Building strong, peaceful, resilient hearts through the magic of being here.

London and Omaha Founders: Dana Dyksterhuis + Jen Armstrong
OUR TEAM

Dana Dyksterhuis
CEO and Founder

• UK Gov/Tech Nation Exceptional Talent Visa in Digital Technology (one of 200 recipients worldwide 2016)
• Startup Founder (HERE and venture-backed Fanzo)
• Microsoft/Techstars Graduate
• Seattle "Female Founder to Watch." (Women 2.0)
• Former Omaha WOWT reporter, PR at Qwest Center

Jen Armstrong
CMO (Chief Mindfulness Officer) and Founder

• M.S., Developmental and Educational Psychology
• 95-hour RCYT Children’s Yoga Teacher Training
• 200-hour RYT Ashtanga Vinyasa Flow Yoga Teacher Training
• 8-week Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction Course
• Family and Parenting Support Work
OUR BEGINNINGS

- 2016: Dana receives UK entrepreneur Visa, meets Jen
- Received mindful parenting tips: “Everyone needs a Jen!”
- Began building platform
- Yoga, Meditation and Brain-Building Om:Pops with Family Support, Hammersmith & Fulham
- Other: Westminster “Reducing Parental Conflict” sessions, Family & Classroom Yoga, Ronald McDonald House Omaha
UK LEARNINGS: THE EPICENTER OF TACKLING MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES

“A silent catastrophe ~ Psychotherapists warned of ‘a serious and worsening crisis’ following a survey of staff in child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS)”  
*The Guardian, 2018*

The Royal Family: “Changing the conversation and tackling the stigma” via programs: Workplace Wellbeing, Mentally Healthy Schools and Military Mental Health

British Government: Mindfulness and meditation a part of the UK school curriculum in 370 schools

Trauma-informed boroughs: Hammersmith & Fulham

*HERE*
PARTNERSHIP WITH FAMILY SUPPORT, HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM

MISSION: HERE TO HELP FAMILIES IN HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM THRIVE

“Loving, positive and nurturing relationships help children and young people develop the healthy brains they need for future life challenges.”
BUILDING A BABY’S BRAIN POWER

• ALBERTA FAMILY WELLNESS INITIATIVE + Brain Building

• NSPCC “Look, Say, Sing, Play”

• HERE Om:Pops
HERE OM: POPS WITH FAMILY SUPPORT

FAMILY YOGA, MEDITATION AND MINDFULNESS SESSIONS THAT INTEGRATE BRAIN BUILDING TECHNIQUES
MINDFULNESS IN SCHOOLS

Mindfulness in schools

And relax.... Mindfulness according to 6 and 7-year-olds - So cute!.... See More

I feel sunny or I feel rainbow.
THE IMPORTANCE OF BUILDING HEALTHY BRAINS IN CHILDREN

Ensuring the healthy development of children and sense of wellbeing.

- Brain Architecture
- Serve and Return
- Toxic Stress
- Air Traffic Control System
- Resilience
- Overloaded
WHERE IT ALL BEGINS

- Babies are born with 100-billion neurons (twice as many as adults), forming new connections at a rate of 700-1000 per second.

  Repetition makes the connections stronger, but if an action ceases to occur in the babies daily life, the associated brain connections go through the process of ‘pruning’.

- Birth - 3 years is the most significant stage of brain development in the whole life!

  This stage is the most sensitive and where their experiences build the brain connections to develop important life long skills such as communication, problem solving and self-control.
SERVE AND RETURN
This kind of interaction helps to develop communication, call and response, listening, and helps strengthen the parent/child bond.

