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MINDFULNESS IN EDUCATOR'S WORKPLACE

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The main aspect of this paper will focus on mindfulness in organizational settings. In recent years mindfulness has evolved into a range of secular therapies and courses, most of them focused on being aware of the present moment and simply noticing feelings and thoughts as they come and go. Moreover, mindfulness techniques, having long played an important role in various traditions around the world, are now recognized as having the potential to support employees in the workplace to manage and cope with various changes.

The aim of this paper is to gain better understanding about mindfulness and how it could be beneficial in organizational settings, from an educational perspective. This thesis is based on literature review of the latest research on mindfulness and will be collected with the aim of completing Master Thesis. The literature review is composed of well-known researchers related to the research question, while identifying opportunities and challenges about mindfulness in the workplace. Moreover, the present study is providing insight for future research about mindfulness in educational settings.

The different results obtained in this bachelor thesis confirm that there is a lack of research about mindfulness in educational settings. Especially, in the Northern European context. However, research that has been conducted about mindfulness in organizational settings, clearly shows that mindfulness has potential to influence on the overall well-being and effectiveness of employees. Moreover, practising mindfulness can help employees to adjust to changes with realistic expectations and the techniques to cope. Furthermore, current study could be seen as a good starting point for future educators, who would like to conduct their research about mindfulness in educational settings or introduce mindfulness in their workplace.

Keywords: workplace, changes, work-related stress, mindfulness

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1 Introduction

The fast changes and increased complexity of 21st century present new challenges and put new demands on our education system and people in it. There has been generally a growing awareness of the necessity to change and improve the preparation of students for productive functioning in the continually changing and highly demanding world. The global society requires effective workers who can learn continuously, and who can work with diversity, locally and internationally. It causes pressure and when it becomes excessive or otherwise unmanageable may lead to stress. The present thesis, which is based on literature review seeks to get better understanding how to support people in the workplace. The research questions are: What is mindfulness? How mindfulness could support educators in the working place? The purpose of this paper is to gain deeper understanding and knowledge about mindfulness in organizational settings and also examine what impact the changes, which may occur in the workplace, would have on individuals' emotional, mental and physical well-being.

Personal interest in particular topic comes from my own experience during the change process, while working as a PYP (IB Primary Years Programme) teacher for multicultural classroom in the oldest English Language immersion school in Estonia. The school received the status of the IB World School in May 2009 as the first municipal school in Estonia, but they had only the right to provide education on secondary level according to the curriculum of IB Diploma Programme (IB DP). The implementation of the programme started in September 2009. Since May 2012 the school has been the candidate school of IB Primary Years Programme (IB PYP). The school was going through fast changes, which unfortunately had negative impact to my overall well-being. As a result, I was diagnosed with depression. My feelings could be expressed by quoting the psychiatrist Ronald Laing (1970), who captures succinctly this kind of situation:

*There is something I don't
know that I am supposed to
know.*

*I don't know what it is I don't
know, and yet am supposed to
know,*

*And I feel I look stupid
if I seem both not to know it
and not know what it is I don't know.
Therefore, I pretend I know it.
This is nerve - wracking since I
don't know what I must pretend
to know.
Therefore, I pretend I know everything.*

R.D.Laing, *Knots* (1970).

Even though I wished to implement and support the changes, I felt alone and not supported during the transformation process. Michael Fullan (2001), who is recognized as an international authority on educational reform, has written: “*making a difference in the lives of students requires care, commitment, and passion as well as the intellectual know-how to do something about it*” (p.30). Despite this, school effectiveness research has drawn attention to the importance of school leadership as a key characteristic of effective schools. Research shows that school leaders improve teaching and learning indirectly and most powerfully through their influence on staff motivation, commitment and working conditions (Leithwood et al., 2006).

1.1 Purpose of the study

The main aim of this research is to get a better knowledge and understanding about meaning of mindfulness in an organizational setting, from an educational point of view. The methodology used for this Bachelor Thesis is based on literature review, for understanding current knowledge and presenting the insight for deeper investigation.

Today's world provides working conditions, which are strongly affected by globalisation and opportunities in the work environment offered by new technologies and practices (Brun & Milczarek, 2007), including fast advance of technology, the huge increase in knowledge, the emphasises on social skills and internationalisation. Therefore, work- related stress has increased in working places, because of increased performance requirements and competition-related changes in work life. Moreover, The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that the prevalence of mental diseases will increase and by 2020 it will be the second leading cause of disability (Kalia, 2002). It is worrying and something needs to be done to predict people's mental health problems. This study highlights the importance of mental health support at work, and introduces mindfulness to improve people's emotional, mental and physical well-being.

2 Stress in the workplace

Everyone who has ever held a job, at some point, must have felt the pressure of work-related stress. Any job can have stressful elements, even if you love what you do. Work-related stress has been recognized as one of the major contemporary challenges facing occupational health and safety between European countries (OSHWiki, 2015). According to the EU Labour Force Survey, in 1999–2007, in total 14% of workers reported their experience with a work-related health problem, stress, depression or anxiety' as the most serious health problem (European Commission, 2010, p. 69). Moreover, in the 5th European Working Conditions Survey (Eurofound, 2012), around 45 % of workers reported to have experienced, during the previous three years, some types of organisational change affecting their work environment, and 62 % reported to have worked with tight deadlines. In Finland, the Finnish Institute of Occupational

Health (FIOH) has evaluated workers' experience of health and working conditions and changes in work and working conditions from 1997 on. The Work and Health in Finland Survey has been conducted every three years and the latest in 2012 (Kauppinen et al. 2013 as cited in Kinnunen-Amoroso, 2016, p.19). The survey shows that stress symptoms have decreased from 1997. Mostly the stress symptoms were experienced in the sectors of public administration, national defense, compulsory social security, information and communication and education. Stress symptoms were common in directors, clerks and customer service employees (Kinnunen-Amoroso, 2016, p.19). Even though the stress symptoms have decreased in 2000's, the prevalence of mental symptoms has increased from the year 2009 (Kauppinen et al. 2013 as cited in Kinnunen-Amoroso, 2016, p.20).

