



# Mindful parenting as a compassionate parenting approach and effective communication with adolescents

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**Abstract.** Mindful parenting is caring with full awareness by improving the quality of oneself as a parent so that awareness of every event with the child can implement parenting following the expected goals. With mindful parenting, parents can accept every child's condition without conditions, full of love and affection and can improve the quality of the parent-adolescent relationship. According to the characteristics of adolescents full of physical and psychological problems, the expected approach is unconditional acceptance and non-judgmental parenting. This study uses the literature review method with the results of previous studies that match the criteria. This research aims to discover how mindful parenting, as a parenting style full of affection, effectively improves the quality of the relationship between parents and adolescents. The literature review results show that mindful parenting is an effective parenting style for parents with adolescents. Patterns of communication full of empathy, openness and caring with compassion can improve the quality of parent-adolescent relationships and reduce symptoms of parenting stress to improve the quality of life.

**Keywords:** Mindful Parenting, Compassionate, Interpersonal Communication, Adolescent.

## 1 Introduction

Adolescence is when the dominant stage of development is in the aspect of social skills. Unique characteristics, full of emotional turmoil and a period of self-discovery, make adolescents experience storms and drugs [11]. Of the various challenges experienced by adolescents in shaping their social skills, it is largely determined by the smallest social pattern, namely the family. The biggest role in the social development of adolescents is determined by the parenting patterns their parents apply. Open and loving parenting patterns make adolescents confident and have more positive social skills [16].

Caring parenting by providing affection for adolescents can improve parent-adolescent relationships more effectively so that control of every adolescent behavior can be influenced by parents [47]. However, this also applies the other way around; if parents provide parenting full of pressure, anxiety and easy to judge mistakes, it will

have an impact on adolescents' ineffective social skills and lead to the emergence of adolescent emotional problems [12]. So, this makes family environment factors dominant in shaping adolescent behavior patterns. Conscious parenting of the role of parents is important to improve the quality of life of parents and adolescents [13].

The study of mindfulness in clinical intervention is developing in the environment of researchers, practitioners and clinical psychology scientists. The concept of consciousness developed by Kabat Zinn [18] explains that consciousness begins with deliberate attention to a current event without judgment of the thoughts, feelings, and sensations that arise. Mindfulness was born from Buddhist philosophical teachings dating back 2,500 years and is widely associated with meditation. In the context of ancient Buddhist philosophy, mindfulness is a present awareness to eliminate suffering and replace it with everything more positive [21]. Mindfulness focuses on intrapersonal aspects of self-capacity, while the awareness of a person with aspects related to others or interpersonal is mindful parenting [22].

Mindful parenting is a process that involves intentionally bringing awareness without judgment in every moment between parents and adolescents. The ongoing process includes greater awareness of each child's unique nature, feelings and needs, greater ability to be present and listen attentively to the child, recognize and accept things as they are at all times, whether happy or unpleasant, recognize self-reactive impulses and learn to respond more appropriately with clarity and kindness [19].

Before discussing the need for research on mindful parenting-based interventions, we will briefly explain the previous empirical studies on the basic concepts of mindful parenting theory associated with parental self-compassion and how mindful parenting can give parents a quality relationship with effective communication with their adolescents.

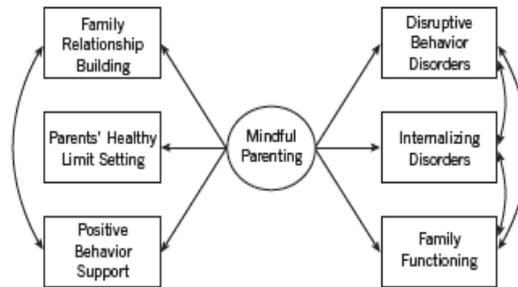
### ***1.1 Concept of Mindful Parenting***

Kabat Zinn & Kabat Zinn [13] define mindful parenting as parenting that parents do attentively, with elements that make up mindful parenting are sovereignty (i.e., recognition and encouragement from within the child), empathy (i.e., the attempt to understand the child's mind and think from the child's point of view), acceptance (i.e., full acceptance of oneself, feelings, thoughts, and views). Duncan [18] states that mindful parenting is a conscious parenting process in giving attention to children, which aims not to label children with negative judgments of children on every experience with children. McCaffrey [20] defines mindful parenting as the reduction of reactive attitudes from parents and an increase in emotional control, flexibility, responsibility and consistency in parenting by the value goals owned by parents.

