Pure Edge

Start with the Heart

Discover 3-5

Contents

Introduction

About Pure Edge, Inc.

PURE EDGE, INC. (PEI) is a private operating foundation that provides direct service to organizations through professional development and strategy thought partnership. PEI also provides grants to national organizations that advance the work of whole child development and Social and Emotional Learning (SEL).

Our Approach

The full Pure Power curriculum reflects the philosophical orientation and instructional recommendations advocated by the Joint Committee on National Health Education Standards and best practices for health and wellness, including exercises, physical therapy, mindfulness, and nutrition.

Effective health and wellness education promotes critical thinking in students and encourages them to make connections between concepts around healthy living and personal experience. Young people need to be reflective decision-makers. They must learn to identify and analyze how culture, media, and technology shape their everyday physical, mental, and emotional health.

Research completed by the National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reveals that there is a direct relationship between academic achievement and fitness. Movement and exercise enhance the learning state for memory retention and retrieval. Therefore, physical activity is a catalyst for learning in all content areas and should be an essential element of students' daily routines.

The knowledge that students gain through this program enhances their own health and wellness, as well as the health and wellness of their peers and community. The program promotes a supportive environment where individuals' similarities and differences are acknowledged and accepted.

About Start with the Heart: Discover

START WITH THE HEART: DISCOVER weaves Brain Breaks into foundational lessons from the original Pure Power curriculum for grades three through five. The content portion of each lesson invites learners to understand how they can activate their brain's superpowers: the power to be kind and calm, the power to tame your temper, the power to laser focus, and the power to grow and stretch. Content areas covered include neuroplasticity, brain anatomy, self-regulation, and developing a growth mindset to support resiliency. Alongside the topical content of each lesson, the curriculum offers simple, life-enhancing, research-based exercises that build learners' ability to manage stress and support a positive outlook. These breathing, mindful movement and rest or relaxation exercises are skills that learners can practice for the rest of their lives. The skills support learners' SEL competencies in the areas of self-awareness and self-management.

We designed the curriculum with ease of delivery as a top priority. Each lesson can be delivered in about 30 minutes. Instruction is scripted. Video supports for almost all of the Brain Breaks are available on PureEdgeInc.org. Many lessons include an optional activity, which extends the lesson time and allows learners to go a little deeper in their exploration of the topic at hand or the exercises of the day.

We recommend delivering on a consistent schedule, at the same day and time.

- Daily
- Two or three times a week*
- Weekly*

*If teaching weekly, incorporating Brain Breaks on non-lesson days will support retention and maximize impact.

The curriculum meets SEL, health, science, and PE standards.

- Builds resilience
- Teaches stress management skills that are simple to implement
- Explores the parts of the brain and helps learners understand what happens in their own brains when they are experiencing powerful emotions

Our hope is that **START WITH THE HEART: DISCOVER** will make it easy for you to share simple practices and explore academic content with learners in support of their physical, mental, emotional, and academic well-being.

Pure Edge Team

Lesson One

Discover Your Superpowers

GUIDING QUESTION

What does it mean to be a superhero?

OBJECTIVE

Learners will understand that practicing Brain Breaks helps them develop the power to be kind and calm.

TEACHER TIPS

- The experiential exercises (Brain Breaks) in this course are as important as the content.
- After each Brain Break in lesson one, take feedback from learners: *Would anyone like to share something they noticed?*
- You may get a variety of responses (e.g., physical observations, feelings, thoughts).
- Reinforce the idea that anything learners notice is okay; we are simply noticing what we observe in ourselves, with a sense of kindness toward ourselves.

VOCABULARY

activate
mindfulness

MATERIALS

Visual supports for the classroom

BRAIN BREAKS

Seated Mountain
Breathing Ball
Balloon Breathing
Chair Sunrise Twist
Guided Rest

Connect

In this class, we are going to learn about our superpowers. Many of planet Earth's creatures have unique superpowers. Sea cucumbers can liquefy their bodies to squeeze through small spaces, and birds called swifts can fly for almost two hundred days without stopping! Just like any other species in the animal kingdom, we too have distinctive superpowers.

The human brain—which has the ability to learn, think, create, analyze, and solve problems—is the powerhouse that enables us to activate our superpowers.

When you activate your superpowers, it is important that you know how to use your special strengths and talents to become your best self and make a positive difference in the lives of others. This is what makes you a superhero.

During our time together, we are going to activate our superpowers through a skill called mindfulness. To help us become mindful, each time we meet we will practice special ways to move, breathe, and rest. We call these exercises Brain Breaks. For most of our Brain Breaks, we will practice breathing in and out the nose.

Let's give our first breathing exercise a try.

Brain Breaks 1 and 2

- **SEATED MOUNTAIN**
- **BREATHING BALL**

Teach

How did that feel? (Take responses.) *Remember, the idea is to simply keep your attention on your breathing. Your mind will wander and you will start thinking about something else. When you notice your mind has wandered, gently bring your attention back to your breath. You will repeat this process again and again.*

Mindfulness means noticing what is happening as it is happening. Mindfulness is about paying attention on purpose, with a sense of kindness and curiosity. When we practice our breathing exercises, there is no right or wrong way to feel and no right or wrong way to notice. As we practice these exercises with mindfulness, we activate our first superpower: the power to be kind and calm.

Brain Break 3

- **BALLOON BREATHING**

Teach

When we keep practicing mindfulness over time, we activate our brains' superpowers. One of the ways this happens is that we begin to notice our thoughts, our feelings,

and even our bodies in a different way. As we practice paying attention with a sense of kindness and curiosity, we become better at noticing how we are thinking and feeling, and we are better able to make decisions that will have a positive effect on us.

Now let's try a movement Brain Break. For this one, we are going to focus on moving in time with our breathing. After our movement Brain Break, we will do a relaxation exercise.

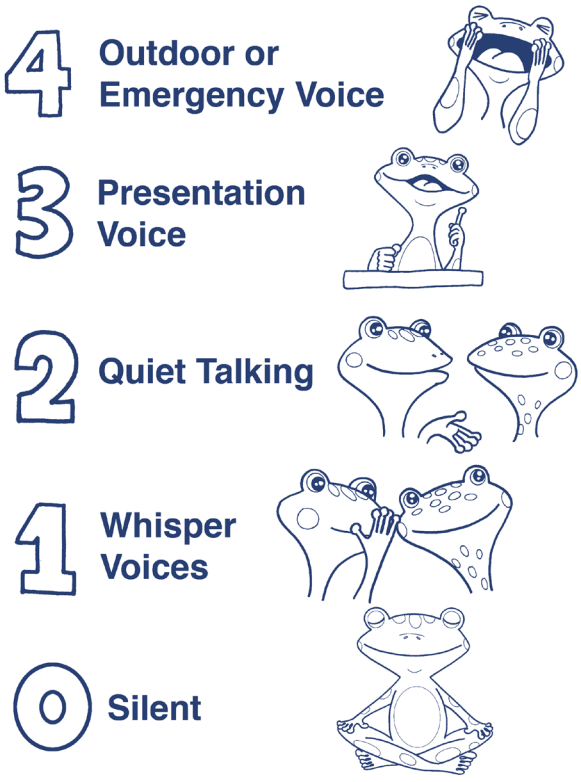
Brain Breaks 4 and 5

- **CHAIR SUNRISE TWIST**
- **GUIDED REST**

Link

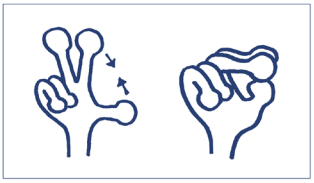
Today we embarked on our first exploration of our superpowers. We learned that mindfulness is noticing what is happening as it is happening, with a sense of kindness and curiosity. Through practicing breathing, movement, and rest exercises, we activated our first superpower: the power to be kind and calm.

VISUAL SUPPORTS FOR THE CLASSROOM | VOLUME SCALE



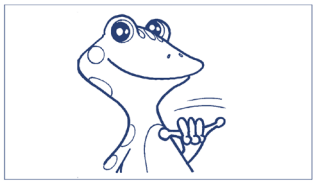
VISUAL SUPPORTS FOR THE CLASSROOM | SILENT SYMBOLS


Yes!

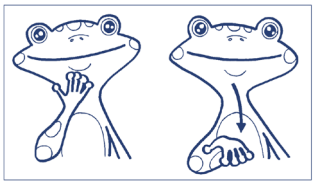

No.

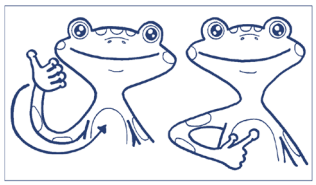

Celebration! / I'm excited!


Sending kind support.


I agree! / Me too!


I'm sorry.


Thank you!


You're welcome!

Your Superpowers!

Sending Kindness to Yourself

Draw a picture of yourself and how you feel after sending yourself three kind thoughts.

Name three things you like about yourself, and send yourself Silent Shout Outs.

My three kind thoughts:

1.

2.

3.

Lesson Two

Building Awareness of Breath

GUIDING QUESTION

How does it feel to focus on your breath?

OBJECTIVE

Students will be able to apply the Countdown Calm Down breathing technique when experiencing challenges or strong emotions.

TEACHER TIPS

- Remind learners to breathe in and out the nose.
- Make space for a variety of experiences—there is no right or wrong way to feel when doing the exercises. Mindfulness is simply a kind awareness.
- When teaching the exercises to young learners, allow for some playfulness and fun. Mindfulness does not have to be serious to be effective!

VOCABULARY

de-stress
mindfulness muscle

MATERIALS

Mind Jar Recipe

BRAIN BREAKS

Breathing Ball
Mind Jar
Chair Sunrise Twist
Countdown Calm Down

Brain Break 1

BREATHING BALL

Connect

Last time we worked together, we learned that mindfulness means noticing what is happening as it is happening, with a sense of kindness and curiosity. We began practicing our breathe, move, and rest Brain Breaks to help us develop our ability to be mindful. Today we will continue to activate our power to be kind and calm through mindful breathing.

Active Engagement

Take out your mind jar and shake it.