For understanding the meaning of stress in the working place context, I would like to use the World Health Organization's (WHO) definition: stress is defined as 'the reaction people may have when presented with work demands and pressures that are not matched to their knowledge and abilities and which challenge their ability to cope'. The WHO also points out that 'stress occurs in a wide range of work circumstances but is often made worse when employees feel they have little support from supervisors and colleagues, as well as little control over work processes' (WHO, 2017). Similarly, The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) defines stress as: "the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed on them at work. Stress is not an illness – it is a state. However, if stress becomes too excessive and prolonged, mental and physical illness may develop" (HSE, 2017). Moreover, in The European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE) project report "Teachers' work-related stress: Assessing, Comparing and Evaluating the Impact of Psychosocial Hazards on Teachers at their Workplace" (2011) has stated:

Work-related stress is not an individual weakness, but instead is an individual reaction to organisational and/or interpersonal problems at work. Therefore, it has to be tackled at an organisational level. Furthermore, it is a multi-causal problem that requires multi-dimensional solutions (ETUCE, 2011, p.7).

Furthermore, HSE has set out six problems that can lead to work-related stress: demands

of the job, control, support provided by the organization, management and colleagues, relationships, role and organizational change (HSE,2017). Problems identified by HSE bear a resemblance to the causes of work-related stress defined by WHO: poor work organisation (the way jobs and work systems are designed and managed), poor work design (for example, lack of control over work processes), poor management, unsatisfactory working conditions, and lack of support from colleagues and supervisors (WHO, 2017).

2.1 Stress causing factors among teachers

From the educational perspective, a survey by teacher unions found the following “top five” stressors, which are: workload/work intensity, role overload, increased class size per teacher, unacceptable pupils behavior and bad school management/lack of support from management (ETUCE,2009). Furthermore, the national trade unions had an opportunity to add other stressors, which are creating risk for their teachers. The Danish Union of Teachers (DLF) and the Italian General Confederation of Labour (CGIL) unions have included “changes” as an important stressor for teachers (ETUCE, 2007 p. 7). Given the stresses that teachers face and the relatively little support that they receive to address these challenges, it is not surprising that many teachers respond in maladaptive ways; by exhibiting common physiological, emotional, and behavioral manifestations of stress; by creating climates of stress in their classrooms that in turn negatively affects their students; or by leaving the profession altogether (Frydenberg & Reevy, 2011, p.267). Unfortunately, very often people do not have strategies other than to simply tolerate the stress. The next chapter will reflect the organizational changes at the individual level.

2.2 The meaning of change

As mentioned previously changes are one of the workplace stressors. There are numerous factors that cause organizations to change, i.e. competitive advantage, organizational renewal, technological transformation, political interests, uncertain economic conditions, international standards, globalization, innovation and performance (Jacobs et al., 2013; Llamas-Sanchez et al., 2013; Mullins, 2006). When changes happen in the workplace, these modifications affect a number of people, all of whom may act differently.

Edmonds (2011) has written that changes within the organization in order to promote and adapt to change, requires changes from the individuals working within the institution. The most common reason for people resisting change is when they perceive a potential loss and also prefer the comfort of status quo. Moreover, Harvard Professor Peter Kotter (1996) claims the central issue around change is never strategy, structure, culture or systems. The core of the matter is always about changing the behaviour of people. Also, Annabel Beerel (2010) has stated that with *“enduring change demands adaptation. The adaptive process is always a learning and transformative process. For all kinds of reasons people resist change. They fear the inevitable loss that change always implies, they fear the challenge of learning, especially unlearning or learning something they cannot presently identify with, and they fear having to embrace reality in all its complexities”* (p.147).

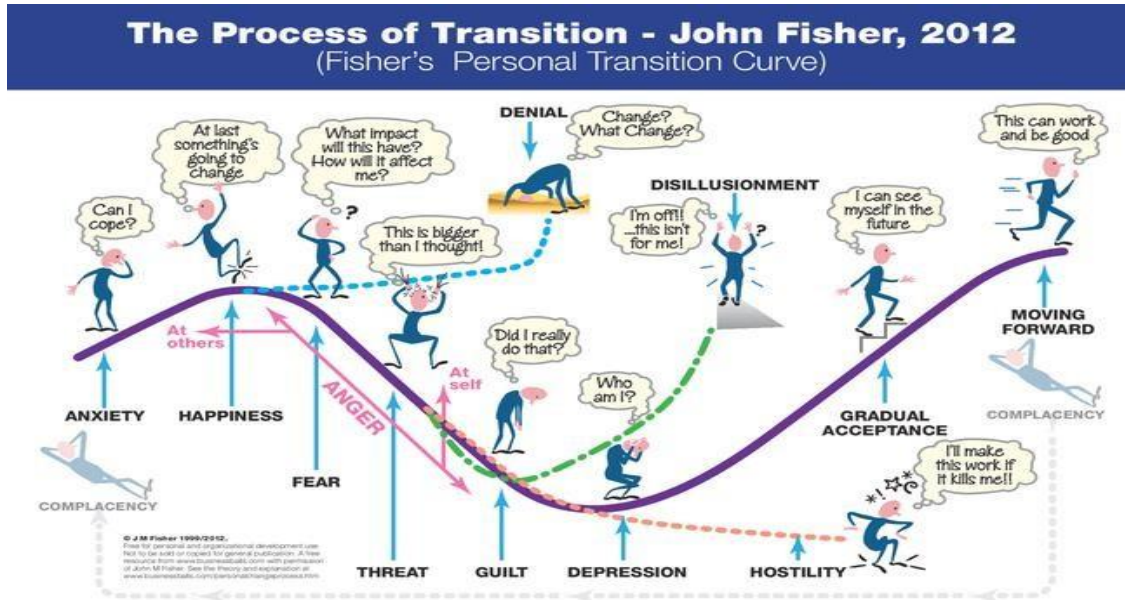
2.3 The process of personal change

To understand and illustrate the range of emotions/reactions in the process of personal change, I have chosen to charter psychologist John Fisher's (2012) “The Process of Transition Diagram”. The main goal is to support people move through the transition effectively, for that reason it is necessary to understand their perception of the past, present and future. What is their past experience of change and how has it impacted on them, how did they cope, what will they be losing as part of the change and what will

they be gaining?

