

Open Heart/Focused Mind: Neuroscience in Action (Mindfulness in a High-School Art Curriculum)

Susan Ethel Jones

Vancouver School Board (District 39), Canada

Abstract

Please accept my proposal to present a 30 min Workshop. This workshop will provide hands-on experience exploring the language of mark-making culminating in the creation of original imagery to music using coloured chalk pastels on paper. Included will be a short video "Expressive Painting" previously presented at the Heart-Mind 2013 Conference at the University of British Columbia, showcasing student expressive imagery the result of mark-making, mindfulness practice and emotional state changes. Also included will be a video compilation of other art projects by my students such as the "Open-Hearted Painting Project", with images created from child-hood memories, Poetry of Cycling Paintings, Creative Creature Paintings and Oil Painting to Music. As an art educator, the integration of mindfulness practices, exercises and reflections within the secondary art curriculum has become a surprisingly joyful experience. The ever-present challenge to expand my capacity for innovation and creativity in the design of new art curriculum has been enhanced by a continued study of mindfulness. In turn, I have been inspired by changes I have seen in classroom dynamics from unfocused to tangible calm behavior.

I have experienced more willingness and engagement in my students, setting the stage for more insight, empathy, connection, confidence and creative expression. Evidence for this is seen in students' reflective writing, art work, self-evaluative responses and round table discussions.

I value advances in the fields of neuroscience, positive psychology, art therapy and social/emotional education to inform my teaching practice. .

Keywords

Art education, Mindfulness, Neuroscience, Postive psychology, Social/emotional learning.