What happens to the mind jar when you shake it up? The glitter swirling inside the mind jar is like your mind's whirling thoughts when it is stressed out. To de-stress and see things more clearly, you need to allow the glitter to settle to the bottom. You can help slow down or stop the storm of thoughts and feelings in your mind by practicing mindful breathing.

As we breathe with the mind jar, breathe in and out the nose. If you like, you can place your hands on your belly while you do your breathing.

Brain Break 2

MIND JAR

*

ENGAGEMENT QUESTION

How do you feel after breathing and watching the mind jar?

Teach

Practicing breathing exercises is about strengthening your mindfulness muscles. The goal is to maintain your attention exclusively on the breath. When thoughts, emotions, or external sounds and noises arise, which they will, allow them to float by and return your focus to the breath.

It is natural for your attention to wander. Over time, with consistent practice, you will notice that your attention strays less often. Breathing—especially belly breathing—sends messages to the brain to calm the body and strengthen mindfulness muscles.

Brain Break 3

CHAIR SUNRISE TWIST

Teach

Put a thumb up if you have ever been in a bad mood and were not sure why. We can use mindful breathing practices to figure out what is really upsetting us. Sometimes, our rotten mood is triggered by a negative thought (provide example or use one of the examples below).

- *If you perform poorly in a soccer game, you might think, "I am terrible at soccer.*

I should just give up." You might start to feel frustrated.

- *If you can't find your friends to sit with at lunch, you might think, "They are all doing something without me," and start to feel lonely.*

Thoughts often flash into and out of our mind like lightning bolts. Before we even realize we had the thought, the emotion that follows sticks with us and affects our mood.

Even if we don't know why we are feeling upset, breathing can help us calm down and start to feel better.

Today our last brain break is a breathing technique that can help you notice how you are feeling. You can also use it when you feel overwhelmed. It's called Countdown Calm Down.

Let's give it a try.

Brain Break 4

COUNTDOWN CALM DOWN

*

ENGAGEMENT QUESTIONS

What did you notice about your ability to stay focused on the breath?

Did your mind have a tendency to jump from one thought to another?

How could calming our minds and bodies help us act from a place of kindness?

Link

Today we learned how to use the breathing technique Countdown Calm Down when we feel strong emotions that are difficult to manage. Counting your breaths will help keep your mind focused on your breath instead of wandering to other distracting thoughts. The wonderful thing about using your breath to calm down is that you can practice anywhere and at any time (e.g., during recess, during a challenging test, to help you fall asleep at night).

Home Practice

Start to make mindfulness a habit, just like brushing your teeth or taking a shower. Practice one or two rounds of Countdown Calm Down every day this week. Notice whether you start to feel a little calmer and more focused.

Mind Jar Recipe

Our brain works much like the **mind jar**. The sparkles are like our feelings, thoughts and memories, and all the other information stored in our brains. When we are angry, sad, or afraid, our brain can feel all stirred up. Mindful breathing can help our brain settle down into a more calm and clear state.

Notice how you react the next time someone skips the line or grabs your pencil. Is your heart beating slowly, or fast? What about your breathing?

When we are stressed it can be hard to think clearly and choose the best response. Mindful breathing can help calm our bodies and brains so we can pause and choose our responses wisely.

Lesson Three

How Habits Grow Your Brain

GUIDING QUESTION

Why are your thoughts and feelings important?

OBJECTIVE

Students will be able to define neuroplasticity by interpreting the statement "Neurons that fire together wire together."

TEACHER TIPS

- Explain that practicing the same exercises again and again is important because our brains and bodies respond well to repetition.
- Make the connection between neuroplasticity and learning the exercises by asking students to compare the experience of practicing an exercise they have done before with one that is brand-new to them. What do they notice?

VOCABULARY

neuron
neuroplasticity
neurotransmitter

MATERIALS

Handout
Image of a Neuron

BRAIN BREAKS

Breathing Ball
Countdown Calm Down
Chair Sunrise Twist
Tree
Attitude of Gratitude

Brain Break 1

BREATHING BALL

Connect

Last time we worked together, we continued to strengthen our mindfulness muscles and activate our power to be kind and calm with mindful breathing exercises. Today, we are going to learn how your habits and experiences, which include your thoughts, feelings, and behavior, gradually mold your brain, just like a sculptor molds clay.

Brain Break 2

COUNTDOWN CALMDOWN

Teach

I have a mystery for you to solve.

(Display an image of a neuron.)

Give a thumbs-up if you think you can identify the image captured in the photo.

(Give students at least three seconds of "wait" or "think" time. Then invite two students to share their predictions.)[1]

This is an image of a unique type of cell.

There are many different types of cells in the human body, and each type performs a different job. The cell in this image is a brain cell, or neuron. Every brain is made up of neurons, which communicate by sending messages to one another. You are able to learn and remember things because your neurons are constantly making and strengthening connections with one another. Learning occurs as more and stronger connections are made between neurons.

In your brain, messages are passed on, or transmitted, from neuron to neuron through special chemicals called neurotransmitters. A neuron is similar to an on-off light switch. It is either "off" during its resting state or "on" when it is sending, or transmitting, a message to neighboring neurons.

Brain Break 3

CHAIR SUNRISE TWIST

Teach

There is a saying inspired by the work of neuroscientist Dr. Donald Hebb, "Neurons that fire together, wire together." Each of your experiences, including your thoughts, feelings, and sensations, becomes rooted in the network of brain cells that produce that experience. The connection between these neurons is strengthened every time you repeat a particular thought or action. This is a good thing when you learn something useful, like remembering the route from your classroom to the bathroom or your morning routine to get ready for school. The strengthening of neural connections is not so great when you repeat bad habits, such as being unkind to your classmates, being unkind to yourself through negative self-talk,

or becoming super stressed out every time you have to take a test.

Brain Break 4

TREE

Teach

There is a special brain science word that describes your brain's lifelong ability to change and grow: neuroplasticity. "Neuro" refers to the brain. "Plasticity" has the word "plastic" in it. Something that is plastic can be molded, or change shape.

Neuroplasticity means that your brain slowly adapts and changes shape in response to your habits and experiences, which include what you learn, how you think, and how you act. The more you practice something through repetition, like shooting a basketball, riding a bicycle, or memorizing facts for your social studies exam, the better you become at that task, because the neurons in your brain responsible for that skill form stronger connections to one another. You are training your brain to improve at a particular skill.

Ask students what they think will happen to the brain cells responsible for helping them focus when they practice mindful breathing.

IMAGE OF NEURON

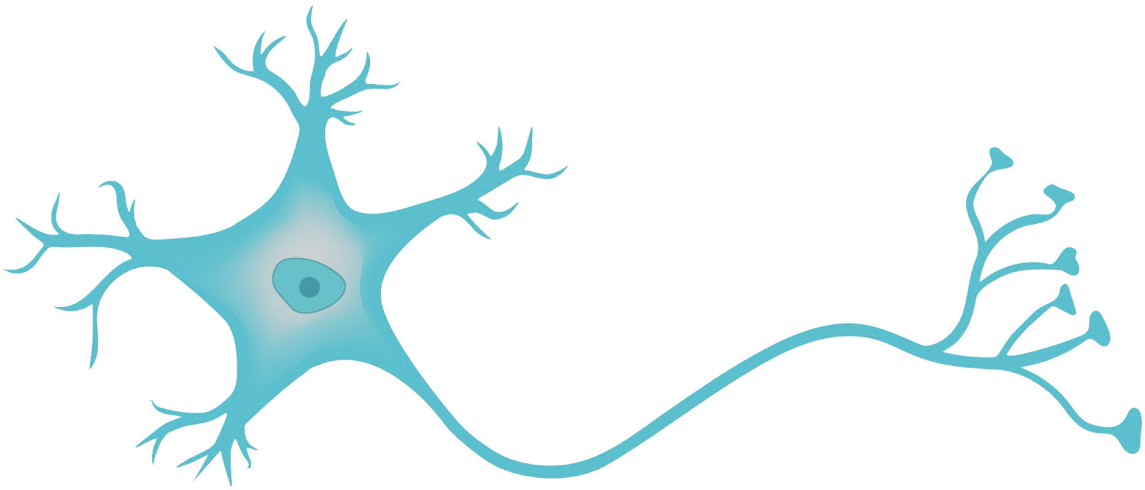


Illustration of a neuron. Credit: David Baillot/ UC San Diego

Explain that the focused attention they build through mindfulness helps improve their skills in other activities, whether it's learning a sport, a dance routine, or a musical instrument.

Neuroplasticity helps us establish patterns of thought, behavior, and feeling that make it easier for us to respond a certain way in different situations. The next Brain Break will help us practice feeling the positive emotion of gratitude.

Brain Break 5

ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE

Link

Every moment is an opportunity to shape and grow your brain. Mindfulness practice helps you take care of your brain and grow to your full potential by training your attention to focus on what you choose.

Home Practice

Practice Attitude of Gratitude once a day—maybe in the morning when you first wake up or at night before you go to bed. See whether you notice any change in your outlook as you practice focusing on the positive.