Figure 1. Fisher's Personal Transition Curve (Fisher 1999/2012)

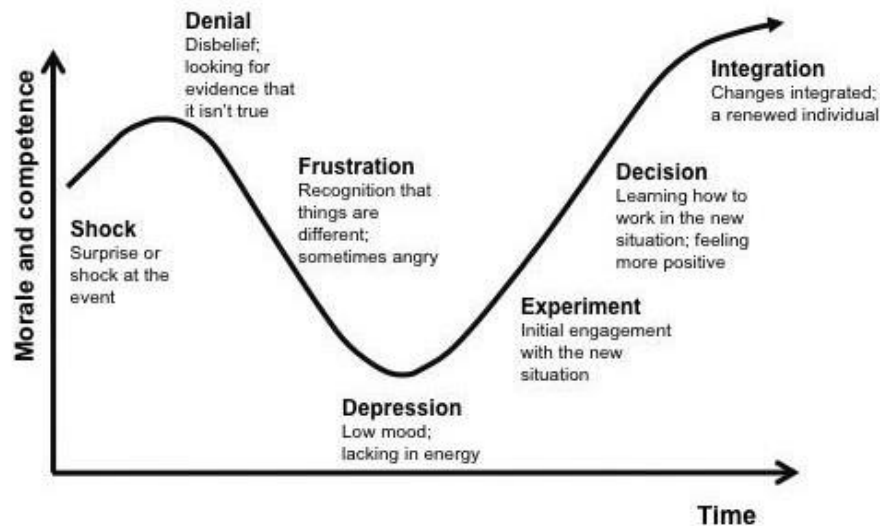
(<http://www.businessballs.com/freepdfmaterials/fisher-transition-curve-2012bb.pdf>)



This model provides illustration how individuals may deal with personal change in the organizational settings. According to businessballs.com the various stages (anxiety, happiness, fear, threat, guilt, depression, gradual acceptance, moving forward, disillusionment, hostility, denial, anger, complacency) reflect the importance for an individual to understand the impact that the change will have on their own personal construct systems; and for them to be able to work through the implications for their self-awareness ("Fisher's process," 2012). Mostly the model has been used in the business context as a management tool and needs further investigation in the educational context. Similarly reflects "The Kübler-Ross Model" people's reactions to change. The model has been named by psychiatrist Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, who introduced it first time in her book "Death and Dying", which came out in the year 1969. The original model, which is also known as "Five Stages of Grief" consists of five stages: denial, anger, bargaining, depression, acceptance. It recognises that people have to pass through their own individual journey of coming to terms with death and bereavement, etc., after which there is generally an acceptance of reality, which then enables the person to cope.

Figure 2. The Kübler – Ross Change Curve

The Kübler-Ross change curve



Nowadays the Kübler-Ross Model has been related also to business, work and employment. As it is stated in Cleverism webpage, which supports entrepreneurs to build up their business:

The Change Curve is a very trusted and reliable tool that can be used to understand the stage where people are when they are going through a major or significant change in life. This insight not only helps doctors and healers understand the transition of patients but also helps managers in understanding the position at which employees are as far as adapting to change is concerned” (“Understanding Kübler- Ross,” 2016).

Both models share similarities and illustrate the stages what change initiatives can cause or produce. To conclude, I would like to quote Mullins (2006), who has written: “When organisations are working through change and when change appears to be externally imposed, the management of people takes on a different dimension in terms of the sensitivity required. In this situation there is an implicit requirement of changes in

attitudes and beliefs. Such changes may lead to new-mindsets, new attitudes and new perspectives which enable people to cope and adjust to the different world. At these times effective management is vital; managers will be expected to understand the strains that their employees feel during times of change but at the same time be able to deal with their own stress levels” (Mullins, 2006, p.110).

2.4 The importance of leadership in the workplace

Without a question, change becomes the life organ of every vital organization. Pearson (2012) has written: “an organization can be transformed when the leadership has the capacity to claim both the visible and invisible aspects of its culture. Understanding how change occurs and its impact on individuals and organizations is central to the work of transformation” (p.97). Leadership is about facilitating, guiding and managing change. Where there is no change, we do not need leaders. Exercising leadership concerns mobilizing oneself and others (the group of organization to adapt to the new realities of change) (Beerel, 1998). Next chapter is taking closer look at various leadership styles and examines the role of leadership in organizational change.

2.5 Leadership in the 21st of century

Powerful global and international trends in education policy are creating leadership contexts that are increasingly similar. School-based management, outcomes-oriented curricula, market forces and competition, a need to forge united school communities and a focus on standards and accountability are usual environments within which school leaders are expected to function (Smith, Burton & Brundrett, 2003). According to many school improvement studies that have been conducted, leadership plays a key factor in a school’s ability to improve. Often it has been assumed that individuals’ leadership ability or skill is a critical factor in supporting school improvement, change and development (Harris & Muijs, 2015). Furthermore, it has been consistently argued that

the quality of leadership matters in determining the motivation of teachers and the quality of teaching in the classroom (Fullan, 2001). Considering my own previous experiences and feelings while working as a teacher, it has led me to these questions: what makes an effective leader? Which leadership styles are the most effective?

Walter Bellin (2012) defines the leadership role “as gaining the alignment of people with the vision, objectives and strategies of the organisation to effectively produce intended change and outcomes” (p.21). Stephen Covey (2004) who was an American educator, author, businessman, and keynote speaker has said: “Leaders are not born or made - they are self-made” (p.62). Similarly, Kouzes & Posner (1995) have written that “in the art of leadership, the artist’s instrument is the self. The mastery of the art of leadership comes with the mastery of the self. Ultimately, leadership development is the process of self - development” (p.298). Furthermore, Northouse (2010) states that leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal (p.3). When considering these statements, everyone can become a leader. However, it takes time to learn and practice leadership skills until they become part of the person. Similarly, Bass & Bass (2008) have written that good leadership is developed through a never-ending process of self-study, education, training, and the accumulation of relevant experience.

There are as many different views of leadership as there are characteristics that distinguish leaders from nonleaders. Northouse's book “Leadership: Theory and Practice” (2005) summarises some of the well-known leadership theories: as trait, skills, style, situational approach and contingency theory. All these theories define various factors that influence the leadership styles and approaches. In Northouse’s 5th edition “Leadership: Theory and Practice” (2010), he added a few leadership approaches, theories more, for example, such as path-goal theory, leader-member exchange theory, transformational leadership, team leadership and psychodynamic approach. As it can be seen, there are various leadership approaches/theories, which gives a leader the opportunity to choose the most appropriate style for the organization.