In each definition of mindful parenting, this parenting approach can increase self-capacity through the personal strengths that exist in parents by eliminating the suffering felt by parents and replacing them with various more positive things with a focus on growing and developing in the face of various challenges in the process of accompanying adolescents [31].

Mindful parenting extends the concept of mindfulness to describe a parent's ability to be aware, self-regulate, and navigate interpersonal issues (self and others) in parenting [20][25]. Being proactive and monitoring children and adolescents is certainly a core aspect of mindful parenting, as is providing compassion and recognizing the needs of children in the short and long term. Over time, all cultures have unique strategies for effective parenting, and therefore, examples of mindful parenting tend to vary depending on socioeconomic and cultural contexts [41].

Families that apply mindful parenting tend to have a harmonious relationship with their adolescents; this impacts the high quality of parent-adolescent relationships [5]. Dishion and Colleagues [20] present a mindful parenting model that explains parenting skills and the intrafamilial processes involved. The elements discussed are in Figure 1. High parenting mindful parenting skills in parents will have a relationship with parent-adolescent mental health. However, on the contrary, if parents do not possess these skills, they will impact parents-adolescents' health and cause psychopathological symptoms in adolescents.



**Figure 1.** The elements of mindful parenting and the relationship to psychopathology and family functioning [41].

To date, interventions using a mindful parenting approach effectively improve family functioning parenting quality and reduce parent-adolescent psychopathological symptoms [6][38][39].

## 1.2 Interpersonal Communication and Mindful Parenting

Interpersonal communication is the ability to communicate with others with verbal and non-verbal language with empathy and openness and pay attention to the interlocutor so that the relationship quality becomes harmonious and the message

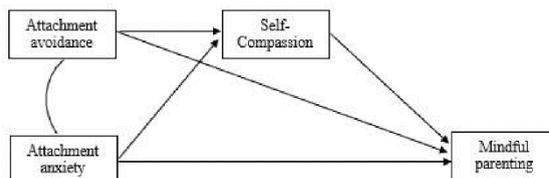
reaches positive [45]. There is feedback on how Interlocutors make interpersonal communication in families able to form healthy communication patterns and improve the quality of parent-adolescent relationships [6][38][39].

In adolescent development with cognitive stages at the formal operational level, being able to think analytically, critically and logically gives them the ability to search for detailed information [6]. Teenagers will not easily accept one-way communication because teenagers will tend to have a variety of reasons that can be done to argue. This communication will be inversely proportional if the communication used by parents is two-way and open by providing opportunities for adolescents to express opinions to be more effective and improve parent-adolescent relationships [6][38][39]. This relationship follows previous research by Hidayati et al. [22] that the support needed during adolescence is informational support, where adolescents need parents who provide direction to various things related to solving the problems they face. With this approach, it will reduce the symptoms of adolescent emotional disorders.

Interpersonal communication carried out by parents to adolescents can avoid the emergence of emotional problems experienced by adolescents during their development. This communication is because, with good emotional control, adolescents can have better social skills. These skills are reflected in the ability of adolescents to communicate affectionately and positively, and there is a reciprocal relationship with parents effectively [19]. Parents with high interpersonal communication are also proven to positively impact the development of adolescent self-concept and their ability to understand others [17].

Effective communication for adolescents can provide a sense of security and comfort and help improve parent-teen relationships. With interpersonal communication, parents can pay attention to adolescents with affection and empathy, and mentoring in adolescent growth and development will be accepted with unconditional conditions. Parents can realize every moment with children, both verbal and non-verbal attention, so parents are not easily judgmental of every behavior raised by their adolescents [21].

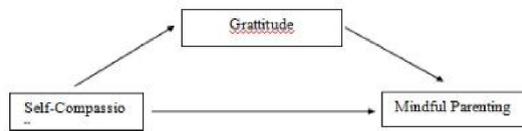
The model in Figure 2 shows how the relationship between elements affects the formation of parent-adolescent mindful parenting.