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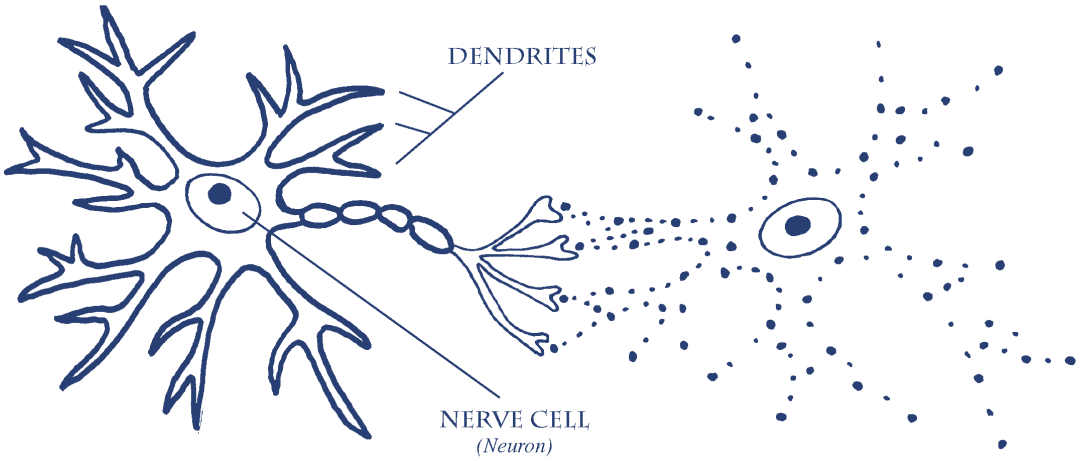
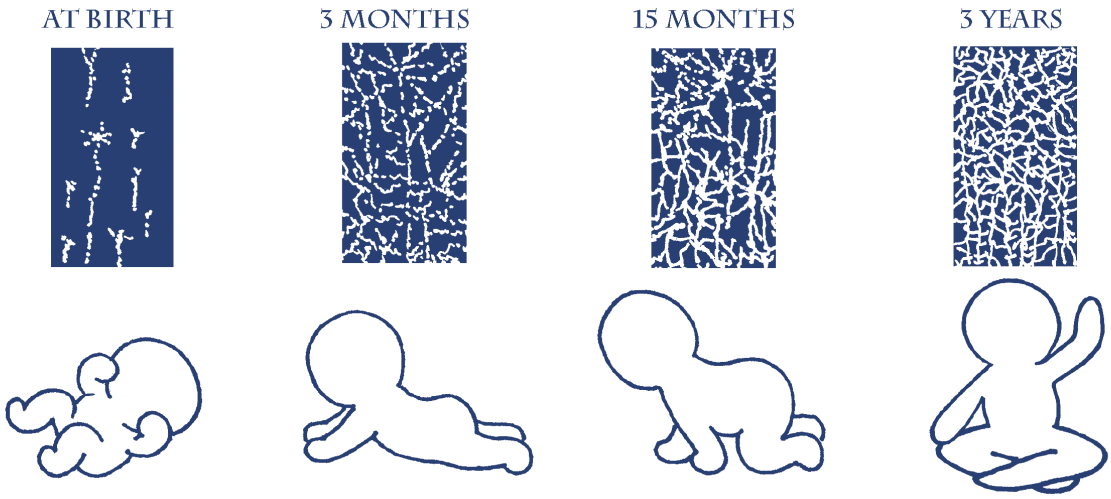
1 Robert J. Stahl, "Using 'Think-Time' and 'Wait-Time' Skillfully in the Classroom," *ERIC Digests*. http://www.ericdigests.org/1995-1/think.htm.

TRAINING YOUR BRAIN GROWS YOUR BRAIN!

CONNECT THE DOTS TO GROW THE DENDRITES





Nerve cells, or neurons, in your brain carry messages from your brain to your body. The more you practice or repeat something, whether it is dance, art, math, or mindfulness, the more the branch-like dendrites increase in size and number.

YOU HAVE THE POWER TO GROW YOUR BRAIN AND TAME YOUR TEMPER THROUGH PRACTICE!

WHAT HABITS DO YOU WANT TO GROW?

Lesson Four

Getting to Know Your Brain: Four Parts of the Brain

GUIDING QUESTION

How do we use each part of the brain in daily activities?

OBJECTIVE

Students will be able to locate and describe the primary functions of the brain stem, limbic system, cerebrum, and cerebellum.

TEACHER TIPS

- Help learners make the connection between the parts of the brain and the exercises.
- Ask questions throughout, like "*What is your brain stem doing right now?*" or "*What part of your brain just helped you move your arm?*"
- In the movement Brain Breaks, remind learners to connect their movements with the breath.

VOCABULARY

brain stem
cerebellum
cerebrum
limbic system

MATERIALS

Brain Diagrams

BRAIN BREAKS

Breathing Ball
Countdown Calm Down
Mountain/Chair Strength Sequence
Standing Half Moon
Attitude of Gratitude

Brain Break 1

BREATHING BALL

Connect

Last time we worked together, we learned about neuroplasticity—that training our brains through practice and repetition helps us become better at things we want to improve. We realized that every moment is an opportunity to shape and grow our brains. Our mindfulness practice helps us take care of our brains and grow to our full potential by training our attention to focus on what we choose. Today we are going to learn about four important parts of the brain and what the main job of each part is. As we better familiarize ourselves with our brains and continue to practice Brain Breaks, we are starting to develop our second superpower: the power to tame your temper.

Brain Break 2

COUNTDOWN CALM DOWN

Teach

The human brain weighs about three pounds and is the size of your two fists put together. (Demonstrate and ask students to mimic action with their fists.) The brain and spinal cord together make up the Central Nervous System (CNS). (Display image.) The brain is made up of four parts: the brain stem, the limbic system, the cerebellum, and the cerebrum.

Display the unlabeled brain diagram. Identify and define the primary functions of each:

Brain stem: *Sits at the base of the brain (in front of the cerebellum) and connects the brain to the spinal cord. The brain stem controls the flow of information between the brain and the rest of the body. It also controls movements that are usually involuntary, or happen without us thinking about them, such as breathing, heart rate, blood pressure, digestion, sneezing, and swallowing.*

Limbic system: *"Limbic" comes from the Latin word for "border."[1] The limbic system is located on the border between the brain stem and cerebrum. The limbic system is made up of several different parts of the brain. It is responsible for processing emotions and feelings of safety and contentment—or a lack of those feelings.*

Brain Break 3

MOUNTAIN/CHAIR STRENGTH SEQUENCE

Teach

Cerebellum: *"Cerebellum" comes from the Latin word for "little brain."[2] It is located at the back and bottom of the brain. The cerebellum is divided (from front to back) into two nearly symmetrical, or equal, parts called hemispheres. It interprets motor messages from neurons and responds to these messages by moving specific muscles. The cerebellum can learn coordinated movements with practice, allowing us to do*

cool stuff like master challenging postures, ride bicycles, and perform cartwheels. It also helps us maintain balance and move smoothly during these activities.

Which of the following activities would be difficult for a person with a damaged cerebellum?

a. *Dancing*
b. *Singing*
c. *Talking to a friend*
d. *Listening to a friend*
e. *Skiing*
f. *Watching television*

(Answers: a, e)

***Cerebrum:** The cerebrum is the largest part of the brain. Its wrinkly gray surface is called the cerebral cortex. The folds increase its surface area, which increases the amount of information that the neurons, or brain cells, can process. Different parts of the cerebrum deal with different voluntary processes you do each day, including those related to vision, movement, hearing, language, and touch. "Voluntary" means that you choose to do something, such as waving hello to someone or kicking a soccer ball down the field. The cerebrum uses neurons to send electrical messages out to your body to instruct a specific body part to do something. The cerebrum is also divided into two symmetrical hemispheres. Each hemisphere controls the opposite side of the body. This means that the right hemisphere controls the left side of the body and the left hemisphere controls the right side of the body.*

*As we do our next posture, ask yourself which hemisphere of your cerebrum is in charge when your body leans to the left and which is in charge when it leans to the right.**

*(*Answer: Left hemisphere will govern movement of the right arm and vice versa.)*

Brain Break 4

STANDING HALF MOON

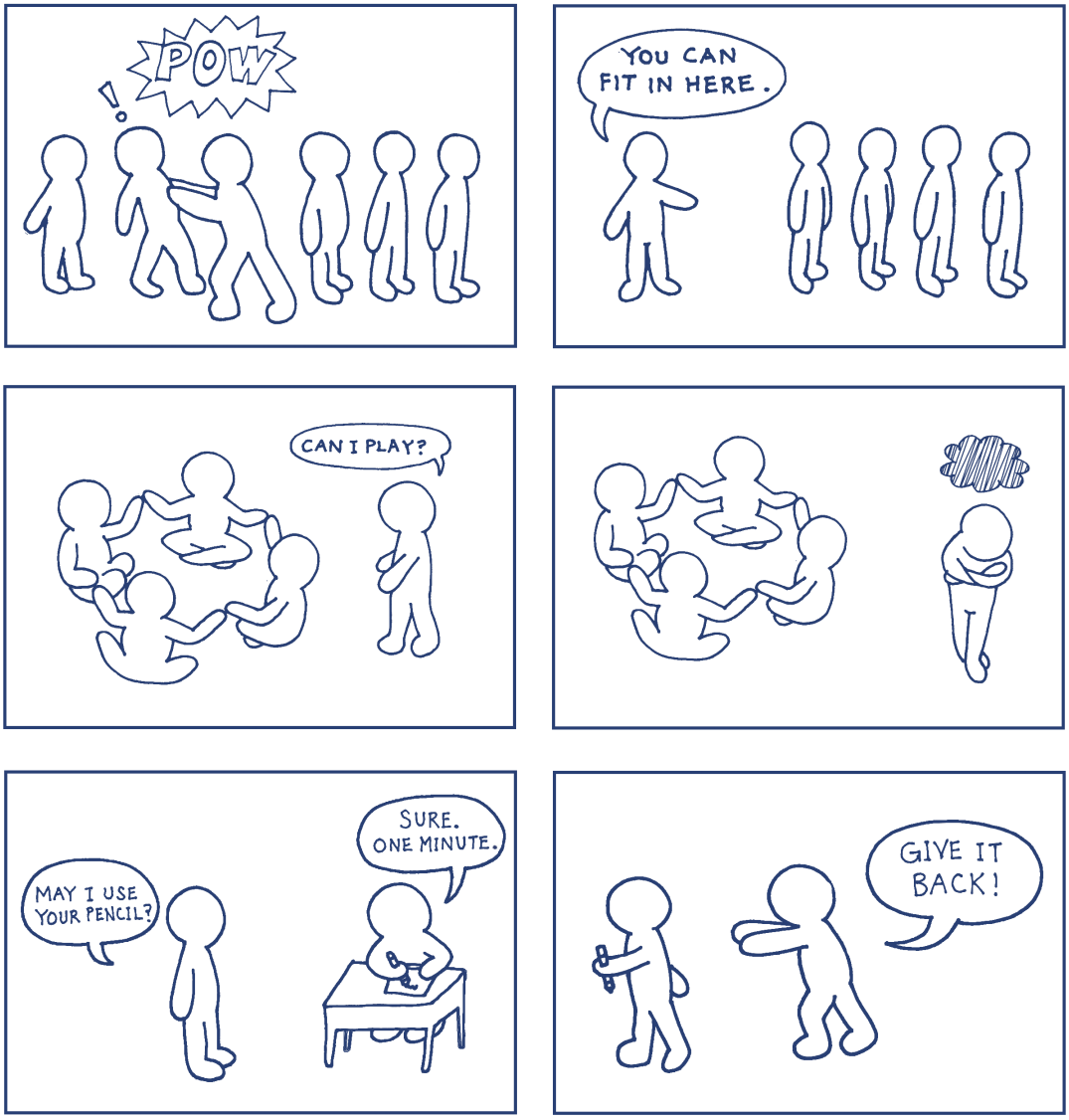
Teach

Neuroscientist Dr. Dan Siegel tells us that one way to think about the relationship between the four parts of the brain is to imagine your brain as a house with an upstairs and a downstairs. The "downstairs brain" includes the brain stem, cerebellum, and limbic system, and it is where the basic and survival functions of the brain take place. It is also where we experience powerful emotions like anger and fear. The "upstairs brain" is another way of thinking about the cerebrum. It is where more sophisticated processes take place, like thinking, imagining, and planning. It helps us manage our powerful emotions and connect with others.