The child ‘SERVES’ to you with facial expression, gestures, babbling and touch... ‘RETURNS’ back to them aid in their learning.
UNRESPONSIVE CAREGIVING EXAMPLE

STILL FACE EXPERIMENT

“Being unresponsive for too long can lead to great emotional distress in babies.”
TYPES OF STRESS

POSITIVE STRESS
Not all stress is bad.
- ALBERTA FAMILY WELLNESS INITIATIVE

TOLERABLE STRESS
We can prevent
traumatic events from
causing toxic stress.
- ALBERTA FAMILY WELLNESS INITIATIVE

TOXIC STRESS
Stress turns toxic when it
is severe and ongoing
- ALBERTA FAMILY WELLNESS INITIATIVE

~ Terms via Alberta Family Wellness Initiative
TOXIC STRESS

Children need positive interactions in order to allow for healthy brain development.
TOXIC STRESS BUILDS UP

“"A child starts a new school and the parent is too distracted (overloaded) to see the child is in distress, so misses the opportunity to communicate feelings and thoughts to help reassure and respond to the child’s feelings in that moment.

““A child’s parents separate and the child observes their mother verbally and physically fighting with their father. The child observes their mother’s emotion around the situation and sees how she channels this in an aggressive manner.
How can we model calm, communicative behaviour toward each other?
SOCIAL LEARNING THEORY

Bandura’s Bobo Doll Experiment

Observation, Imitation, Reinforcement

“Any capacity in which you work with or care for a child, you have the ability to be a positive role model, a social referent for them to learn from and imitate."
NO (PERSON) IS AN ISLAND

Poet John Donne, 1624

“It is important to think about the inter-relations of the whole network of individuals and wider systems that influence the child and their development.

WE ARE HERE FOR YOU, FOR THEM"
RESILIENCE SCALE

What helps tip towards the positive side? To the negative?

~ Image via Family Support
We know that we can give kids support early to help them develop coping skills. These skills push the balance point over to one side and make the scale harder to tip negative and able to bear more negative weight and still tip positive.

This is what resilience is.
HOW MINDFULNESS, MEDITATION AND YOGA HELPS THE DEVELOPMENT OF HEALTHY, RESILIENT CHILDREN
WHAT IS MINDFULNESS

Mind Full, or Mindful?
THE HERE AND NOW

- It’s living in the present, by bringing your awareness to your experience within a precise moment - the here and now.

- It’s a way of being which we have to train our brains to be open to.

- It’s being realistic with the feelings, emotions and stressors which are part and parcel of everyday life.

- It’s being thankful, observational, accepting of ourselves and for our state of being each day.
LIKE AN INSTRUMENT...

“Just like learning an instrument, we can train our brain to learn to slow down, use our breath to focus our attention and calm, and let out some steam physically through the moving meditation practice of yoga.”
HOW MINDFULNESS HELPS

“Significant decreases in text anxiety and ADHD behaviours.”

Napoli, Krech & Holley (2005)

“Increases in calm, relaxation and self-acceptance.”

Wall, 2005

“Reduction in self-reported behavioural problems and depression.”

Joyce et al., 2010

“Better classroom attendance, and improved classroom behavior.”

Klatt, 2013
WHERE THE MAGIC HAPPENS

MINDFULNESS TECHNIQUES TO HELP WITH SHARED POSITIVE AFFECT AND BUILDING HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

“ It all begins with the breath....
MINDFULNESS FOR BABIES

Planting The Seed
FOUNDATION BREATHING TECHNIQUES

For Emotional Resilience and Self-Regulation

- Three Deep Breaths
- Breathing Ball
- Back-to-Back Breathing
- Five-Finger Breath
- Balloon Breathing
- Calm As A Cloud
- Box Breath
- Lion’s Breath
FOUNDATION BREATHING TECHNIQUES

For Emotional Resilience

LION’S BREATH
MANTRAS

For Positive Self-Concept and Self-Assurance

"I AM ENOUGH."
HERE FOR YOU, FOR THEM

"I AM CALM AS A CLOUD."
HERE FOR YOU, FOR THEM

"I AM BRAVE."
HERE FOR YOU, FOR THEM
FOUNDATION POSES
For Strength and Physical Wellbeing
POSITIVE MODELING

Time out for everyone! Self-nurture and be mindful about your needs.
MINDFUL FAMILY TOOLBOXES
I enjoy all the times I feel calm as a cloud.

