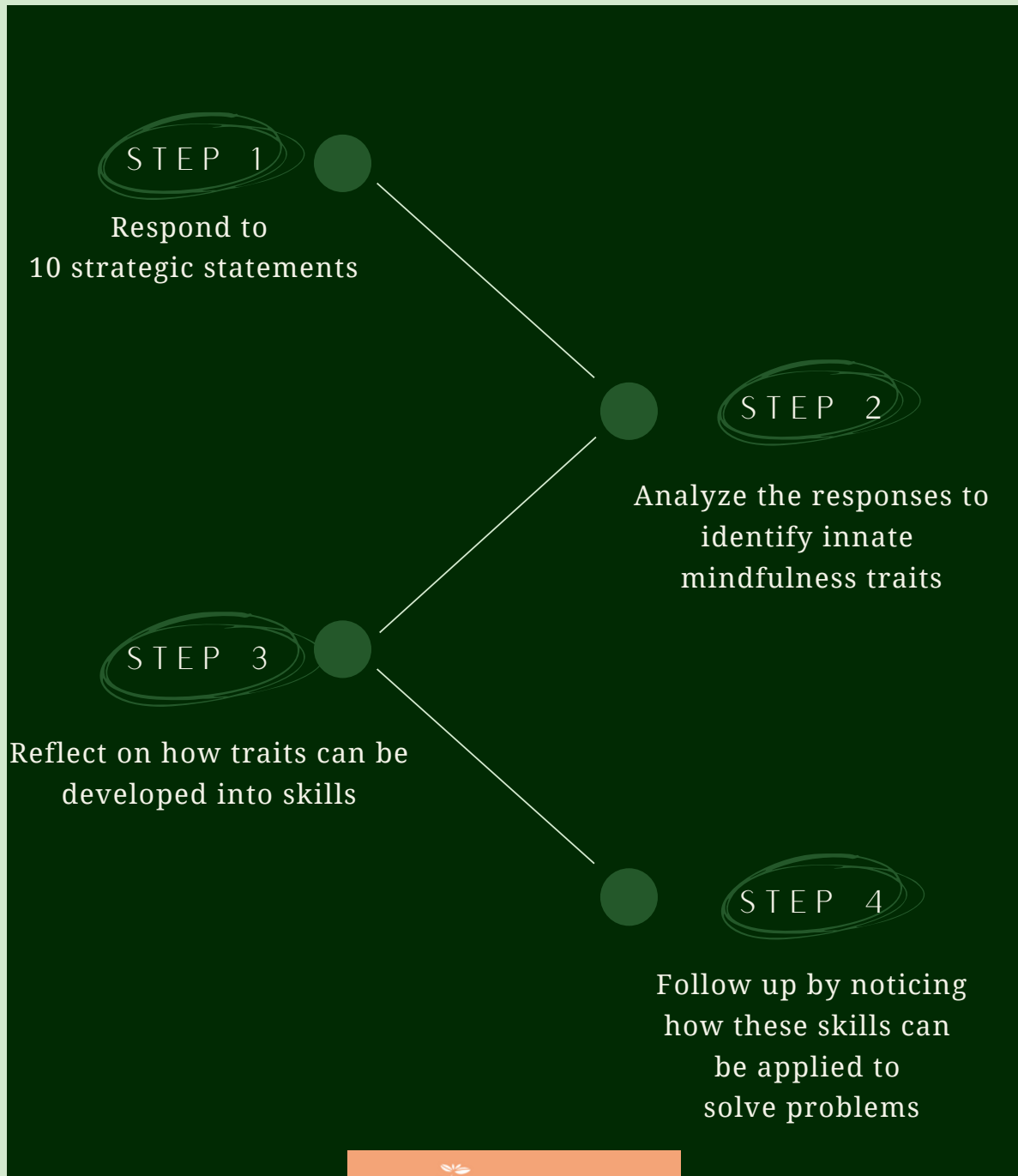


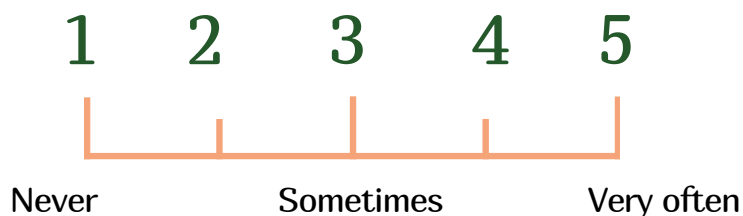
THE SIMPLE PATHWAY TO IDENTIFYING MINDFUL TRAITS



