

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2018

# TOGETHER

## Simple Mindfulness Activities

### Mindful Stretching (take 3-5 deep breaths w/each pose)

-Awaken the Body (Squeeze and Release) –Make fist, raise shoulders, tighten core & leg muscles on inhale, slowly relax on the exhale

-Grounding/Crossing the Midline(Pretzel) Cross arms in front of chest, cross legs (opposite crossing)

-Lower Heart Rate (Mountain Top)-Hands together above your head

### Mindful Breathing (try to bring your breath down into your belly-at least 5 deep breaths)

-Arm tracing-Start with your hand on our wrist, breathe in as you slide your hand up to your shoulder, breathe out and slide your hand back down to your wrist.

-Fingertip breathing- Thumb and pinky together. Breathe in & march from pinky to index finger. Breathe out & march thumb from index finger back to pinky.

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# MINDFULNESS

Jon Kabat-Zinn, the biologist who first coined the term “mindfulness” in the ‘70s, defines it as a state of mind: the act of “paying attention on purpose” to the present moment, with a “non-judgmental” attitude. But mindfulness is really a secular philosophy and set of techniques adapted from thousands-of-years-old Buddhist meditation traditions—ones that only recently landed in mainstream Western consciousness. It was Kabat-Zinn who first formally brought mindfulness into a medical setting; he developed the Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) program, which used specific exercises to help patients dealing with chronic pain and is now widely applied in other therapeutic contexts, and founded the Center for Mindfulness at UMass Medical School. Mindfulness has also been harnessed in increasingly diverse contexts beyond health care—some uses more legitimate than others. Last year, the Congressman Tim Ryan introduced mindfulness into weekly staff meetings on the Hill, Time published a cover story on the topic, and CNN’s Anderson Cooper dedicated a primetime segment to showcasing his own transformative experience at a mindfulness retreat center. Google, General Mills, the Seattle Seahawks, and the U.S. military have all embraced mindfulness as a means of boosting performance and productivity, while its potential as an antidote to the distractions and stress of everyday life is increasingly promoted within the general population and has spurred a cottage industry of books, magazines, and smartphone apps. Still, the body of scientific research illustrating the positive effects of mindfulness training on mental health and well-being—at the level of the brain as well as at the level of behavior—grows steadily more well-established: It improves attention, reduces stress, and results in better emotional regulation and an improved capacity for compassion and empathy. Brain-imaging studies at Harvard and Mass General Hospital have shown that long-term mindfulness training can help thicken the cortical regions related to attention and sensory processing, and may offset thinning of those areas that typically comes with aging. Mindfulness is widely considered effective in psychotherapy as a treatment not just for adults, but also for children and adolescents with aggression, ADHD, or mental-health problems like anxiety. (It remains to be seen whether mindfulness alone is a sufficient replacement for other therapies. In a review last year of 47 different randomized clinical trials, The Journal of the American Medical Association suggested that mindfulness training wasn’t any more effective than other types of therapy, like drugs.)

# RETIREMENT UPDATES

## Retirement Prep Seminars

PREP is designed to help members of all ages prepare for retirement. PREP is structured to allow you to tailor the program to fit your needs. Stay for the entire seminar or just the modules below that would be of greatest significance to you:

- NYSTRS Benefits: Your pension, disability coverage, loans, vesting, death benefits. (8:45-10:15 a.m.)
- Financial Planning: Saving early, catching up, withdrawals, financial advisors. (10:30-11 a.m.)
- Social Security: Benefits, eligibility rules, when to collect, earning limits. (11-11:25 a.m.)
- Estate Planning: Wills, trusts, powers of attorney, health care proxies, living wills, long-term care. (11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.)
- Retirement — A New Beginning: Planning ahead, staying active and healthy, relationships, relocating. (1:30-2:30 p.m.)
- The Retirement Process: Retirement options, "resigning" vs. "retiring," choosing a retirement date, retirement checklist, monthly payments, taxes, and earnings limitations on NYS public employment. (2:35-3:30 p.m.)
- Seminars are held from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., with registration beginning at 8 a.m. Please note the timeframes above are the typical schedule, however, the times for modules may change depending on the availability of the presenters. There is no fee to attend and your spouse/companion is welcome to attend, but you must make a reservation in advance. (Note: These seminars are not designed for individual retirement counseling.)

