



Trauma-Informed Dynamic Mindfulness for Student Social and Emotional Health

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Why Mindfulness?

The faculty of voluntarily bringing back a wandering attention, over and over again, is the very root of **judgment, character, and will**.... An education which should improve this faculty would be the education *par excellence*.

- **William James**,
The Principles of Psychology,
Harvard University Press, 1890



Why Mindfulness?

- ▶ **I practice mindfulness at home** when I'm doing my school work, to relax and refocus. – Laneiyah
- ▶ **I have ADHD. I need mindfulness to focus.** – Mirron
- ▶ I practice mindfulness **with my little brother at home.** – Luis
- ▶ I practice mindfulness with the lights in the locker room down low, **to prepare for a football game.** – Aaron
- ▶ Students come in with attitude during peer mediations and walk talks. **Paying attention to breath sensations is what keeps me calm and cool during mediations.** – Michael, Peer Leader and Culture Keeper (CK)



Why Mindfulness?

- ▶ After getting exposed to the practices in the classrooms and weekly sessions with the CKs, I've been practicing mindfulness daily in my office for 5 minutes. – David Luongo, former Principal, El Cerrito High School, Richmond, CA
- ▶ In just three months of Dynamic Mindfulness at our school, we have seen a substantial drop in referrals and suspensions compared to the year before. And as I have been practicing regularly for a few minutes a day, I am finding that I am more mellow and even-keeled, and my relationships with family and coworkers is so much better. I am able to weave mindfulness into everything I do, and now the practice won't let me go! – John Jimno, Principal, Park Middle School, Antioch, CA



Chronic Stress and Education Equity

- ▶ Children and youth in urban schools, and their families, are often **disproportionately affected by the results of economic, political and social inequities.**
- ▶ This results in **disproportionately higher chronic stress, traumatic stress and post-traumatic stress.**



Chronic Stress and Education Equity

- ▶ Educators serving more vulnerable children imbibe this stress vicariously/secondarily, **impacting their own health and well-being and personal sustainability, as well as optimal professional performance.**





Stress and the Brain



Impacts:

- Attention Control
- Emotion Regulation
- Coping Strategies
- Empathy



How to Heal Stress and Trauma?