In educational settings, the knowledge-based twenty-first century requires changes in educational organizations and practices. The scope of various changes require much more than merely mandating or legislating reform initiatives. Moreover, taking account

of the fact that in the twenty-first century, educators need to be knowledge leaders, who collaboratively construct, challenge, and share professional knowledge (Earl & Hannay, 2011). To accomplish this, educational organizations need different operational norms with transformational leadership focused on managing the conversations between practitioners (Earl & Hannay, 2014, p. 55). Taking account of Shale & Khine (2014) writing: “school leaders are expected to act as agents of change and facilitators who improve the school culture and its effectiveness by transforming the professional learning community, where they are expected to build human capital by working collaboratively with every teacher and employee in the school” (p.1). Furthermore, Kanter (2004) says, “The fundamental task of leaders is to develop confidence in advance of victory, in order to attract the investments that make victory possible - money, talent, support, empathy, attention, effort, or people's best thinking” (p.4). It seems that transformational leadership seems to fill the needs of today's work groups, who wish to be inspired and empowered to succeed in times of uncertainty. What is this leadership style all about then? Northouse (2010) has written that “...transformational leadership is the process whereby a person engages with others and creates a connection that raises the level of motivation and morality in both the leader and the follower. This type of leader is attentive to the needs and motives of followers and tries to help followers reach their fullest potential” (p.172). Despite this, Bass & Avolio (1994) add that “transformational leaders do more with colleagues and followers than set up simple exchanges or agreements” (p.3). They behave in ways to achieve superior results by applying one or more of the “Four I's”: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration (Bass & Avolio, 1994, p.3). Moreover, Bernhard Bass and Ronald Riggio, in their book, *Transformational Leadership* (2006), have written that transformational leaders challenge followers to become innovative problem solvers and help develop their leadership capacities through creating a holding environment that provides both challenge and support. On the other hand, Tourish and Pinnington (2002) argue that the impression of transformational leadership is moving too close to look like cult leaders who are adored by their followers as people who cannot do anything wrong, almost God-like. Moreover, in Dennis Tourish (2013) book “The Dark Side of Transformational Leadership” he adds that the transformational leadership dogma creates belief that all leaders' actions are inherently rational, and does not recognize that implicit compliance to the forcible controls of some power-hungry leaders may have unhealthy, even disastrous results for both employee

and organization.“ Coercive persuasion refers to the way in which leaders socially construct discursive systems of constraint that are difficult for followers to challenge and resist” (p.40).

As mentioned previously, there are variety of leadership styles out there which are all effective under different circumstances. Therefore, Langer (2005) has shown concern that there is mindlessness that prevents individuals and organizations during periods of change from moving in new directions in an effective way. This has led me to a question: how leaders could efficiently support organizational changes to be more mindful? To answer this question, the next chapters explore the definition of mindfulness and introduces ways how to be mindful.

3 What is mindfulness?

According to Ellen Langer (2005), mindlessness occurs when an individual operates like a robot; thoughts, emotions, and behaviors are determined by “programmed” routines based on distinctions and associations learned in the past. Mindfulness, on the other hand emphasizes awareness of the present moment. In recent years there has been increasing interest in the concept of mindfulness and its enhancement has quietly exploded. Nowadays mindfulness has entered to mainstream in the West; and is applying to into wide variety of contexts, including medicine, neuroscience, psychology, business, education and etc. In this chapter, the meaning of mindfulness and the main practices are explored. Furthermore, it is examining the potential benefits to both the individual and organizational level.

3.1 The meaning of mindfulness

Originally, mindfulness is derived from Eastern spiritual practices, specifically early Hindu and Buddhist traditions. The word mindfulness originally comes from the Pali word *sati*, which means having awareness, attention, and remembering (Bodhi, 2000). Therefore, in Western psychological treatments, mindfulness is not seen as a religious or spiritual practice and various attempts have been made to describe what mindfulness is

in modern psychological terms. Mindfulness in contemporary psychology has been adopted as an approach for increasing awareness and responding skillfully to mental processes that contribute to emotional distress and maladaptive behavior (Bishop, 2004, p.230). Commonly it is defined by purposefully paying attention to present moment experiences, without judgement, creating within the individual a sense of stability and nonreactive awareness (Grossman, Niemann, Schmidt, & Walach, 2004; Miller, Fletcher, & Kabat-Zinn, 1995). The most frequently cited definition is originated from Jon Kabat-Zinn, who has developed a program called Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) in 1985. He has defined mindfulness as “paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally” (Kabat-Zinn, 1994, p. 4). Importantly, this defines mindfulness as an active practice rather than a passive attribute; it is something you do, something you experience, not simply something you are. Furthermore, Kabat-Zinn (2013) sees mindfulness as a skill that can only be developed through continuous practice. Different mindfulness techniques are listed in Figure 3 (adopted from Adriansen & Krohn, 2016).

Figure 3. Mindfulness Techniques

Focus meditation	Meditation in a sitting (or lying down) position, where attention is directed towards the breath (without altering it), a particular part of the body or other physical sensations.
Body scan	Conscious attention to different body parts. It may begin with the toes, the arch, the heel, the ankle and then allow the attention to gradually move through the entire body.
Landing	A combination of body scan and attention to the world around such as sounds and temperature. Often guided by an instructor.
Walking meditation	Walking slowly, preferably barefoot, observing all sensory impressions under the feet.

Breathing technique (pranayama)	Conscious, controlled, rhythmic breathing intended to affect the body and mind in various ways. The techniques can involve inhalation through the nose, exhalation through the mouth as a sigh, or altering through the right and left nostril.
Yoga	A series of yoga poses performed with continual body awareness, preferably synchronizing the breath with the movements.

Many of these practices share commonalities as focused breathing, body and mind awareness, conscious attention, and non-judgemental way of being, which are all required for being mindful. In here it is important to note that although there are various other disciplines and practices that can develop mindfulness as well (e.g. tai chi, qigong; Siegel,2007), the scholars main interest has been on mindfulness meditation, which will be discussed in the next subsection.

3.2 Mindfulness meditation (MM)

“Meditation practice is an investigation of who we are. It is the investigation of our bodies, our breath, of the sensations of subtle energies, of movement. It is the investigation of our minds: thought, emotion, the nature of awareness of consciousness itself. It is the investigation of silence. In meditation practice we explore all these aspects of ourselves.”

