insights into the ways students actually use mindfulness in their daily lives at school. Attributing much of the reason they continue to practice to their mentors, the students highlighted the importance of having mindfulness teachers who have their own dedicated practice.

## **Update of Mindfulness Programs from Last Year's Presenters**

The presenters from last year's conference spoke about the recent developments of mindfulness programs at their schools.

Doug Worthen, Middlesex School: The Mindfulness Program at Middlesex now includes 3 levels of classes. Level 3 is a more recent development and it is a course in which students who have attended several level 2 courses can learn how to facilitate mindfulness groups and practice guiding meditations themselves. Doug also spoke about spontaneous social noting practice which is a new practice that he has been exploring in his classes. Spontaneous social noting practice is a group noting practice where each participant notes out loud every 1-5 seconds where his or her attention is in their experience (i.e. thinking, emotions, hearing, body sensations, seeing, etc). This practice has proven to be especially helpful for Doug because it gives him insight into his students' practice, is an energizing practice for many, and is a connecting practice for groups. Additionally, each participant's voice supports other participants' awareness; continued practice often leads to insightful group experiences and discussions.

Dan Scheibe, Lawrence Academy: Dan Scheibe discussed the importance of faculty members buying into the mindfulness program. In the past year, many difficult situations arose at Lawrence Academy, but Dan noted that all the faculty members felt they had more resources from their practice to deal with those situations. Dan also noted that the quality of attention for his students in group settings, such as assemblies, seems to have improved. Currently, the administration at Lawrence is focused on cultivating social awareness as part of the school culture.

Alan Brown, Grace Church School: Grace Church School has two separate campuses, a K-8 campus and a 9-12 campus. Alan reported that this division has made it difficult for him to schedule mindfulness classes. Currently, he is working with the administration to resource more faculty to help with the program. Alan also has added a mindfulness elective to the high school curriculum which is focused on improving and advancing the students' practice.

Josh Relin, Deerfield Academy: Josh Relin, Director of Counseling at Deerfield academy, has been working to bring the Koru program, a mindfulness program developed at Duke University, to Deerfield Academy. Josh has made the program required for all students with the hope that all Deerfield students will hold some awareness that there is some benefit to being present. Making the program required has resulted in mixed responses from the students, as Josh expected. Currently, he is rethinking the program in efforts to make it as inviting and voluntary as possible while still reaching all students.

Jonathan Crowley, Northfield Mount Herman: Jonathan Crowley reported that the mindfulness program at Northfield Mount Herman, after a couple years of gaining momentum, is currently at a standstill. Jonathan is still hopeful that the program is moving forward. Currently, the school has implemented a mindfulness module in the mandatory health class for freshman. In addition, a trustee has donated money to renovate one of the buildings in order to make it into a dedicated space for mindfulness.

For more information about each program from the 2016 conference, please visit:

[https://www.mxschool.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/nismc\\_report\\_0-1-1-1-1.pdf](https://www.mxschool.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/nismc_report_0-1-1-1-1.pdf)

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## —Breakout Sessions—

The conference then shifted into breakout sessions. Attendees were invited to discuss one of the following topics:

- Mindfulness in Athletics: [Doug Worthen](#) and [Alex Peavey](#)
- Aikido, Tai Chi, and other moving meditation practices: Connecting the Dots with Kinesthetic Learners: [Charles Colten](#)
- Yoga: Yoking mindfulness and movement at the New Hampton School: [Jen Churchill](#)
- The Koru Curriculum at Deerfield: [Josh Relin](#)
- Can Mindfulness be Graded? Creating an Academic Course Offering in Mindfulness: [W. Alan Brown](#)
- Continuing the Conversation on Power, Privilege, and Race: [Jessica Morey](#), [Rod Owens](#)

Follow-up via email with breakout session presenters regarding their topics is encouraged.

—About the Presenters—



**ADAM ORTMAN, M.DIV., M.F.A.**  
**MINDFULNESS DIRECTOR, ST. ANDREW'S EPISCOPAL SCHOOL (TX)**

Adam Ortman works as the Mindfulness Director at St. Andrew's Episcopal School, a K-12 independent school in Austin, TX. Prior to this, he taught mindfulness to youth and adults at the high school and university levels, as well as in a youth detention facility. Adam holds a Masters of Divinity from Harvard Divinity School, a Masters of Fine Arts from the University of Texas at Austin, and a Bachelor of Arts from Valparaiso University.

Adam has been practicing mindfulness meditation for a decade, including over nine months of intensive retreat. He has trained with the Mindfulness in Schools Project, Mindful Schools, and Inward Bound Mindfulness Education, and is interested in the dialogue between mindfulness, creative practices, and spiritual life.