## UPCOMING DATES

Upcoming Dates:

Buffalo - Erie 1 BOCES / Thursday, April 12  
355 Harlem Road  
West Seneca, New York 14224

Buffalo - Holiday Inn Buffalo - Intl Airport / Friday, February 23 & Thursday, March 8  
4600 Genesee Street  
Cheektowaga, New York 14225

There are two ways to make a reservation:

Online using your MyNYSTRS account. After logging into your account, visit the My Tools > Schedule Appointments page; or,  
By calling NYSTRS at (800) 348-7298, Ext. 6180.

When calling for a reservation you must provide your Empl ID or Social Security number, email address and home phone.

Please bring your latest Benefit Profile with you to the seminar. For the most up-to-date estimate of your retirement benefits, use our online MyNYSTRS Pension Estimator. This tool allows you to create estimates using various retirement dates.

# Lorry's LINKS

## **Jackie Robinson - Breaking Barriers in Sports and in Life**

WHETHER YOU ARE A LOVER OF MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL OR HAVE A "SOFT SPOT" FOR OVERCOMING THE ODDS STACKED AGAINST YOU AND ACHIEVING A DREAM - THE AMERICAN DREAM, YOU WILL FIND VIDEOS AND ACTIVITIES ON THIS WEB SITE THAT WILL SURELY CAPTURE YOUR HEART AND THE HEARTS AND ATTENTION OF THE BOYS AS WELL AS THE GIRLS IN YOUR CLASS.

THERE ARE LESSONS, PRINTABLES, BOOK LISTS, AND MORE THAT ALIGN WITH LANGUAGE ARTS, MATH, AND SOCIAL STUDIES NATIONAL STANDARDS.

[HTTPS://WWW.SCHOLASTIC.COM/TEACHERS/SPONSORED-CONTENT/BREAKING-BARRIERS/17-18/BREAKING-BARRIERS-UNIT-GRADES-4-8/](https://www.scholastic.com/teachers/sponsored-content/breaking-barriers/17-18/breaking-barriers-unit-grades-4-8/)

## **The Story of US**

THE HISTORY CHANNEL'S NEWEST ADDITION TO THE BROAD, SWEEPING GENRE OF AMERICAN HISTORY SERIES IS AMERICA: THE STORY OF US. EACH EPISODE IS ABOUT 45 MINUTES IN LENGTH. IT IS PRECISELY THIS SORT OF EFFORT THAT CAN HOOK KIDS WHO AREN'T ORDINARILY INTERESTED IN HISTORY IN TAKING A SECOND LOOK.

[HTTP://WWW.HISTORY.COM/SHOWS/AMERICA-THE-STORY-OF-US](http://www.history.com/shows/america-the-story-of-us)

## **Chrome Music Lab**

EXPERIMENT WITH MUSIC USING INTERACTIVE INSTRUMENTS AND ANIMATIONS AT CHROME MUSIC LAB. DIFFERENT TOOLS TEACH THE BASICS OF CHORDS, HARMONY, AND RHYTHM. CHOOSE ANY IMAGE TO VIEW THE CONCEPT TAUGHT, THEN CLICK TO EXPLORE THE INTERACTIVE. SOME INTERACTIVES REQUIRE ACCESS TO YOUR COMPUTER'S MICROPHONE.

[HTTPS://MUSICLAB.CHROMEEXPERIMENTS.COM/EXPERIMENTS](https://musiclab.chromeexperiments.com/experiments)

## **Climbing Everest**

CAPTURING EVEREST IS A FOUR-PART DOCUMENTARY PRESENTED THROUGH VIRTUAL REALITY FILM-MAKING TECHNOLOGY. THIS SITE IS STUNNING. THE DOCUMENTARY TAKES VIEWERS FROM THE FIRST STOP BEFORE STARTING THE CLIMB THROUGH THE FINAL OPPORTUNITY TO REACH THE SUMMIT. CHOOSE ANY OF THE FOUR CHAPTERS TO BEGIN VIEWING.

[HTTPS://WWW.SI.COM/SPECIALS/EVEREST-CLIMB-VIRTUAL-REALITY/INDEX.HTML--](https://www.si.com/specials/everest-climb-virtual-reality/index.html)

## Membership has its privileges!

*Your union is steadfast in its fight for better contracts, safer working conditions, fair pay, advocacy, and upholding the labor rights of the dedicated women and men proudly working in the education and health care industries on a daily basis.*

**But your NYSUT membership does so much more!** It also provides you with the opportunity to enjoy the benefits of more than 40 endorsed programs & services offered by NYSUT Member Benefits, including a variety of quality, competitive insurance plans.