Being calm as a cloud makes me feel happy and relaxed.

I will do my best to be calm as a cloud this week.
Pay attention to all the times throughout the week that your child shows calm behaviour, or make someone else feel relaxed or calm.

Create a ‘Calming Cloudy Sky’ chart: Draw a cloud to add to the sky when acknowledging a calm moment. There is no point scoring here, it is a family team effort. You can fill the sky and maybe offer a family reward once completed.
CALMING MINDFUL TOOLBOX

Wednesday Creativity

“REST YOUR MIND TIME JAR”

Find an old jar like an old jam jar. Fill the jar close to the top with water then add some glitter/sequins/sand/food colouring. Close the lid tight! Add gems/sequins to the jar/lid (optional) then you’re ready to go!
CALMING MINDFUL TOOLBOX

Thursday Time-In + Developing Relationships

“Take some time to ask your child what makes them feel calm as a cloud, and you do the same for yourself. You want to try and focus on ‘time in’ here, so have them think about things they like to do together such as snuggling up with mum with hot chocolate and a favourite book, or giving each other little hand massages, baking some healthy cookies, extra snuggles before bed, etc.

Whatever they (and you!) come up with, try and do one of those things during the following days, it can be their ‘Special Calm Time’ with you. Make your time together about quality not quantity.”

HERE
CALMING MINDFUL TOOLBOX

Friday Breathing Exercise For Resilience

CALM AS A CLOUD BREATH: Laying on your back, with your legs bent and soles of your feet together. Imagine you are looking up at a beautiful blue sky, now with one hand on your tummy and the other on your chest, breathe in nice and slowly... As you breathe out of your mouth imagine you blow the fluffiest white cloud away from you and into the sky. Watch it float up slowly and calmly into the sky- your breath in the calming wind carrying the cloud into the sky.
CALMING MINDFUL TOOLBOX

Saturday Yoga Poses For Strength + Flexibility
CALMING MINDFUL TOOLBOX

Sunday Night Affirmation + Self-Concept

Calming Mantra

“I AM A CALM CLOUD.
I BRING CALM AND HAPPINESS TO THOSE AROUND ME.
I AM LOVED.”
MUSIC

- Namaste Song to Welcome or Start the Day
  Kira Willey
  (Click on image for video)

- Sun Salutation Song to Get Moving
  Kira Willey
  (Click on image for video)

- Calming Nature Background Music
  Mindful Kids
  (Click on image for video)

- Relaxation Music for Concentration
  OCB Relax Music
  (Click on image for video)

- Just Be Song for Relaxation
  Kira Willey
  (Click on image for video)

- Calming Music for Focus
  OCB Relax Music
  (Click on image for video)
PROPS FOR THE CLASSROOM AND HOME
CREATIVE ACTIVITIES
POSITIVE HAND

Sit together and draw an outline of the child’s (and maybe your) hand, and on each finger you can think about one nice thing about the child or yourself. Done as a family activity, this can be a nice relationship-building experience, as each family member can write something nice about the other.
REST YOUR MIND TIME JAR

Find an old jar like an old jam jar. Fill the jar close to the top with water then add some glitter/sequins/sand/food colouring. Close the lid tight! Add gems/sequins to the jar/lid (optional) then you’re ready to go!

Explain to your little one that when you shake the jar, the glitter and sand/sequins moving about inside represents your mind feeling busy. If they are a little older you may be able to explain that it reflects actual feelings such as stress, worry, anxiety or just too many thoughts racing round your mind. Whatever their age, you can then explain that when the glitter and sand/sequins settles, this is your mind calming. You can instruct your child to breathe deeply and slowly while they watch the contents of the jar to settle.
CALM CLOUD

To allow children and parents to think about and share the things that make them feel calm, they can be written down on the cloud if you wish! Like the example shown here, you can add some colourful rain and even a happy face! This can be placed somewhere to serve as a reminder that even on rainy or cloudy days there is room to find calmness.
POSITIVE BOOKENDING: BEGIN AND END EACH DAY WITH GRATITUDE