The upstairs brain is not fully developed until we are older, and sometimes the strong emotions of the downstairs brain can overpower us. We don't always make the best decisions when the downstairs brain is in charge. Our brain works the best when the upstairs brain and the downstairs brain are in communication. Two of the ways that we can make sure the upstairs brain and the downstairs brain stay connected are by

Mindful or Unmindful?

Color in the boxes showing mindful behavior.



Draw or write about a time you were angry but chose a mindful response (a time you used the 'Kind Leader' part of your brain).

doing breathing exercises and by moving our bodies. When we practice breathing and movement exercises, we strengthen the power to tame our temper.[3]

Brain Break 5

ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE

Link

Today we learned about four major parts of the brain: the brain stem, limbic system, cerebellum, and cerebrum. We discussed how we can imagine the brain as a house with an upstairs and a downstairs—and that we feel best when the upstairs and downstairs brain work together. Breathing and movement are two ways to make sure all parts of the brain are communicating with one another.

Home Practice

As you go about your day, think about which parts of the brain are activated in different situations.

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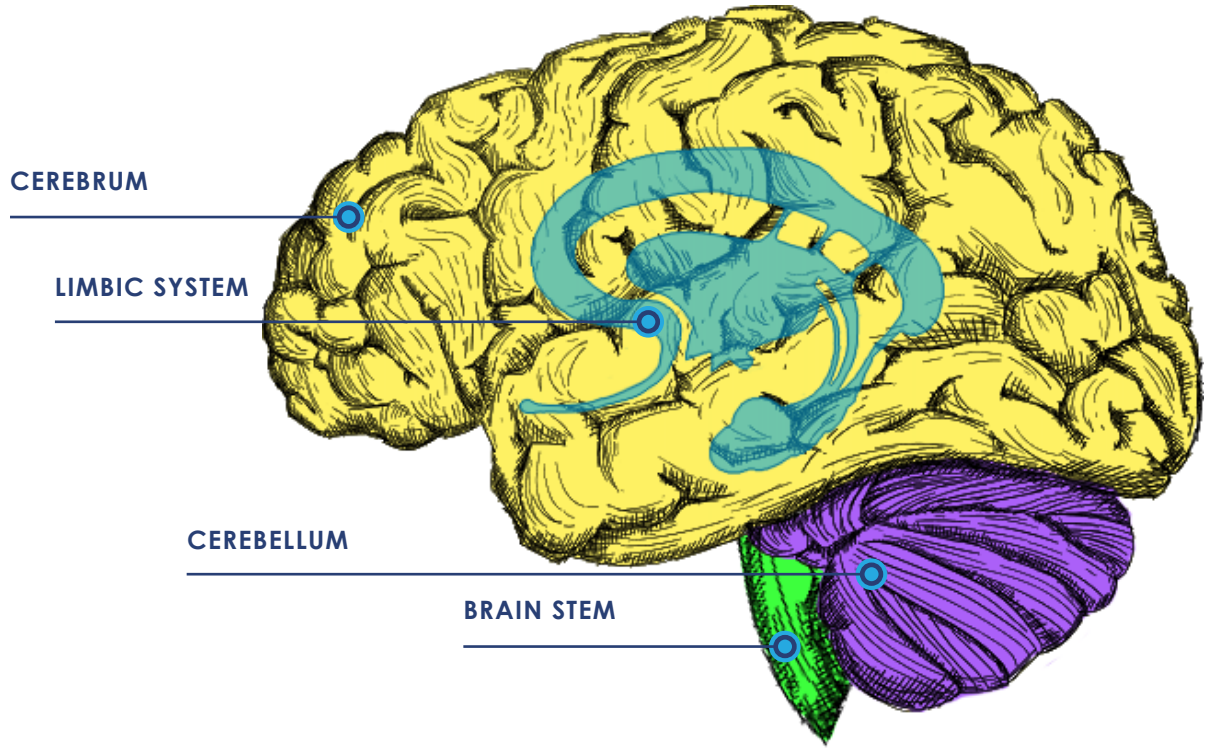
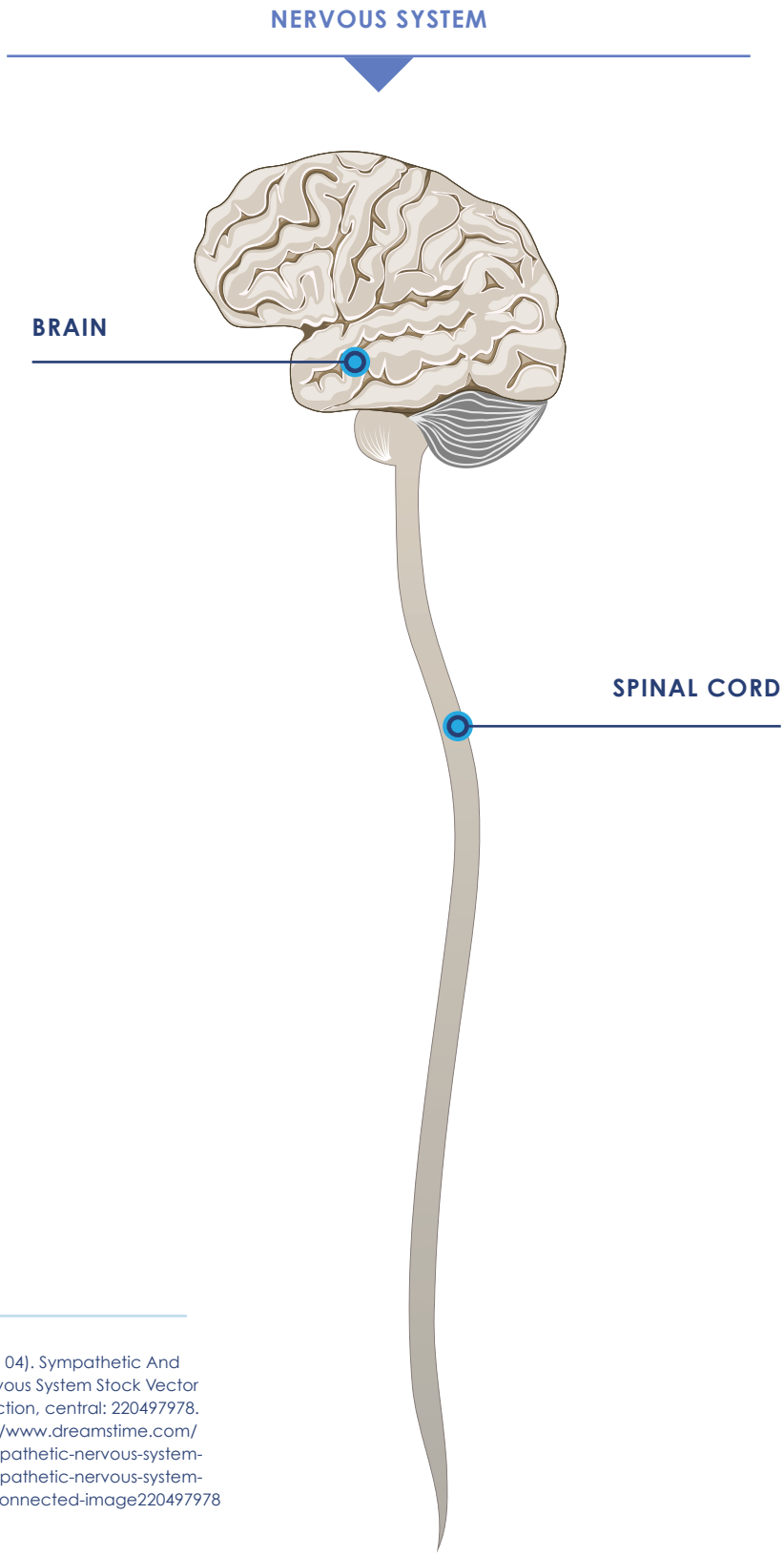
1 "Limbic," *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*. https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/limbic.

2 "Cerebellum," *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*. https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/cerebellum.

3 Daniel J. Siegel and Tina Payne Bryson, *The Whole-Brain Child*. New York: Random House, 2012.

THE FOUR PARTS OF THE BRAIN





Designua. (2021, June 04). Sympathetic And Parasympathetic Nervous System Stock Vector – Illustration of connection, central: 220497978. Retrieved from https://www.dreamstime.com/sympathetic-parasympathetic-nervous-system-sympathetic-parasympathetic-nervous-system-difference-diagram-connected-image220497978

Lesson Five

Getting to Know Your Brain: Amygdala and Prefrontal Cortex

GUIDING QUESTIONS

What does it mean to self-regulate?

Why is self-regulation important?

OBJECTIVE

Students will be able to articulate and demonstrate how the breath can calm their amygdala so they may effectively communicate and work with the prefrontal cortex to make thoughtful, intelligent decisions.

TEACHER TIPS

- As you introduce Starfish Breathing, bring learners' attention to how the breath, the sense of touch, and the gaze all combine to help them build focus.