Endorsed By:

**MEMBER  
BENEFITS**



**As an Example: With the NYSUT Member Benefits Trust-endorsed MetLife Auto & Home insurance program, NYSUT members receive special group rates on auto insurance, homeowners insurance as well as motorcycle, boat, personal property and other types of insurance -- rates that are NOT available to the general public.**

That is why we encourage you to always look for the "Endorsed by NYSUT Member Benefits" logo before you or your loved ones make any purchasing decisions.

Visit [memberbenefits.nysut.org](http://memberbenefits.nysut.org) or call **800-626-8101** for specific information about this program.

## Newly endorsed Member Shopping Program available for use!



We heard the requests of the NYSUT membership and spent months diligently researching new member shopping program options. The NYSUT Member Benefits Corporation is pleased to announce that the Purchasing Power Member Shopping Program is now available for use by eligible NYSUT members.

Purchasing Power is an online shopping option that offers another way to purchase brand-new, brand-name products and pay for them over time through the ease of payroll deduction or ACH withdrawals. Eligible NYSUT members can enjoy access to products such as computers, appliances, jewelry, furniture, televisions, electronics, travel packages and much more.

While Purchasing Power is not a discount program, it can save you money and stress compared to high-interest credit cards or rent-to-own stores. As always, you are encouraged to shop and compare before making any purchasing decisions.

Visit [nysutmbc.purchasingpower.com](http://nysutmbc.purchasingpower.com) or call **800-537-3135** to learn more.



For information about contractual endorsement arrangements with providers of endorsed programs, please contact NYSUT Member Benefits. Agency fee payers to NYSUT are eligible to participate in NYSUT Member Benefits-endorsed programs.

# President's Message

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I am OLD enough to remember teacher evaluations done by your BUILDING PRINCIPAL. once a year you would have an OBSERVATION IF TENURED, maybe 2 or 3 IF PROBATIONARY. THESE EVALUATIONS WERE AGREED UPON BY THE DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION AND THE UNION THROUGH THE NEGOTIATION PROCESS. THE DETAILS AMOUNTED TO A PAGE OR LESS IN OUR CONTRACT.

I HAVE ALSO BEEN AROUND FOR THE EVOLUTION FROM LOCALLY CONTROLLED EVALUATIONS, TO STATE CONTROL. WE HAVE SEEN OUR ANNUAL PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE REVIEWS CHANGE FROM AN OBSERVATION AND WRITE-UP, TO SOMETHING THAT NEEDS A NASA SCIENTIST TO INTERPRET THE DATA FORMULAS, TIED TO STATE TESTS, AND MOUNTAINS OF EVIDENCE (REMEMBER THE BINDERS?) THAT PROVE TO THE ENTIRE UNIVERSE THAT WE REALLY CAN DO OUR JOBS. WHAT USED TO BE A RELATIVELY SIMPLE AND SENSIBLE PROCESS, NOW TAKES A LARGE COMMITTEE MONTHS OF WORK, NOT BECAUSE WE DISAGREE WITH THE DISTRICT, BUT BECAUSE WE ARE ALL TRYING TO MAKE SENSE OF THE MANDATES.

WELL THE ISSUE IS ALIVE AND WELL AGAIN. APPR NEEDS TO BE REDONE BECAUSE, BIG SURPRISE, OUR STATE STANDARDS HAVE BEEN REVISED AGAIN. I AM SURE YOU HAVE READ THE EMAILS AND YOU ARE AWARE NYSUT IS PUSHING HARD TO REGAIN LOCAL CONTROL. PLEASE KEEP YOUR EYES AND EARS OPEN CONCERNING THIS ISSUE THAT WILL IMPACT US ALL.

AS WE START THE LAST THIRD OF THE SCHOOL YEAR I WANT TO THANK ALL OF OUR BUILDING REPRESENTATIVES AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS THAT WORK SO HARD ON BEHALF OF THE ETA. WE ARE UNITED BECAUSE OF ALL THAT YOU DO. THANK YOU!

IN SOLIDARITY,  
LINDA SCHWANZ