

Shelburne author releases educational children's book on mindfulness



Written By Constance Scrafield

Shelburne teacher Christie Reid recently published her very first book, *The Guide Inside*. It's a children's book, designed to teach youngsters about mindfulness.

Naturally, the first question was to ask for Reid's definition of mindfulness.

Her initial response was aimed at teens and adults, "Mindfulness is being present with our body, aware of our internal self. How my

immune system is boosted during meditation.?

Along with meditation is breathwork, which she learned from Gio Bartolomeo, a breathwork teacher: ?breathing into our chest, into our belly triggers the Vagus nerve and makes you restful,? she said. ?It is leading you into a sense of calm and peaceful awareness.?

For children, Reid suggests they can be shown how to tune in to their body sensations and feelings, learning how to become calm when needed. For example, when a child has a negative picture or an ?unhelpful thought? that worries them, suggesting letting the picture flow up into a cloud and be taken up and away can reassure the child and make them feel safe. These are some of the tools for imagining and managing stress.

Reid's daughter, Aura, is four years old and well aware of her mother's solutions to negativity. It seems the benefits are wider still, as Reid commented that she has noticed her daughter's vocabulary is broader than that of other children.

?She is very imaginative, making up stories that she tells me,? Reid said.

Currently, Reid is working on her MA in Counselling Psychology, having already achieved a Master's in Teaching. She said she is really working on her Master's, which she reckons should be done in December.

When presenting mindfulness to children, she introduces the idea of ?regulating? anger as a tool for expressing calm and avoiding reactivity.

?Being a teacher, I saw this every day, how not to react but being calm; how well that works for the child and the parent as a discipline using slowing your breath.?

Reid's charming book comes with cards to support what is inside the book. In addition to the character she has imagined and brought to tell the children readers stories, the book is also an introduction for parents that gives them a place for self-reflection.

A portion of book sales, \$2 each, goes back to day care and other community programs and emotional regulation workshops.

?Everyone has their sensitivities,? Reid said, ?the difference is making your house more harmonious. This is a way to build harmonious, loving homes.?

She finds that the friends she has talked to about this love it. There is information on the back of the book about how children from zero to two years old are starting to form attachments, and that parents need to pay attention and begin building that awareness.

When a child pushes a lot and has melt-downs, parents need to learn to regulate. To dive deeper into the issue, Reid took a course on children's mindfulness and yoga.

In addition to furthering her education with her second MA, Christie Reid wants to help people learn to protect their body systems by being calm; to understand and give the tools to ?find safety within.? She has completed a breath work certification. Recently, she learned about Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT) of tapping the pressure points in the body with one's fingers, which once again stimulates the ?Vagus nerve,? easing anxiety and stress.

This is a holistic therapy born of ancient Chinese medicine.

?The nervous system is an important aspect of our bodies for healing and we have to protect it by breath work and emotional freedom,? Reid said.

She sees her future and for her daughter a good life of connecting with people and giving back to the community. Her husband, Brad, supports her efforts.

?Taking care of Mother Earth and for Aura, also dancing for sure.?