

Solomon's Song

# Road to Resilience Toolkit



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## Program Description

The *Road to Resilience* program empowers youth (ages 12-18) to incorporate healthy mind body practices as a development and healing tool for psychological trauma and stress, and teaches skills for healthy living, developing coping mechanisms, building resilience, and learning self-care. The program incorporates Center for Mind Body Medicine <https://cmbm.org/> practices to build resilience and healthy living skills.

## Program Format

- 1- Two cohorts per section- one middle school cohort and one high school cohort
- 2- Meet twice a week for 3 weeks per section
- 3- Maximum of 7 students per cohort (7 middle school students & 7 high school students)

***Program curriculum***

Day	Curriculum
Day 1	Drawings
Day 2	The Physiology of Stress-Our survival gear
Day 3	Autogenic Training
Day 4	Guided Imagery
Day 5	Movement and Body Scan
Day 6	Drawings

***Program Curriculum:*** Appendix A

***Online Discussion Forum*** Facilitators created an online private Facebook page to use as discussion forum for facilitators, youth, and families to connect outside of the program.

***Supplies:*** Paper for drawing, markers, colored pencils, colors, etc., speaking object (held by participant when it is their turn to speak), snacks.

***Participant Registration Form/Permission slips:*** Appendix B

***Program Evaluation Form:*** Appendix C

## Cohort Guidelines

Participants in the Road to Resilience program are expected to abide by the following guidelines:

- 1- **CONFIDENTIALITY** So that we may create a safe and supportive environment within our, group members are asked to keep all information shared by any member of the group in strict confidence at all times.
- 2- **MUTUAL RESPECT** To ensure that group members feel comfortable sharing their genuine thoughts and feelings within the group; all members are asked to treat one another with courtesy, respect and dignity. Treating others with kindness and compassion often promotes emotional and physical health for all concerned.
- 3- **“I PASS” RULE** While members are encouraged to participate in group discussions, at no time will anyone be asked to reveal information which he/she is uncomfortable sharing. By saying “I Pass”, the group member’s wish to be silent at that time will be honored. This group member will still have a chance to share but after everyone else in the group has shared.
- 4- **PUNCTUALITY** Please be on time for group.
- 5- **COMMITMENT** If a member is unable to attend a group session, he/she is asked to notify the facilitator prior to the following session if at all possible.

## **Program Implementation**

### ***Staff***

*Program Coordinator:* Responsible for oversight, hiring, and coordinating program logistics.

*Facilitators:* Three college student facilitators - one to facilitate sessions at the high school level and one at the middle school level. Additional student is a backup that floats between the sites and is available if a facilitator is absent for any reason.

*Mind Body Medicine Trainer:* Lora Matz, Senior Faculty Member at the Center for Mind Body Medicine (CMBM). LoraMatz@earthlink.net 651.592.1176

**Application Process and Forms for Facilitators:** Appendix D

### ***Training***

**Integrative Health and Healing Practices Training (16 hours):** a workshop on MBM practices facilitated by Lora Matz. The program facilitators learn and practice MBM skills that will be incorporated into the *Road to Resilience* program.

**Facilitation of Health and Healing Practices (8 hours):** *Road to Resilience* program coordinators and facilitators work with Lora Matz to identify appropriate activities for facilitation and develop an agenda

for workshops. In addition, *Road to Resiliency* program facilitators will practice the process of facilitation in a safe, guided workshop environment.

**Ongoing Training:** Monthly one-hour video conferencing coaching and mentoring sessions for facilitators as needed.

### ***Hiring***

College Students were recruited from a local university. We worked with professors from the Social Work department at Winona State to recruit and hire facilitators. Applicants were required to fill out an application, submit a resume and a cover letter. Applicants were chosen based on the materials submitted and an interview.

### ***Outreach and Marketing:***

- ☐ Worked with the school counselors and administrators for referrals
- ☐ Went into classrooms with the counselor to do short five minute presentations promoting the program.
- ☐ Social Media- Facebook
- ☐ Created posters for digital signage promotion in the schools (Appendix E)

## **Lessons Learned**

- ☐ Difficult to get regular attendance and commitment from program participants. Most successful attendance occurred when it was incorporated into the study hall period of the school day. This eliminated barriers such transportation or forgetfulness. (High school)
- ☐ Check middle and high school calendar dates first to see if it interferes with the scheduled school dates

## **Participant Testimonies**

“Helped me to deal with stress.”