VOCABULARY

amygdala
prefrontal cortex
self-regulation

MATERIALS

Brain Diagram

BRAIN BREAKS

Breathing Ball
Standing Half Moon
Starfish Breathing
Chair Sunrise Twist
Guided Rest

Brain Break 1

BREATHING BALL

Connect

Last time we worked together, we learned about four major parts of the brain: the cerebrum, cerebellum, limbic system, and brain stem.

Mindfulness is a tool to slow down the mind so your brain can more accurately filter and interpret the information it receives. This slowing down allows you to make more intelligent, thoughtful decisions by strengthening the power to tame your temper. Today we are going to learn about two more important parts of the brain: the amygdala and the prefrontal cortex ("PFC" for short!).

Brain Break 2

STANDING HALF MOON

Teach

Display brain diagram.

***Amygdala** comes from the Greek word for "almond" because of its almond shape.*[1] *The amygdala is part of the limbic system, the emotional center of the brain. You have one amygdala in each hemisphere. The amygdala helps keep you safe. It is constantly on the lookout for danger and reacts quickly, enabling you to run away, fight back, freeze, or collapse in fear. It is a master decoder of emotions and threatening stimuli. The amygdala helps create emotions that motivate you to move in response to what is happening in that moment.* (Connect the word "emotion" with "motion.")

***The prefrontal cortex**, often referred to as the PFC, is located at the front of the brain.* (Highlight the word "front" in "prefrontal.") *It is part of the cerebrum, which we learned about last time. It is sometimes referred to as the "seat of good judgment" or the "thinking brain," because it allows you to pause and think before reacting. The PFC helps you self-regulate, or control your behavior, by guiding you to make thoughtful, intelligent decisions.*

After the initial automatic emotional reaction from the amygdala, your PFC helps you plan the smartest way to get out of danger. It helps you solve complex problems and choose between right and wrong, even when you are faced with a challenging situation.

Although the amygdala's job is to keep us safe, it sometimes thinks we are in danger when we are not. If it senses a threat, the amygdala sends oxygen to our arms and legs in preparation for a fight, flight, or freeze response, which means less oxygen for our PFC, the thinking part of our brain. Less oxygen to the PFC makes it difficult to think clearly and make smart decisions.

What might be a possible solution to get more oxygen to our brain? Breathing!

Brain Break 3

STARFISH BREATHING

Teach

You can think of the amygdala as the brain's inner security guard and the PFC as the kind leader or captain steering the ship at the front of the brain. Deep breathing, especially abdominal breathing, helps activate the PFC's power to think clearly and calm the amygdala's impulsive, emotional reactions.

Explain how when we're calm, the amygdala sends information to the PFC (the brain's reasoning center). Highlight how the PFC is responsible for thinking about and focusing our thoughts, predicting the outcome of our actions, and deciding what is right or wrong. The PFC also supports our learning and our ability to work toward achieving our goals.

When we practice mindful breathing, we have the power to override the body's stress response and use our PFC to Plan with Focus and Care. The amygdala is programmed to react quickly and impulsively when we are frightened, angry, or stressed. If we can stop and take three mindful breaths, it gives the amygdala a chance to settle down and communicate with the PFC, which can decide if the situation warrants such a fearful or angry response. It gives us an opportunity to think before we react.

Brain Break 4

CHAIR SUNRISE TWIST

Teach

Teach students Dr. Dan Siegel's "handy" model of the brain to review the parts of the brain. In this model, one fist represents both hemispheres of the brain. Students each raise one hand, palm facing them, with the thumb curled into the palm. The thumb represents the limbic system, the emotional system in the brain, of which the amygdala is part. All four fingers, which represent the cerebral cortex, fold to cover the thumb, forming a fist. The fingernails represent the PFC, the wrist is the base of the skull, and the forearm is the spinal cord. When we are overcome with anger, stress, or anxiety, we may "flip our lid," or lose self-control. The prefrontal cortex goes off-line, and the limbic system is in control. This can be demonstrated with an exploding fist.[2]

The brain operates best when all of its parts are in communication with one another. During stressful times or when you are experiencing powerful emotions, mindful breathing can help bring the PFC back online and help us to become more responsive to a situation instead of reacting based only on powerful emotions or stress.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITY

Recall a time when you felt so overwhelmed with emotion that you said or did something you did not mean to say or do. If you could rewind and go back in time, how would you help your amygdala have a conversation with your hippocampus and your PFC? Write this conversation in the form of a journal entry, play, interview, or comic strip.

Brain Break 5

GUIDED REST

Link

Today we journeyed into the brain to examine how the prefrontal cortex influences our ability to plan and make intelligent decisions, even when faced with a difficult situation. The practice of mindful breathing helps bring all parts of the brain into communication with one another. With consistent practice, over time, the brain can learn to be less reactive and instead respond more thoughtfully in challenging situations so your kind leader, or PFC, can successfully guide you.

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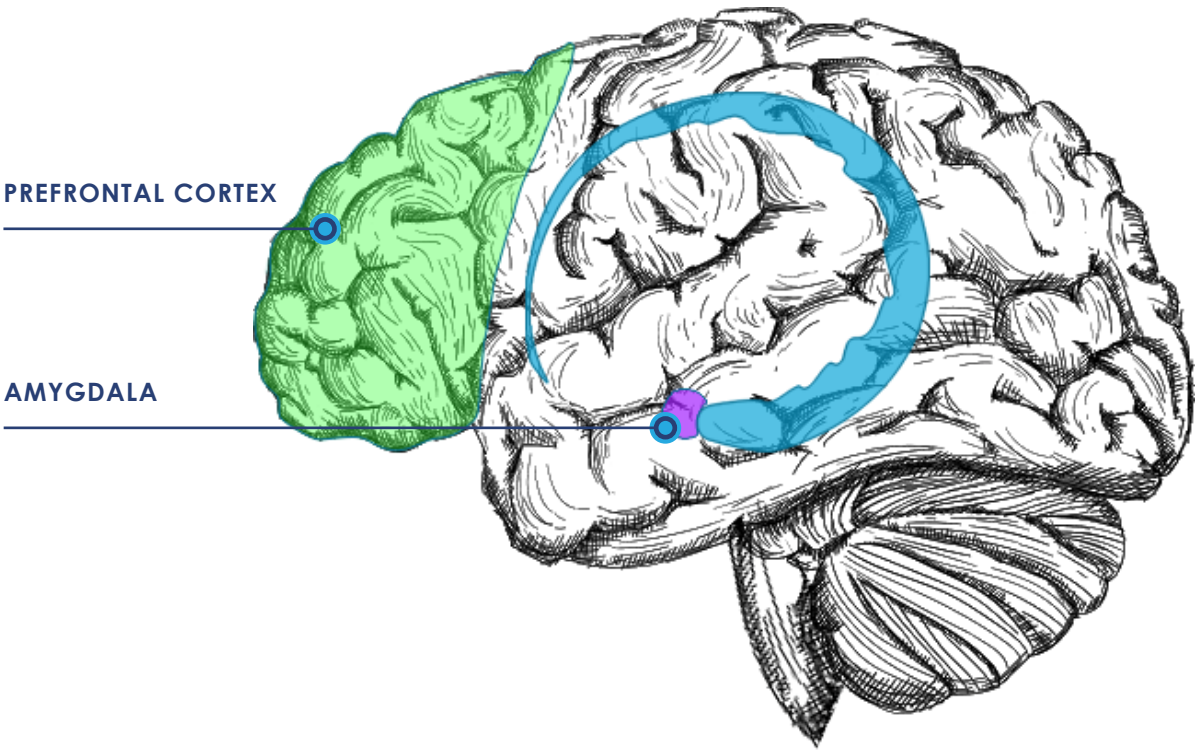
1 "Amygdala," Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary. https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/amygdala.

2 Daniel J. Siegel, "Hand Model of the Brain," 2017. https://drdansiegel.com/hand-model-of-the-brain/.

BRAIN DIAGRAM



Lesson Six

Mindful Seeing

GUIDING QUESTION

How (and why) do you take care of your eyes?

OBJECTIVE

Students will be able to focus their attention through their sense of sight and describe the visual details they observe.

TEACHER TIPS

- For Active Engagement: If objects to display are not available, simply display an image on-screen. Choose a neutral image that creates a relaxing feeling, such as a nature scene. Give learners 60 seconds to notice as many details about the image as possible, then have them record those details. Also ask learners to notice and record what feelings the image evokes in them.

VOCABULARY

sense

MATERIALS

For Active Engagement:

1. Tray with 8 objects....
2. Cloth to cover the tray
3. "Explorers Documentation Log" handout

For Optional Activity:

1. "Creative Mission" handout

BRAIN BREAKS

Breathing Ball
Mountain/Chair Strength Sequence
Rest Your Eyes
Tree
Mirror Movement

Brain Break 1

BREATHING BALL

Connect

Last time we worked together, we journeyed deeper into the brain to examine how the prefrontal cortex influences our ability to plan and make intelligent decisions, even when faced with a difficult situation. We discovered that through mindful breathing, we can ignite our power to tame our temper. With consistent practice, over time, the brain can learn to be less reactive and instead respond more thoughtfully in challenging situations. Today we are going to explore our sense of sight. We will use our sense of sight to activate another superpower—our power to laser focus.

Brain Break 2

MOUNTAIN/CHAIR STRENGTH SEQUENCE

Teach

Our senses allow us to experience and understand, or make sense of, the world around us. In addition to ensuring our safety and survival, the senses make it possible for us to interact and communicate with one another. Although we have five main senses (taste, sight, smell, hearing, and touch), we tend to rely the most on sight. If you take a particular sense away (such as sight or hearing), the other senses become sharper. Nerve endings located in the tongue, eyes, nose, skin, and ears send messages to the brain, which enable us to interpret the incoming information from our senses. When we become expert observers, slowing down and paying attention to all of the detailed information our senses provide that we never before noticed, we open ourselves up to appreciating a hidden world of new experiences.

Active Engagement

Let's begin by taking slow, deep, mindful breaths through your nose with your eyes gently closed. Notice the sound of your breath. Does it sound like the ocean's waves? Imagine each inhalation expanding your entire rib cage like a balloon. Imagine each exhale slowly emptying your lungs like a deflating balloon.

Display tray of objects covered with a cloth.