**Figure 2.** Model Mindful Parenting

Previous research by Duncan et al. [9] made a model related to mindful parenting with a framework where parents bring awareness to every moment of their relationship with children. This connection is attentively made by developing from

the nature of listening when interacting with children, fostering emotional awareness and self-regulation in parenting, and bringing affection and not easily judging children's mistakes by accepting all conditions unconditionally. The application of parenting with this framework is proven to improve the quality of parent-adolescent relationships more harmoniously and adolescent behavioral outputs that reduce symptoms of problematic behavior and improve the psychological well-being of parents-adolescents. The framework, explained in more detail in Figure 4, is that the role of parenting parents with full awareness of their adolescents will have a positive impact on parents-adolescents.



**Figure 3.** Model mindful Parenting

Parents with a mindful parenting approach in dealing with difficult situations with adolescents will listen more carefully without judgment and accept unconditionally, not focusing on memories or parental expectations of their adolescents; emotional reactivity is also low, so it will support parent-adolescent closeness and help adolescents in socializing appropriate behavior. This behavior will strengthen the parent-adolescent relationship and have a connection that contributes to a mutually responsive orientation [30]

## 2. DISCUSSION

Mindful parenting is a positive approach based on increasing self-capacity as a role of parenthood that provides caregiving consciously at every moment with children. Previous studies have proven that parents who use mindful parenting can improve parent-adolescent relationships more positively. Loving parenting, understanding every adolescent need, and not judging and accepting every adolescent condition will unconditionally be able to have an impact on self-concept and psychological well-being for parents [6][38][39]. With a mindful parenting approach, parents can be gentle and face all adolescent problems with empathy, which has also proven to be able to reduce symptoms of behavioral and emotional problems in adolescents [6][38][39].

The ability of parents to apply parenting consciously is inseparable from the intrapersonal aspect of themselves; the most influential is the ability of parents to have a gentle attitude and acceptance of themselves, thus impacting the ability of

parents to be compassionate also with the surrounding environment, especially their adolescents. With this self-compassion, parents can have the ability to eliminate suffering and difficulties faced with a more positive outlook. Its ability to escape from the difficulties and sufferings experienced makes parents reduce the anxiety experienced to have more adaptive mental health in facing various further difficulties [4]. Previous studies have shown that parental self-compassion can influence the application of conscious parenting both directly and indirectly [9][28][33].

Self-compassion possessed by parents can produce resources that can expand the ability to comfort and support themselves when facing difficulties, so they feel that the difficulties experienced are a common problem everyone faces. That way, when facing problems with adolescents, parents are not easy to judge; be gentle and accept every condition of adolescents to improve the quality of life for parents and adolescents [3].

Self-compassion in parents can affect interpersonal communication skills for adolescents [16]. The ability to accept and love oneself impacts his ability to be gentle and empathetic towards those around him. Interpersonal communication is the process of delivering messages that are not only verbal but also non-verbal so that this communication can pay attention, understand and improve the quality of the relationship between parents and adolescents [12]. Interpersonal communication skills possessed by parents can establish positive relationships with their adolescents through interactions that show that they are willing to know, have high school commitment, and understand and love each other [45].

Interpersonal communication owned by parents can impact the quality of relationships and social skills of adolescents [23]. Social skills for adolescents are basic abilities that must be possessed at this age stage because they impact the development of other potentials. With interpersonal communication, parents can provide nurturing with full awareness in giving attention, listening to children with affection, without giving judgment, and full of empathy. Interpersonal communication is proven to affect the application of parenting with mindful parenting and impacts the output of more positive relationship quality and parent-adolescent psychological well-being [24][43].

Although this study is a literature review analysis of previous studies, it has been able to show that parenting with a mindful parenting approach has been shown to have a positive impact on the quality of parent-adolescent relationships, the output of adolescents' behavior that is more adaptive and has better social skills. With mindful parenting, parents can be gentle, loving, empathize with every adolescent's needs and accept every child's condition without any conditions, so it plays a maximum role in positively influencing adolescents.

### **3. CONCLUSION**

This study explains how important the role of parenting is to the development of adolescence. The impact that will affect the lives of adolescents is so significant. Therefore, from the study results, the mindful parenting approach is very effective in providing loving parenting and improving the quality of more positive relationships. The application of mindful parenting to parents is determined by the personal capacity of parents, namely self-compassion and interpersonal communication owned by parents. As a suggestion for future research, it is very important to know how the mindful parenting model is determined by self-compassion and interpersonal communication in parents with adolescent children.

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