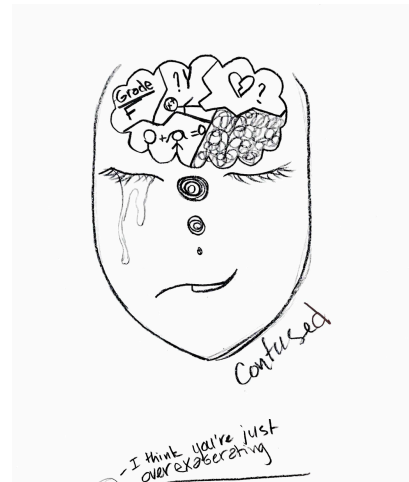
“I was having trouble dealing with bully problems. This helped me with my bullies. That was a big impact. They are people that I can trust.”

“This group was like a second home”

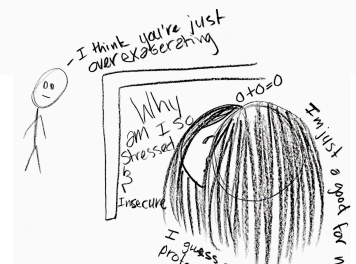
### Participant Example Drawings (1st session to last session):

1st Session:

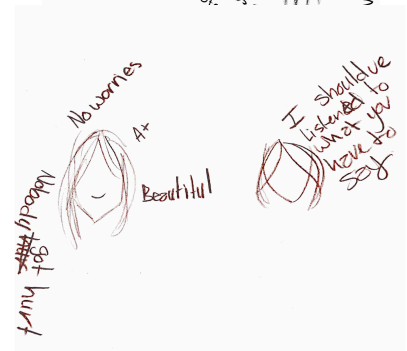
- Draw yourself as you see yourself now
- Draw yourself with your biggest problem



- Draw yourself with your biggest problem



- Draw yourself with your biggest problem solved

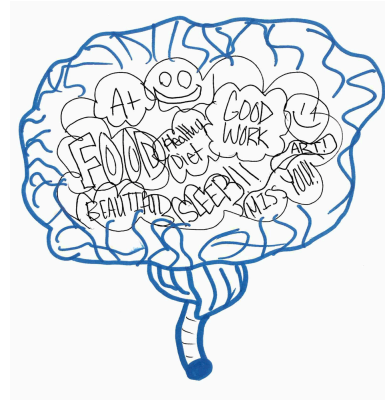


Last Session:

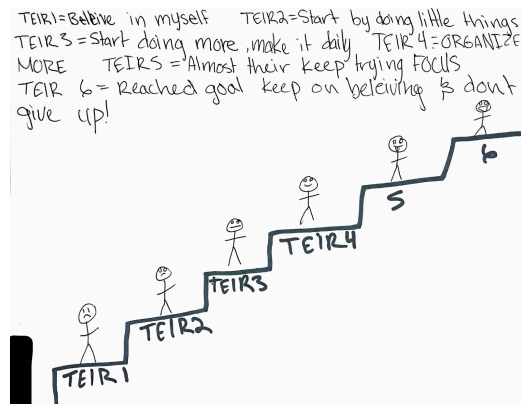
- Draw yourself as you are now



- Draw yourself as you'd like to be



- How are you going to get there?



## Stats

## Appendix A

### Mind □ Body Skills -6 Group Outline

#### Session #1: Drawings

- Welcoming remarks-introduce yourself and why you are excited they are there and why the group is important—be real!
- Opening Breathing Meditation
- Discussion of group guidelines
- Introductions - Tell us about yourself (work, family, health, what brought you here, previous group experience, etc.)
  - Goals for the group?
- Experiential Exercise: Drawings
  1. Draw yourself as you see yourself now

2. Draw yourself with your biggest problem
  3. Draw yourself with your biggest problem solved
    - Process/Share drawings
    - Collect drawings -they will be returned last group
- Go around the circle and have each person check out with one word OR Closing Breathing Meditation

## **Session #2: The Physiology of Stress-our survival gear**

### **Understanding Your Body and Stress**

Begin by asking the group how they know if they are stressed and what their definition is-

✓ Stress is the feeling of being out of control and no longer in charge of your emotions or body.