I am going to reveal a tray filled with different objects. For one minute, we will silently observe the items, using only our senses of sight. Be extremely attentive to the details of each object. After one minute, you will recall and record all of your observations on your documentation log.

Remove the cloth. After one minute, conceal the objects. Distribute student documentation logs and pencils. Give students 2 minutes to record all of the observations they can recall. Invite students

to share their observations. Divide your chart paper or blackboard into five categories (name of object, utility/function, color, size, and shape) and write each observation in the correct cell.

Teach

Tension in your eyes can produce a feeling of tension in other parts of your body. When you strain your eyes, often the muscles of the face, jaw, neck, and shoulders become tight. When you exercise your eyes, you relieve tension in your eye muscles, which reduces tension in the rest of your body. Now let's try a new Brain Break that will help us to take care of our eyes.

Brain Break 3

REST YOUR EYES

Have learners bring their hands to their eyes while maintaining a tall spine (rather than dropping their heads into their hands).

*

ENGAGEMENT QUESTIONS

How did that feel?

When would it be a good idea to use this exercise?

Teach

For our next exercise, we are going to use our power to laser focus by picking a gaze point and keeping our eyes focused on that point throughout the exercise. When you pick your gaze point, make sure it is either a few feet in front of you on the floor or a little above eye level on the wall in front of you. Make sure the gaze point that you pick is not moving (i.e., don't choose a person in front of you to look at). Let's give it a try!

Brain Break 4

TREE

*

ENGAGEMENT QUESTIONS

Did it help to use your gaze point while practicing Tree?

Why do you think it helps to keep a steady gaze when you are practicing balancing poses?

Can you think of another example of an activity where it helps you to be successful when you keep your eyes focused on something?

Teach

For our last exercise today, we are going to play a movement game. After we play the game, we will think about how this game develops our power to laser focus.

Brain Break 5

MIRROR MOVEMENT

*

ENGAGEMENT QUESTIONS

How do you feel after playing Mirror Movement?

Did you use your sense of sight as the leader? As the follower?

Was it easier for you to be the leader or the follower? Why?

Why is playing Mirror Movement a mindfulness activity?
(Ask learners to recall the definition of mindfulness: noticing what is happening as it is happening. Mindfulness is about paying attention on purpose, with a sense of kindness and curiosity).

What was the difference for you between using the gaze point in Tree and following your partner in Mirror Movement? Was it easier or harder to laser focus in one or the other of the exercises? Why do you think so?

Link

Today we explored the connection between our sense of sight and our power to laser focus. We practiced our power to laser focus both by ourselves in Tree and with a partner in Mirror Movement. We also learned that we can take care of our eyes by making sure we give our eyes a break when they need it. Next time, we will take a look at how we see ourselves by learning about a concept called "mindset."

Home Practice

This week, continue to explore your power to laser focus through your sense of sight. When you are on the playground or walking down the hallway, look more closely at the world around you. Start to appreciate how hard your eyes work all day to take in lots of information! Practice the Rest Your Eyes Brain Break when your eyes need a short rest.

Explorer's Documentation Log

Topic: Mindful Seeing

Date: _____

Object: _____

1. Take 3 mindful breaths to activate your power to laser focus; notice your eyes; are they tense or relaxed?
2. Continue your mindful breathing and simply observe all the objects displayed on the tray for the assigned time.
3. Record as many of the items from the tray as you can remember. Even though the items are now covered, can you still see the image of the items in your brain?

Tip: Try mindful breathing to help remember the items.

Object #1	Object #2	Object #3	Object #4
Object #5	Object #6	Object #7	Object #8

Creative Mission:

Topic: Create a superhero with the power to laser focus their sense of sight.

Action: Draw or write about *when* your superhero would use this power. *How* would your superhero serve your community?

Lesson Seven

Minding Your Mindset

GUIDING QUESTION

What is a mindset?

OBJECTIVE

Students will be able to explain how a positive growth mindset promotes resilience and success.

TEACHER TIPS

- Eagle is a challenging posture! Be sure to follow the script and start from the most supported version. Give learners the choice to add in more challenging options when they feel steady.
- It helps to go through the arm options with learners before they get into the posture.
- Remind learners to focus on what they CAN do—everyone can focus on their breathing and on building their balance, strength, and flexibility.

VOCABULARY

fixed
growth
mindset
perseverance
resilience

BRAIN BREAKS

Breathing Ball
Mountain/Chair Strength Sequence
Eagle
Guided Rest

Brain Break 1

BREATHING BALL

Connect

Last time we worked together, we developed our "laser eyes" to heighten our sense of sight and observe details from our environment that we had not previously taken the time or effort to notice. Today we are going to take a look at the way we see ourselves by learning about our mindset.

Brain Break 2

MOUNTAIN/CHAIR STRENGTH SEQUENCE

Teach

As we pay close attention to our thoughts and feelings, one thing we might start to notice is our mindset. Our mindset is the set of attitudes or beliefs that we have about ourselves. It affects how we see ourselves and interpret situations.[1]

A fixed mindset is the belief that we are born with a certain degree of intelligence and range of talents that do not change very much, even with a lot of practice and effort. When we have a fixed mindset, we have thoughts such as, "It's too hard; there is no point in trying."

A growth mindset is the belief that we can improve our abilities through dedication and hard work. When we have a growth mindset, we have thoughts such as, "I will have to try a different approach because my first strategy didn't work."

For today's next Brain Break, we intentionally chose a new, challenging posture. Let's think about how we can approach the exercise with a growth mindset.

Take student responses, and help guide their responses into a growth mindset. Some examples you can use are *"If I keep practicing, I will get it; I can't do it yet; I love to try new things; I can focus on my breathing; I can focus on what I can do…"*

Brain Break 3

EAGLE

*****

ENGAGEMENT QUESTIONS

How did it go?

Was it helpful to focus on having a growth mindset before practicing Eagle?

How did it help (or not help)?

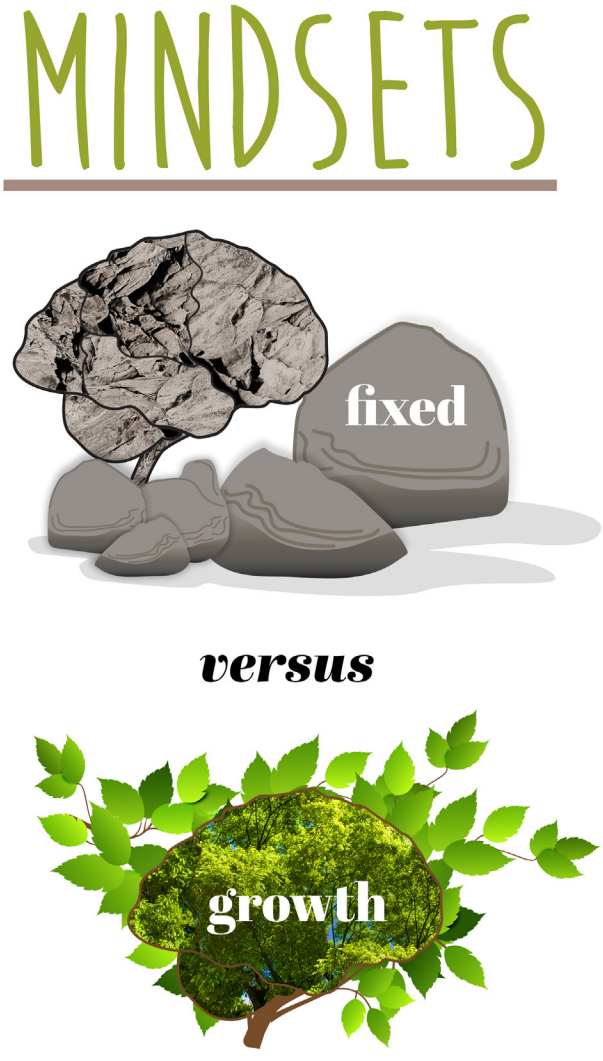
Teach

We can compare a fixed mindset to a rigid, inflexible rock and a growth mindset to a seedling that continues to grow and develop into a great oak tree.

A fixed mindset will hold us back, because we won't believe that change or growth is possible. A growth mindset inspires the necessary ingredients for achievement: a love of learning, perseverance, courage, and resilience.

It is the difference between saying, "I can't!" and saying, "I can't yet!"

When we focus on building our growth mindset, we are developing one of our superpowers: the power to grow and stretch. This superpower reminds us that we are always capable of learning, growing, and changing.



Active Engagement

Even If

Play the game Even If to teach students to reinforce their self-esteem by developing positive responses to negative situations. Model how to turn a negative situation starting with "*Even if…*" into a positive response starting with "*I can…*"

For example, "*Even if I don't get chosen for the team, I can ask the coach for tips to improve my skills and try out for the team again next year.*" Then share several negative "*Even if*" statements with students so they may practice adding on positive "*I can*" statements. Finally, have students create their own "*Even if…I can*" statements that address a challenge they are working with in their life. Have learners share their statements with the whole class or with partners.

Possible "*Even if…*" statements include the following:

- *Even if I score poorly on my exam…*
- *Even if I don't achieve my goal…*
- *Even if I forget my homework at home…*
- *Even if I have an argument with a friend…*
- *Even if someone says something mean to me…*
- *Even if I get in trouble for misbehaving…*
- *Even if I don't get my way…*
- *Even if I don't get invited to a party…*
- *Even if I have to share a room with my brother or sister…*
- *Even if I have to do my homework instead of playing video games with my friends…*
- *Even if I have to move to a new school…*
- *Even if I lose a game…*

Brain Break 4

GUIDED REST

Link

Today we explored our power to grow and stretch. We learned how a growth mindset trains our brains to be more resilient and helps us achieve our goals, even if at first, we do not succeed. Although we have a natural tendency to gravitate toward negative thoughts, we can overcome this by meeting challenges with a growth mindset to grow our brains and work toward our limitless potential.

Home Practice

Until we meet again, don't forget the importance of adding the short but powerful word "yet" after you mistakenly tell yourself that you can't do something.

---

1 Cherry, K. (2021, April 29). What Is a Mindset and Why It Matters. Retrieved from https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-a-mindset-2795025

Lesson Eight

Taking in the Good

GUIDING QUESTION

How does Taking in the Good have the power to make you, and others around you, happier?