**ALEX PEAVEY, M.S., M.ED.**  
**UPPER SCHOOL COUNSELOR, COLLEGIATE SCHOOL OF RICHMOND(VA)**

Alex began his mindfulness practice at age 15 when he participated in a wilderness program for teens, and it has been an integral part of his life ever since. Upon arriving at Collegiate in 2004, he brought mindfulness to the boys' varsity basketball team, and, in 2007, this approach evolved into 2-week mindfulness class that every freshman at Collegiate takes as a part of the health & wellness curriculum. In response to student demand, Alex created a semester-long "Mindful Leadership" elective for 12th graders, and he now oversees the development of mindfulness for all JK – 12 students at Collegiate. Concurrently with the student classes, Alex provides mindfulness-based professional development for Collegiate faculty/staff, as well as workshops for the parent community.

Outside of Collegiate, Alex has presented at corporations, festivals, schools, colleges and universities, and at governmental offices including the Federal Reserve. He is an advocate for

bringing mindfulness to teens across Virginia, as he has provided mindfulness to residents of juvenile correctional facilities and monthly mindfulness practices to any interested Richmond area high school students. Recently, Alex founded The Mindful Way, where he serves as a consultant for high school, college, and professional athletes and teams in mindfulness for peak performance and resilience. Alex's professional training includes a 7-day program under the direction of Jon Kabat-Zinn and Saki Santorelli, and certification in Trish Broderick's Learning To Breathe Curriculum for Adolescents. His educational background includes a BA in Psychology from the University of Virginia, and a MS in Sports Leadership and a MEd in Counselor Education from Virginia Commonwealth University.



**CHARISSE MINERVA SPENCER, M.A.**  
**MINDFULNESS COORDINATOR, FRIENDS SCHOOL OF VIRGINIA BEACH (VA)**

Charisse Minerva Spencer brings to the Mindfulness arena a background in Arts, Science, and Youth Development. She earned a B.S. Degree in Medical Technology from the Medical College of Virginia/ VCU. However, her love of the Arts led her to divert her path in order to live her passion for dance and choreography. Later Charisse returned to school to get a Masters in Performance Studies with a concentration in Dance Anthropology from Tisch School of the Arts/New York University. Her eclectic professional experience coupled with more than 30 years of practice in the Soka Gakkai International (SGI) Buddhist organization led to her interest in Mindfulness.

Charisse brings a scientific and artistic approach to the field investigating the existence of contemplative practices, its individual and cultural significance, as well as how these practices can be introduced in ways that are broad-based. She has worked with Mindfulness in Schools Project (MiSP), Inward Bound Mindfulness Education (iBme), is Mindfulness Coordinator at Friends School of Virginia Beach, and has done workshops in schools, festivals, corporate offices, detention & treatment centers.



**CHARLES COLTEN, M.A.**

**DIRECTOR OF HEALTH & COMMUNITY WELL- BEING, HACKLEY SCHOOL (NY)**

**DIRECTOR / CHIEF INSTRUCTOR, AIKIDO IN THE SCHOOLS**

**TEACHING FACULTY, CENTER FOR CREATIVE RESOLUTION AND THE OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE TRIALS AND HEARINGS (NEW YORK CITY)**

For the past 30 years, Charles has practiced, explored, researched, and shared mindfulness-based practices with children and adults in environments as varied as classrooms, athletics fields, board rooms, hospital clinics, trainings for judges and police, youth court, inner city schools, dojos, rural schools, at home and abroad. He is passionate about using the vehicle of the embodied mindfulness practices, such as Aikido, Tai chi, and other Physical Arts to enhance mental focus, emotional intelligence, and communication skills...ultimately creating a more peaceful, just, and harmonious world through developing ourselves as more mindful people in more harmonious interaction with one another and the rest of the natural world.

In his role as Director of Community Wellbeing at Hackley School, he has co-created programs in mindfulness, positive psychology, and integrated nutrition across divisions and departments; serving Kindergarten-12th grade, Faculty, Staff, and Parents. Colten regularly consults, provides professional development, and direct student programming in New York City agencies, health care settings, businesses, and schools; public, private, and international.

Charles has more than 28 years of teaching experience and holds a M.A in Educational/Organizational Leadership from Columbia University's Klingenstein Center. He is a direct student (deshi) to Endo Seishiro Shihan, and has received the rank of 4th degree black belt (Yondan) from Hombu Dojo-World Aikido Headquarters in Tokyo, Japan. Most importantly, Charles is a lifelong student who approaches mindfulness with curiosity; as a never-ending and living research.



