

MINDFUL PRESENCE IN HEALTH CARE

H.E.A.L. Healthcare Curriculum by Heather Ferris

2025 is a time of great change and hardship in the world particularly for those who are suffering disease, displacement, unkindness. Many people have experienced bias through colonization and other systems of domination and oppression. Levels of stress and anxiety are high. We are experiencing shortages of personnel within every segment of our health system. The needs of the task (including prioritizing medication) precede the best interests of the person in many cases. This leads to more stress for caregivers, families, patients and health employees. MINDFULNESS brings us into the present moment, opening our connection to ourselves and others, relieving stress.

This series of animated videos tells a story about how provider biases in health care can adversely affect patient health outcomes. These stories highlight incorrect assumptions and biases that may exist in health care and what potential negative outcomes may arise as a result of them. Through storytelling, individuals are asked to reflect upon which biases are present and the impact that they may have in their own practice.



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LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Encourage mindful presence when providing care; a heart-felt approach that will re-energise the health professional, patient and family members.

- Our jobs should be meaningful and make a difference
- We will value ourselves and be valued.
- People in our PRESENCE will feel seen and valued, leading to more satisfying outcomes.
- We will be aware of resistant behaviour as a response to something (Including medication) and take the time to try to meet a need before labeling the person angry, violent or someone with bad behaviour. Involve family caregivers in this as they have more knowledge of their person.

*The Presence Practice is deliberate.
We are present and kind because that is the right thing to do.
Patient dignity must be preserved as much as possible.*

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H.E.A.L. Healthcare | www.healhealthcare.ca



National Collaborating Centre
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CURRICULUM DETAILS

We start with a case study using dementia but think also of mental illness, addictions and every segment of health care. Presence is necessary across the system to help people feel seen and heard with dignity, not bias.

Print the prompts for self-reflection prior to watching the video of each activity.

ACTIVITY ONE

Watch video of Edward Bear (Video 1 - 00:00-06:18)

Prompt 1 ... What did you feel watching Edward Bear? What could improve his experience?

Prompt 2 ... What do you experience in your body when you feel fear and/or resistance?
Think of a real situation in which fear came up for you.

Prompt 3 ... What are your thoughts and possible actions/responses when you feel threatened?
(what is your limbic response?) What do you need from others when in this response?

Prompt 4 ... As someone providing care how do you a) feel in your body and b) respond to what appears to be threatening or unsafe behaviour, or if you have been warned about the potential for harm?

Prompt 5 ... Notice what happens when you feel your feet solidly on the ground; take a deep breath, exhale and come from your heart (be consciously kind to yourself and the other person)

Prompt 6 ... When you see interactions as a purposeful connection between humans (with valid feelings) would it be different than seeing them as the object of a task that must be accomplished? Can you do both?

ACTIVITY TWO

Teaching on Mindful Presence (Video 1 - 06:18-28:16)

Prompt 1 ... How might this practice help you regulate your nervous system?

Prompt 2 ... How might this practice employed by health workers affect patients?

Prompt 3 ... How might this heart-felt approach influence potential bias?

ACTIVITY THREE

Interview on Dignity in Health Care, an interview between Cathy Richardson and Heather Ferris (Video 2 - 48 minutes)

Prompt 1 ... Think back to patients who you may have labeled resistant. Reflect on the question:
“How would I have responded in these circumstances had I been the patient?”

Prompt 2 ... What do people in care need in the face of resistance using a person-centred lens?

Prompt 3 ... How might a mindful compassionate response affect the outcome for staff and patient?

PRACTICE

Listen to [Audio-only file](#) on the practice of developing Mindful Presence.

EVALUATION

Complete the [HEALhealthcare evaluation form](#).