OBJECTIVE

Students will be able to analyze the relationship between perspective and Taking in the Good.[1]

TEACHER TIPS

- Taking in the Good is a technique that encourages our minds to absorb positive experiences and helps us cultivate resilience and gratitude.
- Taking in the Good does NOT mean ignoring our more challenging emotions, like anger, fear, or sadness.
- Remind learners that the best way to deal with negative emotions is to let yourself feel the emotions you're feeling and let them pass, not to push them under the rug.[1]

VOCABULARY

diverse
point of view
negativity bias

MATERIALS

"What Do You Notice" Handout

BRAIN BREAKS

Breathing Ball
Starfish Breathing
Mountain/Chair Strength Sequence
Eagle
Taking in the Good

Brain Break 1

BREATHING BALL

Connect

Last time we worked together, we discovered the power of transforming our mistakes, or perceived failures, into successes by developing a growth mindset. When we train our brains to grow from our mistakes, our brain becomes stronger and smarter. We learned that developing resilience is a character trait that is essential to achieving our goals. Today we are going to continue to develop our power to grow and stretch by practicing focusing on the positive.

Brain Break 2

STARFISH BREATHING

Active Engagement

Today we are going to conduct an experiment to see what each of us notices when we look at the same picture.

Display the duck-rabbit image. After students examine the picture, pose the following questions:

- *What is the first thing you notice?*
- *What else do you see?*
- *Why might some people see a duck first, while others see a rabbit first?*
- *Is everyone now able to see both a duck and a rabbit in the same picture?*
- *Are there a "right" and a "wrong" way to view this picture? How do you know?*

Teach

People have different points of view. We interpret situations, people's actions, and even pictures differently, because we have different experiences, needs, goals, feelings, and values that shape our perspective and understanding. Having diverse points of view can be wonderful. It contributes to our individuality and enables us to learn from and teach others. Sometimes, however, we are too quick to judge a situation. We don't always take the time to fully consider other perspectives.

Today, we will begin to reflect upon and shape our points of view so we can "take in the good" from a variety of situations and interactions with others. Taking in the Good is a strategy to ward off our natural tendency to gravitate toward the negative (negativity bias) and instead soak in and spread the positive.

Brain Breaks 3 and 4

MOUNTAIN/CHAIR STRENGTH SEQUENCE

EAGLE

Teach

Neuroscientist Rick Hanson said, "The brain is like Velcro for negative experiences, but like Teflon for positive ones."[2] This means that unpleasant experiences stick to the brain's long-term memory, while pleasant experiences are less likely to stay put. It takes 2 to 3 seconds for your brain to remember something unpleasant and about 20 to 30 seconds for your brain to remember something pleasant.

We can practice Taking in the Good by making an effort to see things from a more positive perspective. We can improve our happiness, and the happiness of others, by training our brains to find the nuggets of good in each situation and person.

Active Engagement

Read a scenario that could be interpreted from a more negative or a more positive perspective. Scenarios can be made up (see examples below) or you can use excerpts from children's literature (e.g., The Dot or Ish by Peter H. Reynolds). Demonstrate your thought process as you briefly acknowledge the negative, but choose to focus on the positive elements of the scenario. Model how you devote time to Taking in the Good.

Students discuss with their partners how they recognize the negative, but then purposefully focus on the positive and Taking in the Good.

Ask these questions about the main character in the story:

- *How might* (name) *negatively interpret this situation?*
- *How might* (name) *Take in the Good from this situation?*
- *How would choosing to focus on the positive contribute to (name's) power to grow and stretch?*

Have several pairs of students share their process of interpreting the given scenario to Take in the Good.

Sample scenarios:

(Change the names in the scenarios if a student has the same name.)

Matthew *scored an 85 percent on his math test. His parents are going to be very proud of his achievement, especially since math is Matthew's most challenging subject. He dedicated a lot of time to improve his math skills. This is the highest score he earned this year! He felt a sense of satisfaction because his hard work paid off. Later that day, Matthew found out that some of his classmates scored above a 90 percent on their math tests.*

Shannon *is a perfectionist. She is afraid of making mistakes and "messing up," which prevents her from trying new things and strengthening her power to grow and stretch. For example, Shannon is a fantastic soccer player, but not a strong basketball player. Anytime her gym class plays basketball, she finds an excuse not to participate. One day, with some encouragement from a friend, Shannon*

decides to join her class's basketball game. When her teammate passes her the ball, she attempts to make a 3-point shot, but misses.

Now we will practice actively focusing on the positive by remembering something good that happened in your own life today.

Brain Break 5

TAKING IN THE GOOD

*

ENGAGEMENT QUESTIONS

How can Taking in the Good make you happier?

How can your Taking in the Good help others?

How can we Take in the Good at home? At school? In the community?

OPTIONAL GROUP ACTIVITY

After practicing Taking in the Good, have students describe in detail (with the whole group, a small group, or a partner) the positive memories they chose to work with. Students can document or visualize their respective memories on individual pieces of paper, on a large sheet of paper (to be posted in the classroom), or in a journal.

Link

Today we learned how to reexamine how we interpret a situation by seizing the opportunity to look for, take in, and grow the good in our brain. Taking in the Good nurtures our power to grow and stretch. It also has the power to make us, and the people around us, happier!

Because of neuroplasticity, the brain is trained by what we think. We become what we repeatedly practice. This means that if we consistently practice reacting with anger and worry, over time those will be our strongest neural and behavioral pathways when we are under stress. The good news is that because of the brain's amazing ability to grow and change, you can rewire it to have healthier responses by practicing mindfulness. You can train your brain to respond to stress in a more calm and relaxed manner.

We have finished our initial exploration of our superpowers. I hope you have discovered how powerful you are!

Home Practice

Remember, practicing Brain Breaks helps us discover the power and the abilities that we already have inside of us. What Brain Breaks would you like to keep practicing? What do you think will help you to do that?

1 Vasundhara Sawhney, "It's Okay to Not Be Okay," November 10, 2020. https://hbr.org/2020/11/its-okay-to-not-be-okay.

2 Rick Hanson, "Train Your Brain: The Five Essential Skills." http:// media.rickhanson.net/home/files/TakingintheGood.pdf

WHAT DO YOU NOTICE?

Brain Break Scripts

REST

Attitude of Gratitude

1. Sit comfortably, and if you like, you can close your eyes.
2. Think of something or someone in your life for which you are thankful or grateful. It can be anything or anyone!
3. Take a few moments to just appreciate this thing or person.
4. Now think of another thing or person for which you are grateful.
5. Take a few moments to appreciate this thing or person.
6. Notice how you feel.

Inhale

Exhale

BREATHE

Balloon Breathing

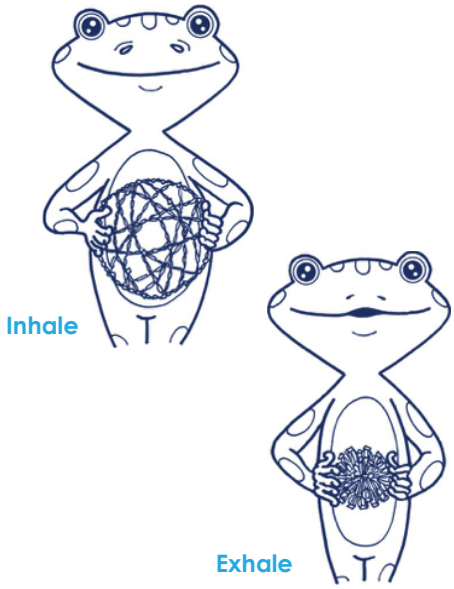
1. Rest your hands on your belly and imagine it's a big balloon.
2. Breathe in to fill the balloon with air.
3. Breathe out to empty the balloon of air.
4. Repeat three times.
5. Notice how you feel in your body. In mindfulness, there's no right or wrong answer; just notice what you are feeling right now.

BREATHE

Breathing Ball

1. Start in Seated Mountain.
2. Take a breath in as the ball opens.
3. Breathe out as the ball closes.
4. Can you breathe in time with the breathing ball?

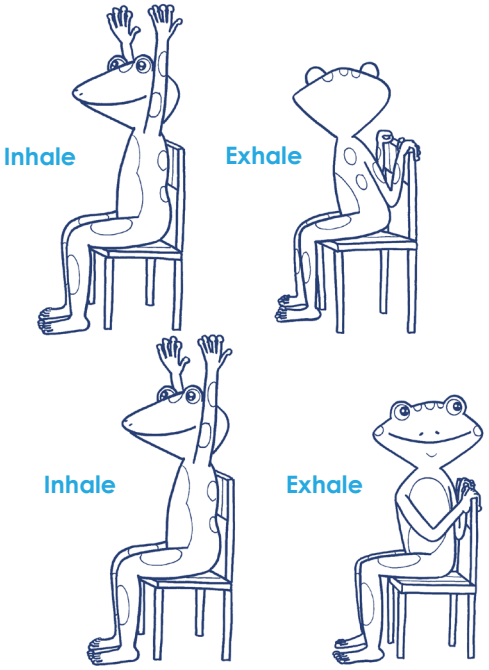
- *We use a Hoberman Sphere as a breathing ball.*

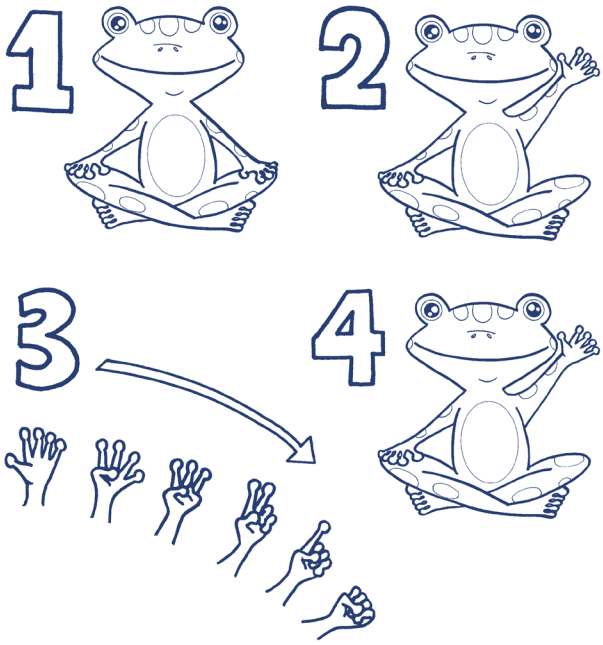


MOVE

Chair Sunrise Twist

1. Sit in Seated Mountain.
2. Inhale, stretch arms overhead for Chair Sunrise.
3. Exhale, twist to the right, placing left hand on right knee and right hand on right hip or the back of the chair. Keep right shoulder relaxed. Take a few breaths here.
4. Inhale, back to Seated Sunrise.
5. Exhale, twist to the left, placing right hand on left knee and left hand on left hip or the back of the chair. Keep left shoulder relaxed. Take a few breaths here.
6. Inhale back to Seated Sunrise.
7. Exhale to Seated Mountain.