Joseph Goldstein (1999, p.118)

The capacity to stimulate mindfulness is developed using various meditation techniques that originate from Buddhist spiritual practices (Hanh, 1976). Meditation is the English translation of the Sanskrit word *bhavana* (i.e., to cultivate) and the Tibetan word *gom* (i.e., to become familiar with) (Singh, 2014, p.1). Goldstein & Calistoga (2014) have written in their book *“Mindfulness Made Simple: An Introduction To Finding Calm Through Mindfulness & Meditation”* that mindfulness meditation (MM) offers a way to

learn and practice mindfulness. In other words, mindfulness meditation is a particular practice, which goal is to become more aware, more connected to your body, breath, and mind in the present moment. By simply observing the natural functioning of the mind, its habitual generation of thoughts, feelings and perceptions which give rise to psychological distress will gradually diminish because of our noninteraction with them. Traditionally, there are various forms of meditation: sitting, laying, walking or standing (Mikulas, 2014), which all share specific techniques: engaging attentive focus, noticing intruding thoughts and redirecting purposeful focus (Burger & Lockhart, 2017, p.431). Meditation practises are usually classified in two main styles - focused attention (FA) and open monitoring (OM), depending on how the attentional processes are directed (Lutz et al.,2008). In the focused attention or also called “concentrative” style, attention is focused on a given object in a continuous manner. Worldwide, the breath is a common object, but it can include sounds, sights, words, phrases etc. (see more Mikulas, 2014). This technique involves observing the experiential field by allowing thoughts and sensations to arise and pass without clinging to them, maintaining attention on an object or bringing it back to the specific object of focused attention. The second style, open monitoring meditation, involves the nonreactive observing of the contents of ongoing experience, primarily as a mean to become reflectively aware of the nature of emotional and cognitive patterns (Lutz et al., 2008). In mindfulness training both styles are widely used and entail both components (Malinowski, 2013).

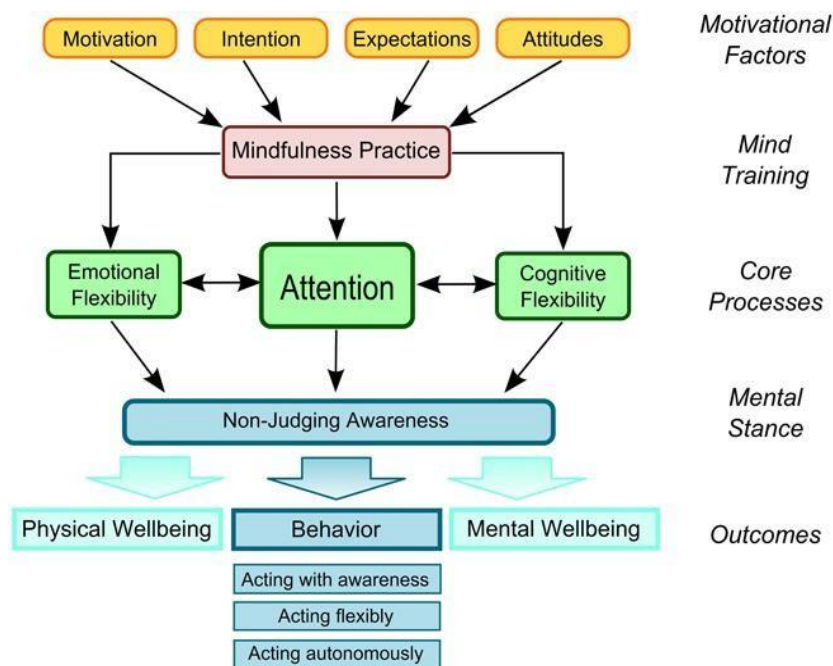
To put it simply, the mindfulness meditation is a form of a mental training, which gives an ability to understand what is happening in you and, around you, and within you. As Gunaratana (2011) has noted: “it is a process of self-discovery, a participatory investigation in which you observe your own experiences while participating in them“ (p. 26). Therefore, Miller (2016), has shown concern for a lack of reflection on experience in mindfulness meditation. He has written that “mindfulness meditation allows us to see phenomena clearly as much as possible without distortion. Still there is need for reflection” (p.131). Self- reflection could allow for analysis and deeper knowledge of experiences, which leads to a greater understanding of ourselves.

The next subchapter is illustrating the main components, which are parts of mindfulness practice.

3.3 The Liverpool Mindfulness Model (LMM)

Grabovac (2011) has noted that there is lack of mindfulness models, which adequately describe the mechanistic details of practice change process. However, the Liverpool Mindfulness Model is a more recent attempt to conceptualise and define the core components of mindfulness and to provide a framework for directing future research. The Liverpool Mindfulness Model (LMM) presented in Figure 4. reflects in a simple way the attentional skills, which are engaged in mindfulness practice (Malinowski, 2013). As it can be seen, the model structures five central tiers. These are: motivational factors, mind training, core processes, mental stance and outcome. *Motivational factors* are the first tier, which shows the individual engagement in the *mind training* (tier 2). As Malinowski (2013) have written that “regular engagement in mindfulness practice develops and refines the mental *core processes* (tier 3), primarily based on the refinement of attentional functions that interact with and facilitate regulatory processes of emotions and cognitions” (p.2). Developments in these core processes lead to changes and more balanced *mental stance* or attitude (tier 4), which will be seen as a positive *outcome* (tier 5), across physical, mental and behavioural domains (Malinowski, 2013).

Figure 4. The Liverpool Mindfulness Model (adapted from Malinowski, 2013)



To conclude, then these fundamental principles, which were previously discussed, capture the common psychological definitions of mindfulness, which emphasise the support and development of attentional abilities combined with a specific, non-judgmental attitude toward the different mental (or physical) experiences which may arise at any given moment. Therefore, it has lead me to the next question: how to measure mindfulness?

3.4 How to measure mindfulness?

When attempting to measure mindfulness, there seems to be confusion between the researchers. Especially, is mindfulness single or multi-faceted assessment, which constructs with components such as non-judgmental awareness, decentering, mindful responding to distressing cognitions, and acceptance of negative thoughts (Hill & Labbe, 2014). Moreover, some researchers consider mindfulness to be a state-like quality, a brief and momentary experience that appears as attention is specifically directed to emotions, sensations, and thoughts (Bishop et al., 2004). Therefore, there seems to be consensus, related to the importance of attention as a main component of being mindful as also shown in the previous model. For example, the Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS; Brown & Ryan, 2003) solely measures attention. On the other hand, the Toronto Mindfulness Scale (TMS; Lau et al., 2006) attempt to also tap into other qualities of mindful attention, such as curiosity, observation, and acceptance. Moreover, The Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ) measures five dimensions of mindfulness, which are: acting with awareness; describe; non- judge; non-react and observe (Goldberg et al., 2016). Therefore, Hill & Labe (2014) point out two main problems related to those self-reported measurement tools. Firstly, there is no information available on the test-retest reliability (except from one report on MAAS). Secondly, there is lack of adequate normative data for all of the current measures (p.19). Then again, all these measures have high face validity and are easy to use and score.