**DAN SCHEIBE, M.DIV., M.A.L.S.**  
**HEAD OF SCHOOL, LAWRENCE ACADEMY (MA)**

Dan became the 45th Head of School at Lawrence Academy (founded in 1793) in 2012. Prior to joining the Lawrence community, Dan was the Assistant Head of School at Middlesex, having worked there for 14 years in a variety of roles, including leading the chapel program, teaching, coaching, and enjoying the usual expressions of life in a residential high school community. During his time at both schools, Dan was intimately involved in the introduction of mindfulness programs. Each came to fruition in very different culturally-sensitive ways that balanced the organic with the systematic. Dan holds a M. Div. from Princeton Theological Seminary, a M.A.L.S. from Wesleyan University, and a B.A. from Yale University.

Dan's wife Annie has deep experience in school communities as well, and they happily live on campus with their sons Tad, Peter, and Hans and their daughter Lilly (now in college). Dan sees mindfulness work as having profound effect from personal levels to professional levels to the broadest levels of educational principle and practice.



**DOUG WORTHEN**  
**DIRECTOR OF MINDFULNESS PROGRAMS, MIDDLESEX SCHOOL (MA)**

Doug is the Director of Mindfulness Programs at the Middlesex School in Concord, Massachusetts. He has been teaching mindfulness and coaching lacrosse at Middlesex since 2010 and holds classes for the students, faculty, staff, and parents. He began practicing mindfulness meditation in 1999 as a member of the UVA national championship lacrosse team and has been a dedicated practitioner ever since. Living through two bouts of lymphoma, which included a bone marrow transplant in 2007, Doug has experienced firsthand the healing power of mindfulness. He has completed many teacher training programs and has attended several 1-3 month-long mindfulness retreats. Read about Doug's classes at Middlesex.



**FRANKIE ENGELKING M.A.**

**DIRECTOR OF STUDENT & COMMUNITY WELLNESS, MCLEAN SCHOOL (MD)**

Frankie Engelking is the Director of Student and Community Wellness at the McLean School in Potomac, Maryland. She has devoted the past 25 years of her professional career to the promotion of health and wellness education for individuals, communities and professionals.

Her career began as a Patient Educator at the Washington Adventist Hospital in Takoma Park, Md. and continued at the Area Health Education Center in Baltimore, Md. as the Community Health Education Coordinator. After earning her Masters Degree in Education at the Catholic University of America she created her own Health Education consulting company where she worked with over 22 schools in the Washington metropolitan Area, provided substance abuse prevention training to County and State Government Agencies and was a certified trainer for the *Parent to Parent* national substance abuse prevention program.

For nine years she was the host and producer of the live, call in radio program “Perspectives on Health “ on WGTS 91.9 FM. She has appeared on the *CBS This Morning Show*, participated in the production of several documentaries on the subject of Teen Behavior and Healthy Choices, and was a presenter at the NAIS national conference in San Francisco.

Her relationship with the McLean School began over 20 years ago. The positions she has held include Health Education Coordinator for grades K-12, Middle School Dean of Students, Interim Head of the Middle School and currently she is the **Director of Student and Community Wellness**. She has instituted McLean’s nationally recognized Mindfulness Education program and works with students, faculty and parents to develop programs that promote the health and well-being of every member of the McLean community.



**JEN CHURCHILL, RYT**  
**YOGA AND MINDFULNESS EDUCATOR, NEW HAMPTON SCHOOL (NH)**

Jen has been teaching yoga and mindfulness at New Hampton School in New Hampton, NH since 2010. She is a Registered Yoga Instructor and Certified ChildLight Yoga Instructor. Currently, she is enrolled in the MBSR Certification Program at UMass Medical School's Center for Mindfulness, Oasis Institute. She discovered yoga as an anxious and awkward teenager and is passionate about its power of transformation during this important life stage.

With the students at New Hampton School, Jen has discovered many ways to weave mindfulness and yoga into the independent school curriculum such as, offering workshops in mindful stress reduction, leading co-curricular yoga, and offering specialized classes for athletic teams. Jen also teaches yoga for faculty and staff at New Hampton School where she sees how mindful practices can benefit the entire community. Blending various styles of yoga and meditation, she is driven to meet the unique challenges of making mindfulness accessible to the diverse population found within an independent school. When she's not teaching, she can be found exploring with her husband and 4 little ones, enjoying various domestic arts, competing in sprint triathlons, and breathing as much fresh air as possible.



