



# Saved Her Teaching Career Through Mindfulness

Kaitlyn | First Grade Teacher | Indiana, PA



## The Challenge

After 16 years of teaching, Kaitlyn was facing burnout from increasingly dysregulated students showing up with hyperactivity, emotional outbursts, and sometimes violence. The pressure to produce test scores while managing challenging behaviors left her considering quitting teaching entirely. She felt overwhelmed juggling her attempts to start a kids' yoga business while teaching full-time.



## Action

- Started a daily personal yoga and mindfulness practice to save her sanity.
- Enrolled in a Master's Degree program focused on yoga, mindfulness, and SEL in schools.
- Developed deep understanding of the nervous system and chronic stress responses.
- Regulated her own nervous system first, becoming a calmer, less anxious teacher.
- Integrated mindfulness and yoga into daily classroom routines—breathing together, discussing feelings, practicing mindful movement and yoga poses.
- Created a toolkit of self-management strategies with students.

## In Kaitlyn's Words

*"Yoga & mindfulness saved my teaching career and inspired me to become excited about my position as a teacher once again. I will never again keep these practices separate from the classroom environment."*



## The Results

- Students naturally began discussing feelings, using emotional regulation tools, and supporting struggling classmates.
- Classroom community deepened through shared mindfulness experiences.
- Students started sharing positive affirmations, focusing their bodies, and believing in themselves.
- Created co-regulation between teacher and students, transforming the entire classroom dynamic.
- Rekindled Kaitlyn's excitement and passion for teaching after nearly quitting.



## Why It Worked

- Started with teacher self-regulation before attempting to regulate students.
- Integrated practices into daily routines rather than treating them as add-ons.
- Addressed the root cause (nervous system regulation) rather than just managing symptoms.
- Created tools students could use independently and with each other.



## A Takeaway for You

The most powerful change starts with YOU. Regulate your own nervous system first—when teachers are calm and centered, students naturally follow. You can't pour from an empty cup, so fill yours with mindfulness practices before expecting to transform your classroom.