3.5 Supported benefits of mindfulness

The following examples are just a few of the health benefits that mindfulness research has been proving. For example, Kirk and Ryan (2003) found that mindfulness has a significant role to play in a variety of aspects of mental health. The studies showed that mindfulness is a distinct form of awareness and attention that is associated with a number of well-being indicators. Furthermore, mindfulness were shown to relate and to predict more positive well-being and less cognitive and emotional disturbance (Kirk & Ryan, 2003, p. 845). Moreover, neuroscience research is showing that mindfulness can positively transform the architecture and operation of the brain, improve sustained attention, visuospatial memory, working memory, and concentration (Jha, Krompinger, & Baime, 2007; Chambers, Chuen Yee lo, Allen, 2008; Zeidan, Johnson, Diamond, David, & Goolkasian, 2010). Besides that, Creswell et al. (2014) demonstrated with their findings that mindfulness can foster psychological stress resilience. Their study offers new insights into how short mindfulness meditation and dispositional mindfulness can impact stress reactivity to an acute stress challenge (Creswell et al, 2004, p. 10). Here, it is important to clarify that dispositional mindfulness is a tendency to engage a state of consciousness characterized by awareness and nonjudgmental acceptance of present-moment experiences (Harrington, Loffredo & Perz, 2014, p.15).

As shown above, mindfulness has various benefits in one's well-being. As a result, many organizations and corporations have started offering mindfulness programs to their workforce. Companies, including Aetna (Wolever, 2012), General Mills (Gelles, 2012), and Google (Kelly, 2012) have created mindfulness training programs in order to improve their workers well-being and effectiveness. The U.S. Army has implemented the Mindfulness- Based Mental Fitness program, with positive results (Jha, Stanley, Kiyonaga, Wong, & Gelfand, 2010). Furthermore, some graduate schools have implemented formal mindfulness programs to support their students' success. For example, Harvard Business School and Stern School of Business at New York (Hyland, et al., 2015).

Nevertheless, mindfulness seems to be a relatively new and limited issue in the context of organisational and management studies (Dane, 2011, p.997), although over the years more scholars have integrated mindfulness into organizational context. For

example, Hunter and McCormick (2008) presented their exploratory study about mindfulness in the workplace. They examined what kind of impact mindfulness has on people's work lives. Their analysis suggests that people who practice mindfulness in the form of meditation practice have, for example, more external awareness at work, are more accepting of their work situations, and have a more internal locus of evaluation (Hunter & McCormick, 2008). Furthermore, Terhi Takanen (2013) has done research in Finland about "The Power of Being Present at Work". The long term development action research project took place in one department of the Finnish Ministry of Finance, called the Office for the Government as Employer (OGE). In her action research, the main task was to develop ways of being present at work, where she cultivated Co-Creative Process Inquiry (CCPI), *which is a new developmental approach (it will be further introduced) for practicing being present in the here and now. Its main intention is embodying being present as an orientation in change/development work* (Takanen, 2013, p. 197).

On the other hand, Takanen (2013) states that developing mindfulness skills has also become fashionable trend in organisational contexts by promising time to stop, a skill for living on the edge, a skill that fosters well-being and innovations (Takanen, 2013, p. 196). Moreover, she adds that most of the mindfulness studies in organisational settings are theoretically-oriented and/ or pre-planned (controlling) programmes without a strong connection to everyday organisational life and its challenges (Takanen, 2013, p.196). Similarly, Hülsegher (2015) has expressed his thoughts about engaging mindfulness into training and practice "... positive effects may appear rather quickly, but they may also fade out quickly once one stops practicing. We consequently know little about the sustainability of effects found for mindfulness interventions in general and for low-dose interventions in particular" (p. 674).

Keeping these concerns in mind and considering that leaders are usually the ones who develop and implement the change/s, it leads to the next chapter, which discusses how leaders could support their employers to be mindful. Moreover, how to implement or encourage mindfulness for a stronger workplace.

3.6 Towards mindful organizations

As mentioned previously, there are various leadership styles out there and leaders are usually the ones, who are implementing the changes. Moreover, as discussed earlier very often organizational change/s affect individual changes, which often lead to work-related stress that can pose risks to psychological and physical health. Psychologically and physically healthy leaders not only benefit themselves but are also critical to employee well-being as well. Mindfulness in the workplace could support individuals to manage their mental, emotional and physical wellbeing. The next chapter discusses the meaning of mindful leadership.

3.7 Mindful leadership - New way of leading?

“Our understanding of the nature and processes of leadership is most likely to be enhanced as we come to understand better the arena in which leadership necessarily occurs—namely, the human mind. Perhaps this characterization should be pluralized as human minds, since I am concerned equally with the mind of the leader and the minds of the followers.” - Gardner (1995, p. 25)

As discussed previously, mindfulness has been suggested as a valuable wellbeing resource for employees. Therefore, it has not yet been analyzed in relation to organizational leaders' well-being. Recent research indicates that when leaders are stressed, they are less able to support their employees, and this in turn directly has an effect on the stress levels of employees (Ten Brummelhuis, Haar, & Roche, 2014).

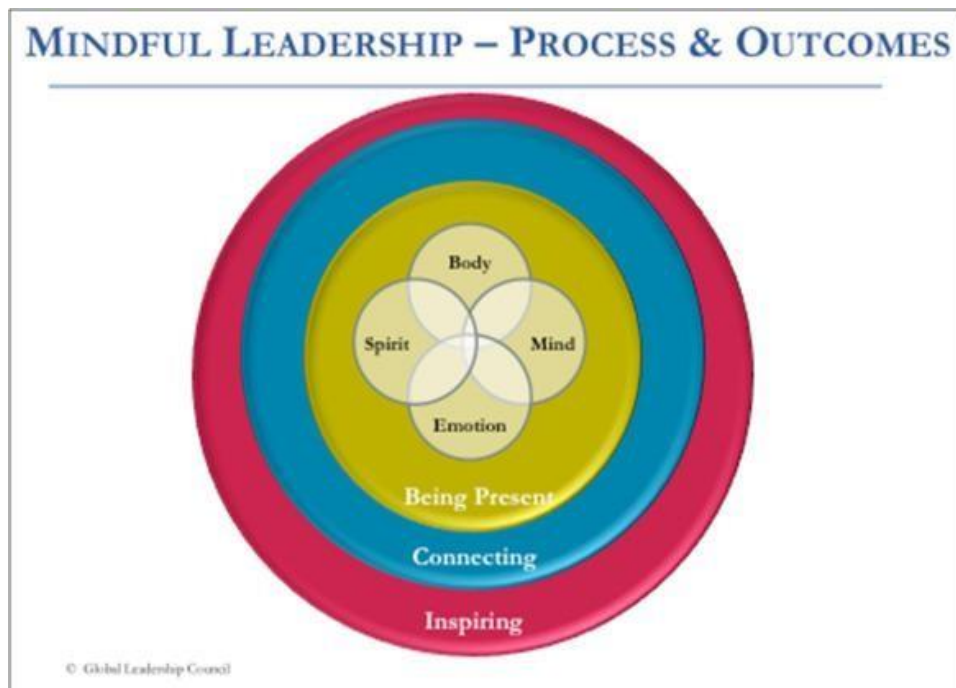
Dickmann & Stanford-Blair (2009) state that the essence of being a mindful leader is being mindful about mind in self and others. They define a mindful leader as a person, who is attentive to the nature and nurture of intelligence in the process of influencing others toward the achievement of goals. (pp.189-190). They add:

“... mindful leaders consciously connect to capacity through actions that support the physiological platform that enables intelligence, promote social

relationships, harness the power of emotion, expedite the construction of knowledge, build a culture of reflection, and cultivate productive dispositions” (p.211).

Similarly have Hougaard et al. (2016) created a mindful framework for leaders, where the high focus and awareness about self and others are vital parts. They add: “... strong focus and open awareness directed toward our own self. It enables us as individuals to be calm and clear-minded in how we think and behave. In this state, we mindfully monitor our thoughts and emotions and use our values and goals to guide our actions” (p.55). Both frameworks clearly give value to the relationship between the mind and body. Therefore, Ehrlich (2017), who have studied mindfulness and its application to leaders and organizations, has also proposed the Mindful Leadership Model (Figure 5), where have added the value of spirit and body, besides importance of mind and emotion connectedness for being present. He also adds that one is mindful, while being connected with all four aspects of oneself. Then it is possible to connect with others and build relationships (p.235). Spirit in this context means a nonmaterial source of meaning (for example goals and visions), not related to being spiritual. Ehrlich (2017) also adds that being fully and authentically present enables to enjoy life and serve others at the highest level of capability. The connections are more meaningful with others, and thus positively influencing and inspiring. Inspiration leads to change- personal and organizational- and potentially to transformation (p. 242). Even though the model is presented in organizational settings, one could see it also as a way to be a leader of your overall life (included personal and working life).

Figure. 5 The Mindful Leadership (adapted from Ehrlich, 2017, p.236)



As it can be seen, there are various ways to interpret the meaning of mindful leadership and there is no common definition. Therefore, all these definitions share similarities. Firstly, to be able to relate and support others, the central role is being mindful about self. Secondly, self-awareness about mind, body, emotions (also “spirit”) are essential for being a mindful leader. Therefore, it is important to note that these “frameworks” are more as suggestions about mindful leadership. Hopefully, in the future there are more valuable research about effectiveness/inefficiency of mindful leadership. Also, in educational settings.

To sum up, a mindful leader embodies leadership presence by cultivating focus, co-creation, clarity, creativity, compassion and brings out the best in himself/herself and others. Developing mindfulness in educational organizations, could provide a path to healthier and more productive school environment. Moreover, retaining educators and providing them with tools for self-care can translate into increased effectiveness in their role in the school (for example, see Flook et. al, 2014). To move towards mindful organizations, the next subchapter is suggesting a model, which could support the overall organizational renewal.

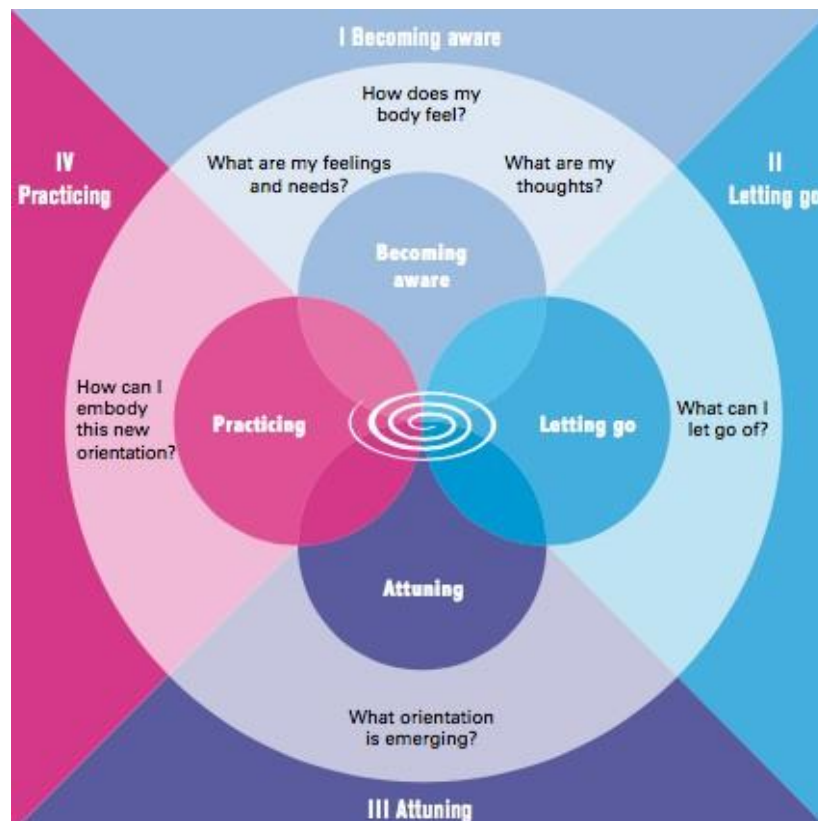
3.8 The Co-Creative Process Inquiry (CCPI) - Being present at work

As it was previously mentioned, Terhi Takanen (2013) co-created a practical developmental approach during her three years of studies in one department of the Finnish Ministry of Finance, which is based on practising being present in here and now. Present study would like to represent CCPI as a scientifically proven model for supporting people's overall well-being at work. Moreover, CCPI shares the same values and background as mindfulness. Both concepts have Buddhist roots and share the commonality to be in the present moment, non-judgmentally. To look and understand the inner world of self, while embodying mind, heart and body.