✓ Stress causes you to lose confidence in yourself.

✓ Your

body is your home and stress makes it feel uncomfortable

✓ The stress response system is part of everyone's hardwiring.

✓ You can learn to take charge of your response to stress!

When we are threatened, scared or hurt our body automatically turns on the Stress Response. This is our survival gear and every person and animal's brain is wired to respond to emergency situations or stress.

✓ Everybody's stress is triggered by different things!

What triggers your stress? (Ask for examples)

✓ Everyone reacts differently to stress.

How do you react or respond to stress? (Ask for examples: Physical symptoms, emotional, behavioral)

✓ Even animals react to stress. (Discuss)

1. What does a porcupine do when he feels stressed?
2. A cat? A dog? A skunk?
3. Your mother, father, brothers or sisters?

✓ Each individual as well as animals act differently. This is our hardwiring and why each species survives.

- ✓ **Some fight and get angry easily and feel out of control, some flee (withdraw and want to get away) when the “Stress Response” is activated** and when there is no way out we may freeze. When our body goes into fight, flee (shut down) or freeze it is in **EMERGENCY MODE!** There **are two parts to our autonomic (automatic=all by itself) nervous system):** they must be in balance (be good partners and work together) for us to feel good and in charge of ourselves: **Each part has its own job, and our job is to make sure they are working together and doing the right thing.**



### Sympathetic nervous system-

Turns on the STRESS RESPONSE and fight/flight or freeze. It is like the

**GAS** pedal on a car



Makes everything in your body go faster for a while to deal with an emergency or what feels like a challenge. Turns on and triggers energy in your body so that you can protect and defend yourself if there is a real emergency.

### Sympathetic nervous system-

- **Signals our body to GET READY**
- The Stress Response-fight/flight or freeze response gives energy for fighting or running from danger even when there isn't really any danger, but we think or imagine that there is.
- Heart beats faster,
- Stomach might hurt
- Muscles tense
- Cold hands
- Racing thoughts



### Para-sympathetic nervous system-

Turns on the part of the system whose job it is to keep us relaxed and balanced, this is like the **BRAKES**



Helps your body, brain and emotions to slow down and relax, saving your energy for when you really need it for a real emergency. Balance is learning to be the boss of your stress and your body. It is learning to regulate your response system and be in charge when the stress response system doesn't need to be working.

### Para-sympathetic nervous system-

- Helps us to feel quiet and peaceful
- Feel good
- Feel relaxed and safe
- When activated: heart rate, blood pressure, breathing **slow down**, digestion works like it should and our body feels better
- Muscles relax
- We are better at solving problems

Explain the difference between those who go into fight versus flight response

Ask group members to identify which response they are most likely to go into. It's important that group knows that neither one response is better than the other-Stress has you. **Your AMYGDALA has hijacked the rest of your brain.** Explain where the amygdala is and the difference between what it is responsible for versus the FRONTAL CORTEX-Executive Center

1. Because just thinking about worries can make the SYMPA-THETIC part turn on like the gas, our job is to:
  - a. Take charge and be aware of our stress by learning and talking about our signs of stress, feelings and triggers
  - b. Practice using the brakes to slow things down and bring ourselves back into balance so that the two parts of our nervous system can work better together again. Then we can feel in charge of ourselves

**What should I remember to do when I am stressed?** One of many kinds of stress busters/relaxation skills is breathing. It is a very important one.

### Slow, Deep Breathing

Slow, deep breathing is a great way to help your body and your mind relax, which helps to reduce anxiety.

1. Put your hand on your stomach.
2. Take a slow, easy breath in through your nose and feel your stomach rise.
3. Let the breath out by breathing slowly through your mouth and feel your stomach go down.

Keep practicing these slow deep breaths. You might want to imagine your stomach is like a balloon, getting bigger when you breathe in, and smaller when you breathe out. Or you might think the word "soft" when you breathe in and the word "belly" when you breathe out. Gradually let the exhale or out part of your breathing get longer, so that eventually you are breathing out twice as long as you breathe in. If you count your breath you might count 1..2..3 on the in breath and 1..2..3..4..5..6.. on the out breath.