Neuroscience Research

Trauma Research

Somatic Psychology

Mindfulness

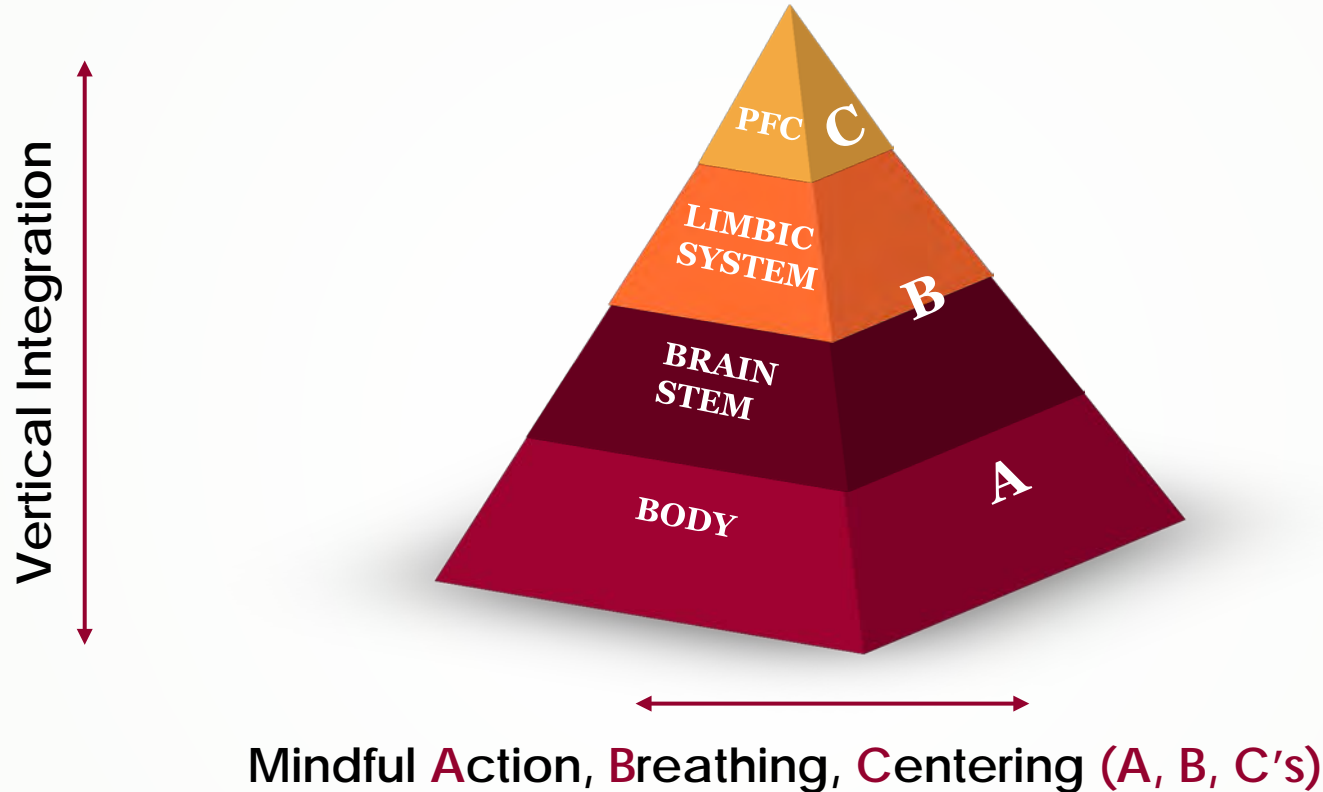
Movement

Integration



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The Essence of Emotion Regulation





Dynamic Mindfulness / Transformative Life Skills

- ▶ **Universal** classroom-based program designed to reduce stress and increase youth adaptive coping skills through instruction in centering meditation, breath awareness and yoga.
- ▶ Three **core practices** are referred to as the ABC's
 - Action-Breathing-Centering
- ▶ **Four Units:** Stress Management, Body and Emotional Awareness, Self Regulation, and Building Healthy Relationships.



Transformative Life Skills (TLS)



- Scope: Universal School-Based Yoga Program
- Duration: Typical 18-week semester-long program
- Scope & Sequence: Total of 4 Thematic Units (Stress Resilience, Self-Awareness, Emotion Regulation, Healthy Relationships). Each unit includes 12 manualized lessons that can be delivered in 15, 30, or 60 minute segments.
- Manualized Instructor Lesson Plans
- Fidelity of Implementation & Engagement Checklists

DM/TLS



SEL



DM/TLS Curriculum is a scripted method for enabling **Social & Emotional Learning** in a cognitive and experiential way