The Co-Creative Process Inquiry (CCPI) supports people to become aware of the way they are participating in the co-creation of the reality they live in. Furthermore, this approach helps people to become conscious and responsible co-creators and renew the way they are working and living together (Takanen & Petrow, 2013, p. 103). Co-creating in this context means that people take responsibility for their own renewal, and more generally, for reforming the society and organizations (Takanen & Petrow, 2013). As it can be seen Figure 6, which is representing the four main phases, questions have a key role in Co-Creative Process Inquiry. Through the process of becoming aware, letting go, attuning and practising, the participants equally are working with various questions, which are formulated from the individuals and the working community. The most important is to be present and conscious, without judgement. As Takanen & Petrow have stated: "In CCPI, being present in action is the purpose and core orientation" (Takanen & Petrow, 2013, p.118). Moreover, these four phases are providing an opportunity to become aware and renew the process through practical and experimental ways, while connecting mind and body (Takanen & Petrow, 2013). For better understanding let us take a closer look at the phases. Firstly, **becoming aware**, which is connected with the ability to monitor our inner world, our thoughts and emotions as they arise. The guiding questions support one's attention to the present moment and create inner connections, which are related to feelings, needs and thoughts. Secondly, **letting go**, which leads to understanding without judging, which feelings, needs and thoughts are not carrying person forward. In this phase, person opens up the space for new perspectives. Thirdly, **attuning**, where important keyword is listening, while being aware of self. And the

fourth phase is **practising**, which brings a present-oriented focus that shifts a participant taken-for-granted ways of connecting to this issue, and opens up new ways to act and react differently (Takanen & Petrow, 2013, pp. 118-119).

Figure 6. The Co-Creative Process Inquiry (Adapted from Takanen & Petrow, 2013)



In this inquiry being present in action is reconstructed as a verb - as practical, being present, being mindful in relational everyday actions (Takanen, 2013, p.45). It means that practising being present is seen as being aware moment to moment, which is part of the process. Being present in action is viewed as an intentional process, which is based on non- judgmental intention (p. 45), which is closely connected to mindfulness definition provided by Jon Kabat-Zinn. Therefore, the difference lies on relational interaction processes, which

gives space to explore and co-develop together multiple ways of being present in action. The CCPI is a process, which leads people to work together and take the responsibility for change, while being non-judgmentally in the present moment. And from the leadership perspective, this inquiry enables leaders to create structures that implements

collective responsibility and co-creation (Takanen & Petrow, 2013). Moreover, “*Co-Creative Process Inquiry does not start the change process by analysing problems or formulating objectives or even possible outcomes. It starts with listening to how the core theme of organizational renewal is living in the people of the organization.*” (p.106). Therefore, it is important to note that this approach has not been investigated in educational settings. One aim of this study is to give insight for further research in educational context, which could use CCPI through mindfulness techniques as a supportive inquiry for individual and organizational changes in educational settings.

4 Conclusion

Markku Wilenius and Sofi Kurki (2012) believe that soon, we are facing the 6th wave, which is called the conscious revolution. It is all about making our systems more intelligent. They add that: “a lot of this intelligence has to come from understanding how we can use our natural resources more efficiently” (p.13). It is based on human needs. To inspire and take care of humans, we need leaders, who are aware of their presence and the ways how they impact others. Leaders, who are nurturing passion for their work and are compassionate for others and develop the ability to empower the people in their organization. However, facing unknown times and changes, which affect people differently, we need to be opened to renew our ways of being. This paper had two main aims, which hoped to get better understanding about mindfulness, and how it could be beneficial for educators. The scientific studies illustrate the positive effects of mindfulness on mental level and overall well-being at the level of the brain as well as at the level of behavior. Furthermore, mindfulness skills develop and enhance inter and intra-personal skills such as emotional intelligence, leadership, decision-making, creativity, communication, collaboration and teamwork, which are all vital for a healthy organization. In this respect, mindfulness is far from simply being mental exercises. It helps to establish a new perception of what is real, what is necessary, and how to become established in a way of life which embraces both inner and outer realities.

One of our goal as teachers is to promote health, well-being, and sustainable living to our students (see more from Finnish National Core Curriculum for Basic Education, 2014). In order to give our best, we need to be aware of our own mental,

physical and emotional well-being. The fact that work-related stress among educators is one of the most significant hazards of working, shows that it is time to prepare practical techniques and support for educators. Mindfulness could offer engaging and relaxing techniques, which could support educators to cope better with challenging situations. To identify ways to respond to stress more constructively, better balance between inner needs and outer responsibilities, and develop practical strategies to engage life, work, and the challenges of being educators in a more balanced, fulfilling, effective, and sustainable way. Moreover, mindful leaders are aware of the importance, to empower, support and inspire their employees, for creating engaged workforce, meanwhile valuing the presence. CCPI approach could be one way for supporting co-creation and renewal towards helping to build mindful organizations. This paper is an invitation to introduce the mindfulness in educational settings. For supporting our educators mind-body-emotions connection, which also leads to more balanced, self-aware and happier students, who are able to cope with fast changing world. Through a variety of mindful awareness practices, including short regular formal mindfulness training exercises, students' innate awareness to internal and external experiences are strengthened in ways that are present-oriented, objective, and responsive rather than reactive (Meiklejohn et al., 2012).

5 Suggestions for the further research

As mentioned previously, there is not much research about mindfulness in educational settings. Especially in the North-European context. However, Mindful Schools Organization (more information: <http://www.mindfulschools.org/>) provides support for transforming schools inside out. For this purpose they offer various trainings, and also they share latest research about mindfulness in school settings. Therefore, it is rare to find research about mindful leadership in educational settings. What are the benefits & challenges? What are the outcomes of mindful leadership in educational context? The purpose of this study was to give insight for future research, while offering various models and theories, which are used in organizational settings, but need further investigation in education field. The CCPI practical inquiry could be one way to support educators' overall well-being in the workplace and, helping to move towards mindful organizations. Therefore, it needs further research and will be the basis for my Master's

Thesis. I am inviting future researchers to explore more about mindfulness in educational settings, to support our educators and students mental, emotional and physical well-being, which are essential to overall health. To allow people to realize their full potential, cope with the stresses of life, work productively, and make meaningful contributions to their communities and to the world. Barbara Larrivee's (2012) have said: "teachers need to take control of their teaching lives and become empowered decision makers who act on their world to effect change" (p.8). To put it in another way, people can take the responsibility by themselves.

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