## **Session 3 Autogenic Training**

Autogenic training is one way to give your body and brain a break and to deeply relax. Autogenic phrases are organized to produce specific physiologic responses and reduce stress. For example, the phrases "my legs are heavy and warm" is meant to increase the blood flow to this area, resulting in relaxation. This is done progressively through different parts of the body (muscle, blood vessels, heart, respiration, inner organs and head) along with the use of deep breathing and repetition of the phrase.

Method:

1. Sit or lie in a comfortable position, preferably in a position where the limbs do not touch any other part of the body.
2. Take a few slow, abdominal breaths before beginning the phrases.
3. Imagine the sensations in each phrase happening in the body as completely as possible.
4. Repeat the following phrases to yourself 3-6 times:

My arms are heavy and warm	I am at peace (or, I am quiet)
My legs are heavy and warm	I am at peace (or, I am quiet)
My heartbeat is calm and strong	I am at peace (or, I am quiet)
My abdomen radiates warmth	I am at peace (or, I am quiet)
My forehead is cool	I am at peace (or, I am quiet)
My body balances itself perfectly	I am at peace (or, I am quiet)

5. Visualize yourself being healthy, strong and happy. Remain in a deeply relaxed state as long as you like...bringing yourself back slowly by letting your breathing deepen and moving your limbs gently until you are alert. If you like, allow a smile to come to your face before opening your eyes.

You can eventually use your own phrases if you want. It is important to target different areas of your body and use words like warm, heavy, soft, and relaxed and so on. Repeat the phrases slowly 3-6 times while visualizing that part of your body doing what you are suggesting. The more you practice, the easier this gets and the faster you move into the “relaxation response.”

Adapted from CMBM, Gordon ♥2004

#### **Session #4: Guided Imagery**

Opening breathing meditation

Check-in

Brief explanation of the value of using imagery. Presentation

- What is imagery/visualization?

- Give examples of the power of imagery
- Discuss the use of all senses in imagery
- How, when and why is imagery helpful?
  
- Discuss imagery and the mind-body connection
- Review how an image can affect physiology and emotions
- Discussion how participants can use imagery in various ways

Experiential Exercise - “Special Place” & “Inner Guide”/ “Wise Self”/ “Spirit Guide”  
 imagery (words are interchangeable)

- Share experience
- Closing of Group

## **Session #5: Movement and Body Scan**

- Opening meditation
  
- Check-in
  
- Brief Explanation of the value of movement.
  - Discuss movement and the mind-body connection

- How movement can affect physiology and emotions
- Discuss how participants can use imagery in various ways in movement-shaking of stress, moving through challenging emotions

You may want to talk about what prey animals-like a Gazelle(Antelope) does in the wild once threat has passed

Experiential Exercise - Warm up (stretching), yoga, or hula hoops followed by Shaking.... Exercise

- Share Experience

Do brief Body Scan followed by talking about the importance of doing a body scan or checking in with the body several times a day.

- Closing of Group

## **Session #6: Drawings**

- Opening meditation
- Check in
- Review of tools they now have—ask the group to help you make a list of them: Breathing, Drawing, Autogenics, Body Scan, Imagery, Movement

- Ask the group to name others that they might want to add to their tool bag, - relaxing music, progressive relaxation, yoga or tai-chi....
  - Is there one that they would like to do again since it is the last group? -Exercise group decides on
  - Brief Check In
- Closing Drawings
  - Experiential Exercise: Drawings
    1. Draw yourself as you are now
    2. Draw yourself as you'd like to be
    3. How are you going to get there?
- Process/Share drawings
- Go around the circle and have each person check out with a few sentences about what the group has meant to them or what they are going to commit to doing
- Closing Breathing Meditation

## Appendix B

### Parent/Guardian Permission

I give \_\_\_\_\_ permission to participate in the Road to Resilience program. I understand that the Road to Resilience is a free three-week program that teaches youth healthy living skills to build resilience.

Parent/Guardian email

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Parent/Guardian phone numbers

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Student email

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Student phone number

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Emergency Contact:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone  
number \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**Please circle the section your child will participate in:**

Winona Middle School

Section #1-- Jan. 9, 11, 16, 18, 23, 25

Section #2-- Jan 30, Feb 1, 6, 8, 13, 15

Section #3-- Jan. 20, 22, 27, Mar. 1, (Spring Break) 13, 15

Section #4-- Mar. 20, 22, 27, 29, Apr. 3, 5

**More info found at:**

SolomonsSong.org

**Contact us at:** [r2resilience@gmail.com](mailto:r2resilience@gmail.com)

## **Appendix C**

### **Road to Resilience Program Evaluation**

Please rate the program on the following statements.