APPRECIATION ARMADILLO

Let's give ourselves a big hug and wrap our arms around ourselves, like the shell of an armadillo. Close your eyes. Think about what you are grateful for. Appreciation Armadillo is always grateful for the safe home around his body that his hard shell protects ~ Much like how your arms are forming a protective shell around you now! Take a deep breath in and think about what makes you grateful and happy, just like Appreciation Armadillo.
STORIES FOR CHILDREN FROM THERAPY ANIMALS
“My mum feels sad a lot. So I know about this. I sit next to her and let her feel her feelings. It’s okay to feel sad. It’s the opposite to happy. It’s a natural balance and having one means you can have the other too. It’s important to understand why you feel sad. Sometimes it’s because of things that happen, other people, unkind words, unkind actions towards us. Many things can cause sadness. We cannot change some things. So we can accept them, feel them and say it’s okay I am feeling this... and after a little while get up and do something else.

My mum takes me for a walk, or gives me a hug. Letting go of heavy feelings/energy (like sadness) is important. Going out into the sunshine can make things feel lighter. Sitting on the ground with your back against a tree. Smelling some flowers. Nature always helps my mum. She always says thank you to nature after she feels better again. Appreciate and be grateful for the good things. That’s a wonderful way to change any thinking of heavy sad things to happier lighter ones.

Think of all the good things that are in your life, warm bed, roof over your head, food when you are hungry, fresh water, clean clothes, books, toys appreciating and being grateful for somethings we can take for granted is very important. Gratitude can bring peace and happiness. The best attitude is gratitude! ... We are the ones who can make a change with how we feel by doing something else and then after a little while, you have forgotten the sadness and are happy again.”
“CONQUERING FEELINGS OF BEING LEFT OUT” BY KRATU

“If you can learn one thing... that’s not to worry about what others think as you can’t change them. Don’t take onboard negativity from others. You can only look to yourself, do the best you can and be happy with yourself as you do your best.

My mum struggles with this. She is Autistic. So some things like training dogs she is very good at. Some things like communicating with certain people she is not good at. So she focuses on the things that she is good at. The right people do come along not always when we want them, but doing different things and hobbies gives us a chance to find the friends that are more similar to how we are. Find the things that you enjoy and do them.

We are responsible for our own happiness. So do the happy things you love the most and enjoy doing them!

WE CANNOT CHANGE OTHERS. WHEN THEY DECIDE TO DO OTHER THINGS AND WE ARE NOT INCLUDED, IT’S TIME TO MAKE SOME CHOICES.

If we spend time worrying about what they are doing and not feeling good enough to be invited or included, we will let some important energy we need for us to drain away.

It’s okay to feel and acknowledge those painful feelings, but it’s so important not to stay in them. Feel them and let them go.

In order for us to feel good about ourselves we need to keep our energy and not give it away to others by worrying and overthinking. Quite simply we will have nothing left and then sadness, unhappiness, loneliness all these sorts of heavy energy feelings can come creeping in.”
“One thing that seems to add to kid's stress and anxiety is that they often feel they have no control over what is causing their stress. Giving kids a strategy to use when they feel stressed or anxious gives them the power to try to help themselves. One strategy that we use in the Middle School at Lausanne is to practice a mindful moment at the beginning of each of the seven classes every day. The kids go through a short breathing exercise that helps to calm them and center their attention on the present moment and the current class they are in.

This really helps to bring peace during a busy day. The kids are reminded that they can also do this on their own when they feel stressed outside of the school day. Many of our students say that they practice a mindful moment at home before starting homework and also in sports and other extracurricular activities to help them focus on what they are doing and to calm nerves and anxiety.”
CONTACT US:

Dana Dyksterhuis
da@hereforyouforthem.com
Skype: danadeeseattle

www.hereforyouforthem.com