What it Looks Like in Practice



Instruction occurs **in-class** or in **other classroom settings**



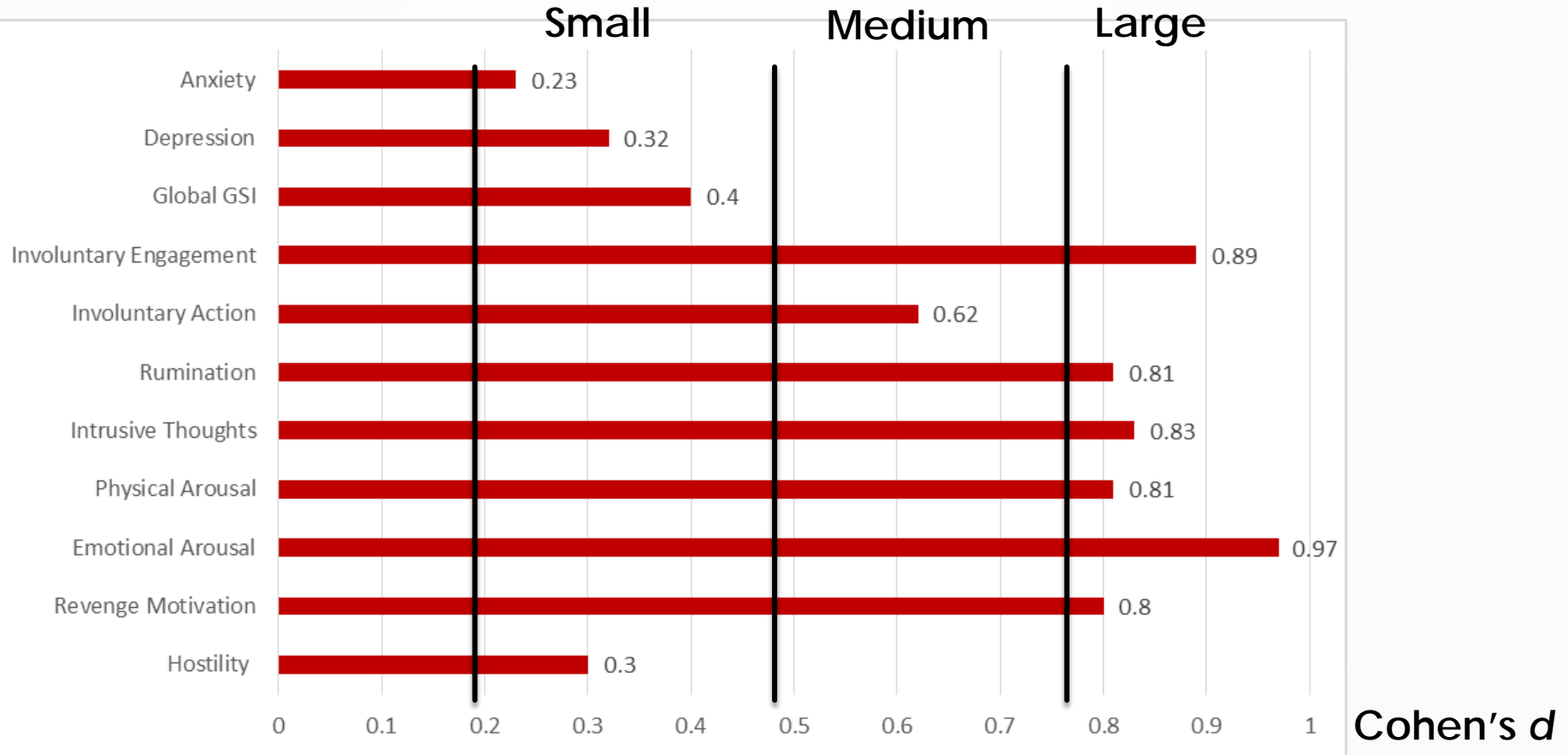
Research Study #1: At-Risk

- ▶ Goal: to investigate **the effectiveness of TLS on indicators of mental health and well-being among a population of high-risk youth attending an alternative school setting.**
- ▶ Sample 49 students in grades 9-11 in a diverse alternative school in California
 - ▶ 54% female
 - ▶ 33% African American, 33.3% Hispanic, 4.2% Native American, 6.2% Asian, 2.1% Caucasian, 20.8% Mixed Race