1. Please circle the activities below that were most useful to you (circle as many as feel appropriate)

a) Drawings

b) Physiology of Stress- our survival gear

c) Autogenic Training (repeating phrases)

d) Guided Imagery

e) Movement and Body Scan

f) Shaking

g) Soft Belly Breathing

2. On a scale from 1- 10 with 10 being the best, I felt safe and supported by my fellow group members in the program      1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

3. On a scale from 1- 10 with 10 being the best, I felt safe and supported by the facilitator(s) in the program      1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

4. Overall, on a scale from 1- 10 with 10 being the best, I would rate the Road to Resilience program  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

5. I would definitely tell my friends to participate in the Road to Resilience program

Yes      No      Maybe      Why or why not?

6. Please take a moment to explain the impact participating in the program has had for you.

## Appendix D

### Part one

#### **Solomon's Song's Road to Resiliency Internship Application Form**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Permanent address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZipCode \_\_\_\_\_

School Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZipCode \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_



Current Major \_\_\_\_\_ Year in college \_\_\_\_\_

Expected graduation date \_\_\_\_\_

**Part two:**

**References:** Provide contact info for three references below *and* submit three letters of recommendation. Choose three references who are not relatives; preferably a professional or other unbiased person who can speak to your professionalism and your ability to work with youth.

**Reference 1: Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Title** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone** \_\_\_\_\_

**Reference 2: Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Title** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone** \_\_\_\_\_

**Reference 3: Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Title** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone** \_\_\_\_\_

**Part three:**

**Application Letter:** Submit a typed letter that addresses the areas listed below. Your letter should be a separate attachment. Please follow the outline headings as used below to organize your written statement. The areas that you are to address in your statement are:

1. Discuss the reasons you are interested in working with at-risk youth to incorporate mind body practices to build resiliency and healthy living skills.
2. Describe any experiences you have had (voluntary or paid) working with youth.
3. Describe any experiences you have with mind body medicine and/or your desire to learn about mind body medicine practices.
4. Respect for diversity of values, heritage, customs and lifestyle is an important aspect of working in the Road to Resiliency program. Please share experiences you have had with diverse populations (religious, racial, ethnic, disability, socioeconomic, gender, and sexual orientation differences).
5. What difficulties might you have working with any of the groups mentioned above?