Identifying Your Innate Mindful Traits

Directions:

Read each of the 10 statements that follow. In the space provided, label how often each statement is true for you on the following scale:



STATEMENTS

- ___ 1: "I notice the colors, textures and aromas of the environment around me."
- ___ 2: "I tend to operate automatically; one can say that I run on auto-pilot."
- ___ 3: "I can easily put my opinions, expectations, and feelings into words."
- ___ 4: "I criticize myself for feeling the way I am feeling."
- ___ 5: "In challenging situations, I tend to pause without immediately reacting."
- ___ 6: "When I do things at work/school/home, my mind wanders off and I'm easily distracted."
- ___ 7: "I can usually describe how I am feeling at the moment in considerable detail."
- ___ 8: "I make judgments about whether my thoughts are good or bad."
- ___ 9: "When I have distressing thoughts or images, I just notice them and let them go."
- ___ 10: "I pay attention to sounds, such as clocks ticking, birds chirping, or cars passing."

ANALYSIS

Notice and circle the numbers of the statements that were rated highest (i.e. circle the # of each statement that you rated as a “4” or a “5” on the scale).

In the space provided below, list the numbers of each statement that were ranked highest; we will refer to them in the discussion that follows:

Based on the discussion, check the element(s) of mindfulness that match your responses:

- ☐ Observe
- ☐ Describe
- ☐ Awareness of the present moment
- ☐ Non-judgment
- ☐ Non-reactivity

REFLECTION

Now that you’ve identified the traits of mindfulness that come naturally to you, consider how you would like to use this information:

1) Think of a challenge that you face or a weekly responsibility. Describe how you can use your innate mindfulness traits to complete a task related to that challenge or responsibility.

2) Is there another element of mindfulness that you’d like to develop further so that it is a stronger skill to use in your day to day life? Explain.

Why & How: Identifying Mindful Traits

DESCRIPTION

Rationale

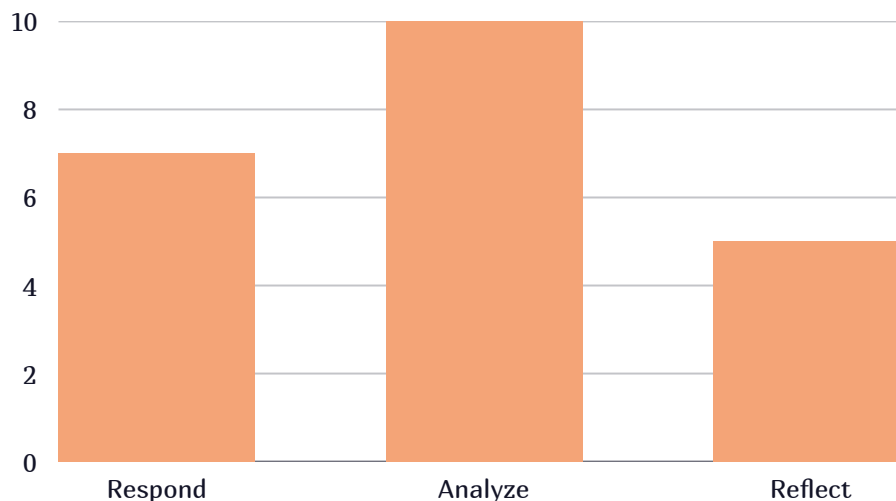
The term “mindfulness” is spoken quite a bit in educational and wellness spaces, but there are many indications that it’s not being applied to its full potential. There is a need to clearly understand what the term means (and what its implementation looks like) to best incorporate it into our professional practices and daily lives.

Intended Outcome

This survey can be used with grades 6 and up to identify the elements of mindfulness that an individual innately has, how they can leverage those into tangible skills, and how to cultivate the other elements that may not be as strong (if they choose to do so).