Results: Magnitude of Significant Effects





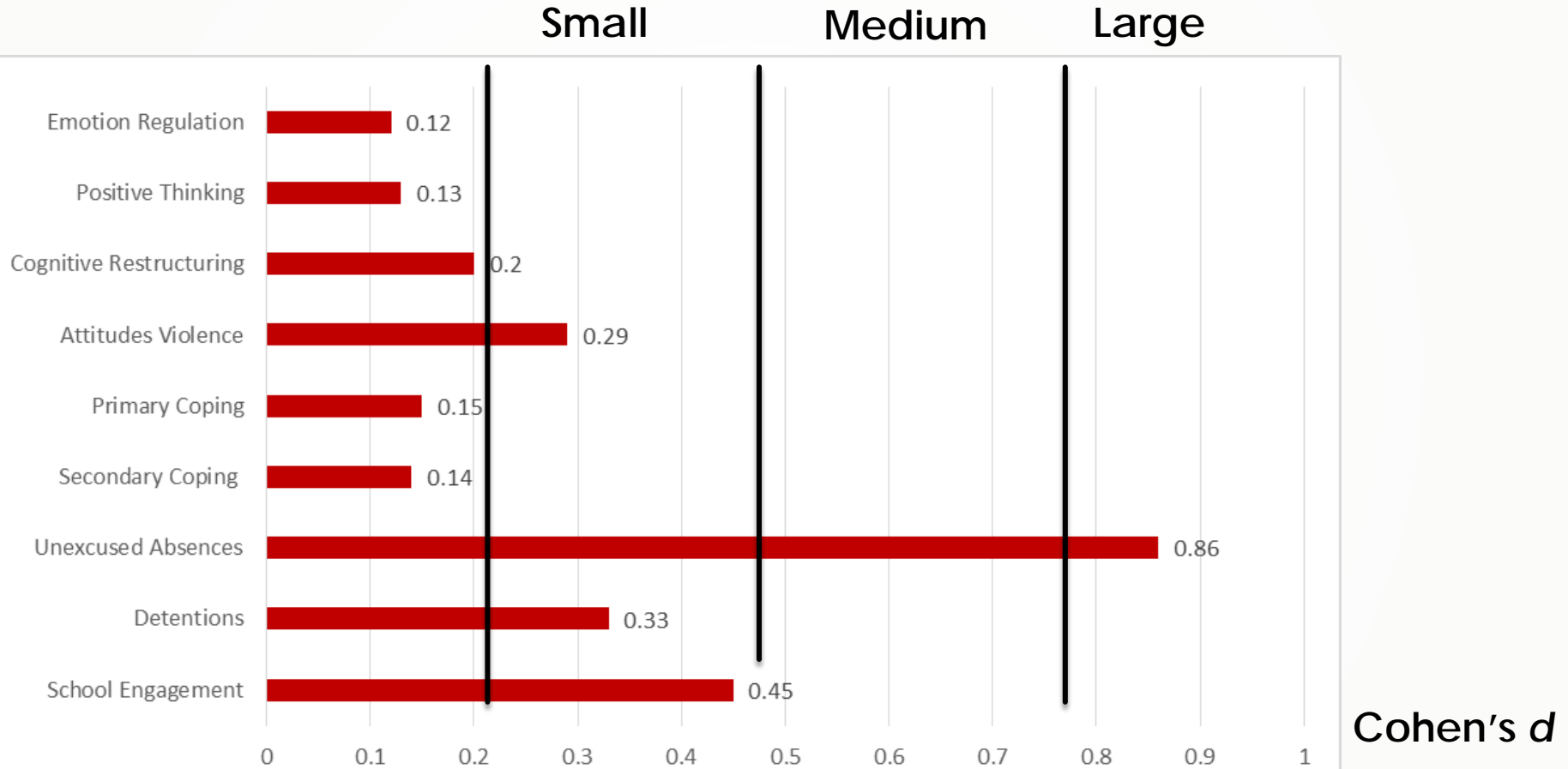
Research Study #2 (RCT)

- ▶ Goal: to investigate **whether exposure to TLS has a significant impact on school engagement and social-emotional well-being of youth in urban high school setting.**
- ▶ Sample N=159 students in grades 6 and 9 in a diverse charter school.
- ▶ Classrooms randomly assigned to treatment or wait-list control conditions.





Results: Magnitude of Significant Effects



A large crowd of children and adults are gathered outdoors in front of a school building. Many of the children are wearing blue t-shirts and have their arms raised in the air, some holding small white cards. In the foreground, there are large, wrapped gifts in clear plastic and a red bag. Two adults in blue shirts are visible on the right side of the frame, also with their arms raised. The scene is bright and sunny, suggesting a festive or celebratory event.

IMAGINE



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CULTURE KEEPERS

A Youth Leadership Initiative

THANK YOU!



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