**Part four: Submit a resume**

**Part five: Submit an unofficial transcript**

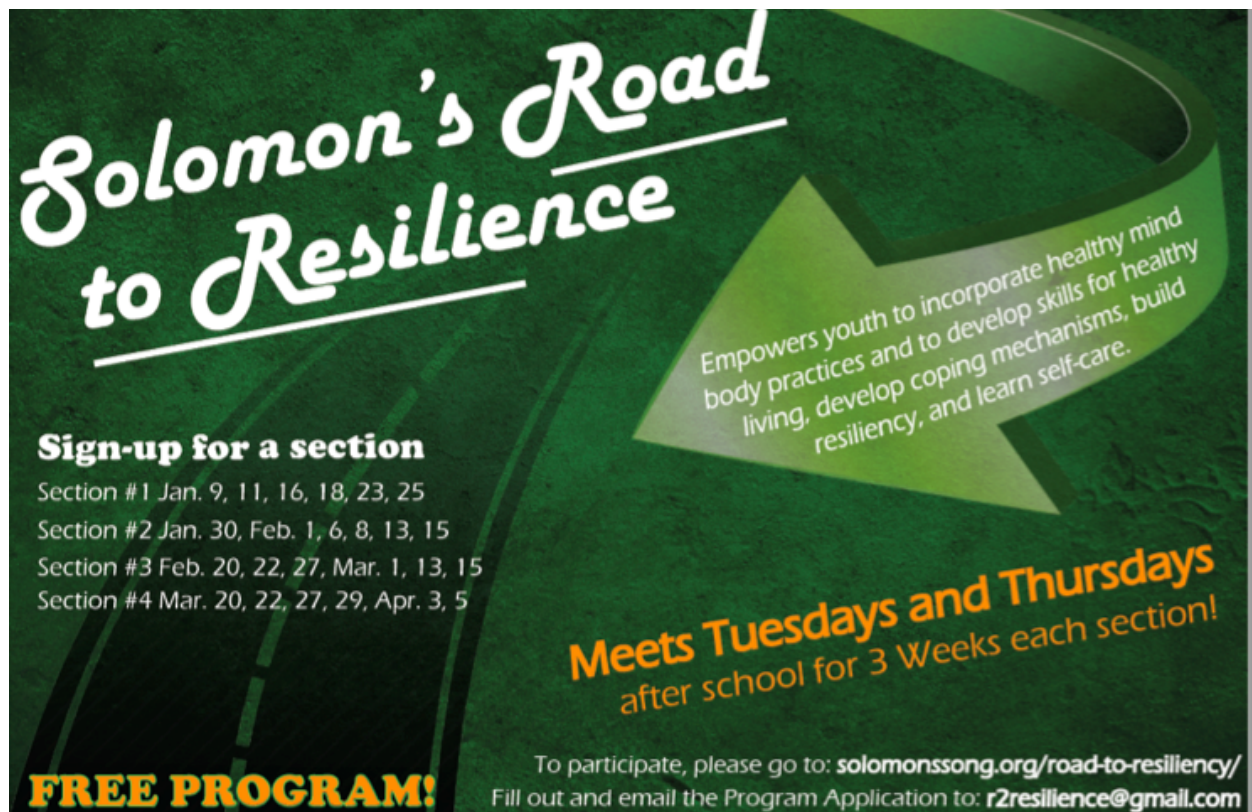
**Submit all documents via email to: [SolomonsSong@hotmail.com](mailto:SolomonsSong@hotmail.com)**

**Questions and more information:**

**[SolomonsSong@hotmail.com](mailto:SolomonsSong@hotmail.com)**

**507-458-8192 (text or voice)**

## **Appendix E**

A poster for 'Solomon's Road to Resilience' with a green textured background and a large green arrow pointing right. The title is in a white script font. Below it, a list of four sections with their dates is provided. A large green arrow contains text about empowering youth. At the bottom, meeting times are listed in orange, and contact information is at the very bottom.

**Solomon's Road to Resilience**

**Sign-up for a section**

Section #1 Jan. 9, 11, 16, 18, 23, 25  
Section #2 Jan. 30, Feb. 1, 6, 8, 13, 15  
Section #3 Feb. 20, 22, 27, Mar. 1, 13, 15  
Section #4 Mar. 20, 22, 27, 29, Apr. 3, 5

Empowers youth to incorporate healthy mind body practices and to develop skills for healthy living, develop coping mechanisms, build resiliency, and learn self-care.

**Meets Tuesdays and Thursdays**  
after school for 3 Weeks each section!

**FREE PROGRAM!**

To participate, please go to: [solomonssong.org/road-to-resiliency/](http://solomonssong.org/road-to-resiliency/)  
Fill out and email the Program Application to: [r2resilience@gmail.com](mailto:r2resilience@gmail.com)

### **Ideas to incorporate (from students & facilitators):**

- Mindful journaling/writing
- Listening to relaxing music for some breathing exercises
- Incorporate more self-care learning and more mindful activities
- Do some activities outside

### **Guidelines for facilitators to know:**

- ☐ Make it very interactive, sometimes you may have to change how you do certain activities to help your students stay engaged. Whether it is making them write on the board, noticing that they have a hard time staying mindful when breathing so you tell them to bring their attention back to breathing, etc.
- ☐ Having a relationship and good communication with the counselor is very important, make sure you are both on the same page. Contact and work with them ahead of time if you need their help to recruit students for the next cohort.
- ☐ When talking about the group guidelines. In the confidentiality part, when you talk about being a mandated reporter do not state that you are a mandated reporter as it can intimidate students. Just explain that if they were to say things that may bring harm to themselves or others you would have to tell their counselor about it, but that you are there to support them along the way.

- ☐ Ask participants for their phone number so you can text them, or have their parents number saved so that you can call them if you ever need to cancel a session or in case there is an emergency.
  
- ☐ Post additiional info about mindful activities, news, breathing, etc. on the Facebook page