**JESSICA MOREY, M.A.**  
**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, INWARD BOUND MINDFULNESS EDUCATION ("IBME")**

Jessica Morey MA is the Executive Director of Inward Bound Mindfulness Education (iBme), a nonprofit organization that offers mindfulness meditation retreats for teens, young adults and parents and professionals who work with teens. Jessica began practicing meditation at age 14 on teen retreats offered by the Insight Meditation Society (IMS) and has been practicing mindfulness ever since. She is a founding board member and lead teacher for iBme teen retreats and is currently part of the IMS Teacher Training.

Through her work with iBme over the past 10 years, Jessica has taught hundreds of teens on retreat, in addition to leading high school presentations, ongoing and online classes for teens and

presentations and trainings for teachers and parents across the country. Jessica and the work of iBme were recently featured on the December 2016 cover of Mindful Magazine and in December 2016 Jessica was interviewed on Dan Harris' podcast 10% Happier about her lifelong meditation practice and work with teens.

Before joining iBme, Jessica worked in clean energy and climate policy and finance. She holds a BA in Environmental Engineering from Dartmouth College, and Masters degrees in Sustainable Development and International Affairs.



**JONATHAN CROWLEY, M.B.A.**

**ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF CAPITAL GIVING, NORTHFIELD MOUNT HERMON SCHOOL (MA)**

Jonathan began practicing insight and vipassana meditation 30 years ago. He first studied at the Insight Meditation Society, then with S. N. Goenka and was appointed an assistant teacher at the Vipassana Meditation Center in Shelburne MA in 2002. He has taught and served courses for children and teens; managed courses for executives; helped established a course retreat center in Dharamsala, India; organized and served 10-day meditation courses at three US correctional facilities.

Jonathan's service work was featured in the film *The Dhamma Brothers*, an award-winning documentary about introducing a 10-day vipassana course at Alabama's highest level maximum-security state prison. His graduate thesis was on the topic of Sustainability Leadership and Vipassana Meditation. Jonathan has been assisting an initiative to bring mindfulness training to faculty staff and students at NMH since 2013.



**JOSH RELIN, PSY.D.**

**DIRECTOR OF COUNSELING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES, DEERFIELD ACADEMY (MA)**

Josh began serving as Director of Counseling at Deerfield Academy in the fall of 2015. Before that, he worked as a clinical psychologist at the University of Massachusetts Amherst Center for Counseling and Psychological Health for 9 years, where, in addition to providing counseling and treatment to the student and faculty community, he specialized in serving veteran needs, teaching mindfulness in individual and group settings, and promoting healthy masculinity across campus.

Josh's interest in mindfulness is grounded in his personal history with insight meditation as well as his training in clinical modalities such as Acceptance and Commitment Therapy, Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction, and Koru, which utilize mindfulness as a means for promoting psychological flexibility and wellbeing. In his first two years at Deerfield Academy, Josh has utilized the Koru model to teach mindfulness techniques to the student body, both through voluntary extra-curricular courses as well as within the mandatory Health Issues curriculum that all sophomores take part in.



**LAMA ROD OWENS**

Rod Owens is an activist, organizer, poet, and authorized Dharma teacher in the Tibetan tradition of Buddhism. He is a core teacher with Natural Dharma Fellowship in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and a third-year master of divinity student at Harvard Divinity School where he studies the intersection of Buddhism and social change.

Known for his authentic teaching style of self-inquiry and humor, he has appeared in the Buddhist publications Lion's Roar, Buddhadharma, and Tricycle and has been recognized as one of the emerging leaders of the next generation of Dharma teachers. He is also a co-author of *Radical Dharma: Taking Race, Love, and Liberation* published by North Atlantic Books which explores race and oppression within American Buddhist communities.



**W. ALAN BROWN, M.A.**

**DEAN OF CLASS OF 2017 AND HUMANITIES TEACHER, GRACE CHURCH SCHOOL (NY)**

Alan Brown is currently a Class Dean and humanities teacher at Grace Church School in Manhattan where he teaches mindfulness in the high school division, as well as leading programs for teachers and parents. A passionate advocate of “personal development as professional development,” Alan founded Learning to Thrive, which offers consulting to schools looking to adopt a whole-school mindfulness or positive education approach, and provides mindfulness-based coaching to individuals and families. He also consults with Mindful Schools, where he helps design and facilitate retreat and online offerings for teachers and youth providers.

Alan came to mindfulness as the "fidgety kid" and speaks openly about how his meditation practice has helped him nearly eliminate tics that come from having Tourette Syndrome and live a much fuller life.