HELPFUL HINTS

Time Recommended (minutes):



Roles:

1. Workshop Participant/ Student
 - a. Nature of Impact: Respond & Reflect
 - b. The Extent of Impact: High
2. Workshop Facilitator/ Educator
 - a. Nature of Impact: Guide the Analysis by describing how each of the 5 elements affect this audience
 - b. The Extent of Impact: Moderate

Method:

1. Distribute the 2-page document with the 3 tasks to complete (print or upload)
 - a. Provide time to respond (7 minutes is recommended)
 - b. Facilitate completion of the responses to the statements, as needed
2. Ask participants to annotate their top responses by writing a list of those statement numbers.
 - a. For example, if someone rated statements #3, 7, 10 as a “5” on the scale, they would write those 3 numbers in the space provided under the “Analysis” subheading.
3. Define and discuss the 5 elements of mindfulness:
 - i. Observe- an ability to notice where you are in the present moment enables you to collect contextual information and therefore make stronger decisions.
 - ii. Describe- an ability to express yourself clearly; this has been shown to reduce stress in relationships.
 - iii. Awareness of the present moment - an ability to concentrate regularly in general and to focus on a specific task at hand when needed.
 - iv. Non-judgment - an ability to maintain a more open mind, allowing you to wonder about the possibilities in front of you.
 - v. Non-reactivity - an ability to choose an intentional response instead of acting impulsively; this has been shown as an important indicator of emotional intelligence. Choosing intentional responses to challenges allows one to build relationships with more ease.
4. Identify the pair of statement numbers that correspond with each of the 5 elements of mindfulness. Scripts and possible extensions for the discussion are as follows:
 - “If you selected #1 and/or #10... then you find it easier than most to Observe”
 - By picking up on details that others may miss, the ability to be attuned to your environment can also strengthen your interactions with others.
 - “If you selected #3 and/or #7... then you find it easier than most to Describe”
 - Words can help listeners visualize -- and thereby engage with -- what you are saying more effectively.
 - Descriptive language has been shown to help increase verbal reasoning skills and creativity.
 - When you express yourself clearly, it can boost the productivity and creativity of the groups you work with.

(continued on the next page)

- “Awareness of the present moment aligned with #2* & #6* but these are INVERSE* statements; if you ranked this highly, then you may want to consider this an invitation to think about developing this skill if you so choose. If you responded with a 1 or 2, then you are someone who easily acts with awareness.”
 - Individuals who have this skill set tend to recognize their own thought patterns, which increases their responsiveness to change. There is also a correlation with an increased resilience to setbacks.
- “Non-judgment aligned with #4* & #8* but these are also INVERSE* statements; if you responded with a 1 or 2, then you are someone who does not easily engage in judgmental thoughts. If you ranked this highly, then you may want to consider this an invitation to think about developing this skill if you so choose.”
 - Individuals who have this capability tend to recognize that assigning negative labels to experiences or things can inadvertently cause conflict.
 - Non-judgment opens up the mind to more peace by reducing the dissatisfaction that comes from comparison.
- “If you selected #5 and/or #9... then you find it easier than most to operate with Non-reactivity”
 - The practice of non-reactivity provides opportunities to reframe challenges so new solutions can emerge.
 - Individuals with this skill are more able to build strong relationships from scratch as well as to facilitate the repair of relationships that have been strained.

5. Invite participants to complete the reflection:

To summarize, you are naturally...

...OBSERVANT if you chose 4/5 for #1 & 10

...DESCRIPTIVE if you chose 4/5 for #3 & 7

...AWARE of ACTIONS if you chose 1/2 for #2 & 6

...NON-JUDGMENTAL if you chose 1/2 for #4 & 8

...NON-REACTIVE if you chose 4/5 for #5 & 9

Provide time to respond (5 minutes is recommended)

Suggested Follow up

Inquiry-based activities and tasks are a great opportunity to utilize the language of the 5 elements on mindfulness. Problem solving through science experiments, creative writing exercises, or strategies for decision making are opportunities to highlight the overlap between “noticing and wondering” and the ability to observe without judgment, and to describe without reacting (all while focusing on the impact one can have in the present moment).

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REFERENCE(S)

Dr. Ruth A. Baer and her team at the University of Kentucky developed the Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ). The FFMQ is a key instrument in the measurement of mindfulness, distinguishing itself by articulating five separate dimensions of the concept. These dimensions include Observing, Describing, acting with Awareness, Non-judging of inner experience, and Non-reactivity to inner experience. Dr. Baer's work in this area has been instrumental in advancing the understanding of mindfulness and its application within psychological research and practice. Dr. Baer currently directs the Masters degree in Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) at the University of Oxford.

Reference:

Baer, R. A., Smith, G. T., Hopkins, J., Krietemeyer, J., & Toney, L. (2006). Using self-report assessment methods to explore facets of mindfulness. *Assessment*, 13(1), 27-45.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1073191105283504>