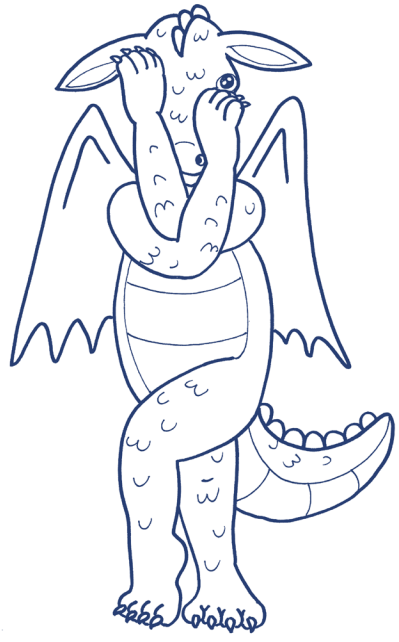




BREATHE

The Countdown Calmdown

1. Sit tall in your chair or crossed legged on the floor.
2. As you inhale, raise one arm over your head.
3. As you exhale, slowly lower your arm and countdown with your fingers: 5,4,3,2,1 Done.
4. Let's try that again…
5. Inhale arm up,
6. Exhale 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 Done!
7. Take a moment to notice how you feel.



MOVE

Eagle

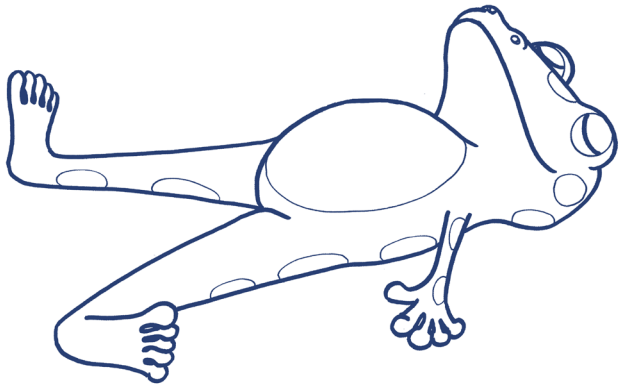
1. From Mountain, step feet apart and bend knees slightly.
2. Start to shift weight to left leg.
3. Inhale, keeping knees bent, cross right thigh over left and let right toes touch the floor on the outside of the left foot.
4. Wrap left arm on top of the right arm. Bend elbows, press backs of hands together.
5. If you are steady, lift right foot off of the ground. If it is comfortable, tuck right foot behind left calf.
6. See if you can touch palms together. Lift elbows and fingers upward.
7. Look at an unmoving point and balance for 5 breaths.
8. Exhale, unwind into Mountain.
9. Repeat on left side.

REST

Guided Rest

1. Lie down on the floor on your back. Spread your feet apart. Turn your palms up to face the ceiling and close your eyes.
2. Put your attention on your forehead. Feel your forehead relax.
3. Put your attention on your eyes. Feel your eyes relax. (Repeat for ears, nose, and mouth.)
4. Put your attention on your cheeks and jaw. Feel your cheeks and jaw relax.
5. Put your attention on your neck. Feel your neck relax.
6. Put your attention on your shoulders. Feel your shoulders relax. (Repeat for arms, wrists, hands, and fingers.)
7. Put your attention on your chest. Feel your chest relax.
8. Put your attention on your back. Feel where your back touches the floor (or the chair).
9. Put your attention on your belly. Notice how the breath moves the belly softly up and down.
10. Put your attention on your hips. Feel your hips relax. (Repeat for legs, knees, ankles, feet, and toes.)
11. Bring your awareness to your breathing and notice where you feel the breath in your body. Maybe you notice it in your nostrils. Maybe you feel it in your chest. Maybe you feel it in your belly.
12. See if you can get really quiet. Maybe you will even feel your heart beating inside your body.
13. Let learners rest in silence for a few moments.
14. Ring chime.
15. Slowly start to wiggle your fingers and toes. Take a deep breath in and stretch your arms overhead. As you exhale, relax.
16. Open your eyes and slowly return to a seated position.
17. Notice how you are feeling.

- *You can shorten the exercise by leaving out some body parts.*
- *This exercise can be practiced lying down or seated.*
- *Learners who do not feel comfortable lying on their backs may lie on their bellies or sides.*
- *Variation: Start with the feet and work up toward the head.*



REST

Mind Jar

- *To begin, shake up a mind jar and hold in front of class so that all learners can see.*

1. Sit in Seated Mountain.
2. Feel the breath moving inside of your body.
3. Keep taking relaxed breaths until the sparkles settle to the bottom of the mind jar.
4. Notice how you feel.

- *You can share with learners that the mind jar can help whenever they feel upset or overwhelmed.*
- *Imagine the glitter as your thoughts. When you shake the jar, imagine your head full of whirling thoughts. Watch them slowly settle as you calm down.*
- *Remember, simply noticing when you feel stirred up can help you start to feel calm.*

MOVE

Mirror Movement

- *Have learners partner up.*
- *If you need to set ground rules for safety depending on your space and the number of students, set them now (e.g., No running; Keep one foot on the ground at all times; Keep enough space between yourselves and other groups).*

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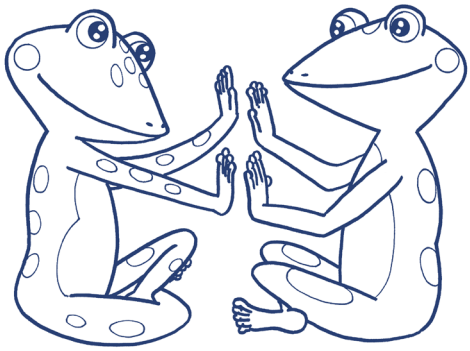
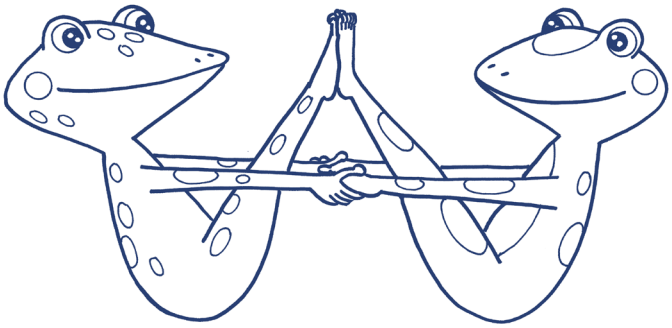
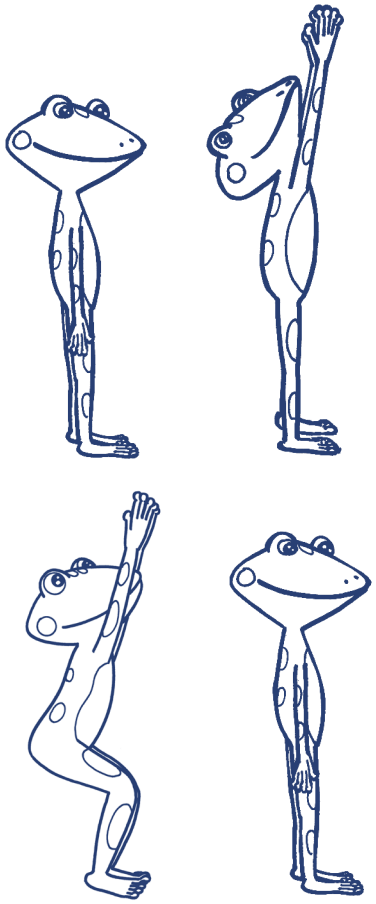
1. We are going to play a game called Mirror Movement.
2. One of you is going to be partner A, and one of you is going to be partner B.
3. For the first round, partner A is going to be the leader, and partner B is going to be the follower. Then we will switch roles.
4. We will be playing in complete silence—no talking at all!
5. Partner A, your job is to move in connection with your breathing.
6. Partner B, your job is to mirror all of the movements that partner A does.

- *Ring a bell or otherwise indicate it is time to start.*
- *Let A partners lead for 2 or 3 minutes. You can let them go longer, depending on their age and the time that you have for the exercise.*
- *Ring a bell or otherwise indicate that it is time to stop and switch roles.*
- *Let B partners lead for an equal amount of time.*
- *Ask learners, "Why is mirror movement being mindful?"*







MOVE

Mountain/Chair Strength Sequence

1. Begin in Mountain.
2. Inhale, raise your arms overhead.
3. Exhale, bend your knees and sit back as though you were going to sit in an imaginary chair.
4. Hold for 3 breaths.
5. Inhale, come back to Mountain.

- *Increase hold to 5 breaths as stamina increases.*

REST

Rest Your Eyes

1. Rub your palms together vigorously to create heat.
2. Close your eyes and place the heels of your hands over your eyes.
3. Feel how this simple gesture relaxes the eyes and brain.
4. Soften the outer corners of your eyes as you open them.
5. Notice what this feels like.

MOVE

Seated Mountain

1. If in a chair, sit with feet on the ground and knees pointing straight ahead. If on the floor, sit with crossed legs.
2. Place your arms straight at your sides or hands resting on side of chair or lap.
3. Sit up nice and tall and keep your shoulders relaxed.
4. Take deep breaths in and out; feel the floor beneath the feet.

MOVE

Standing Half Moon

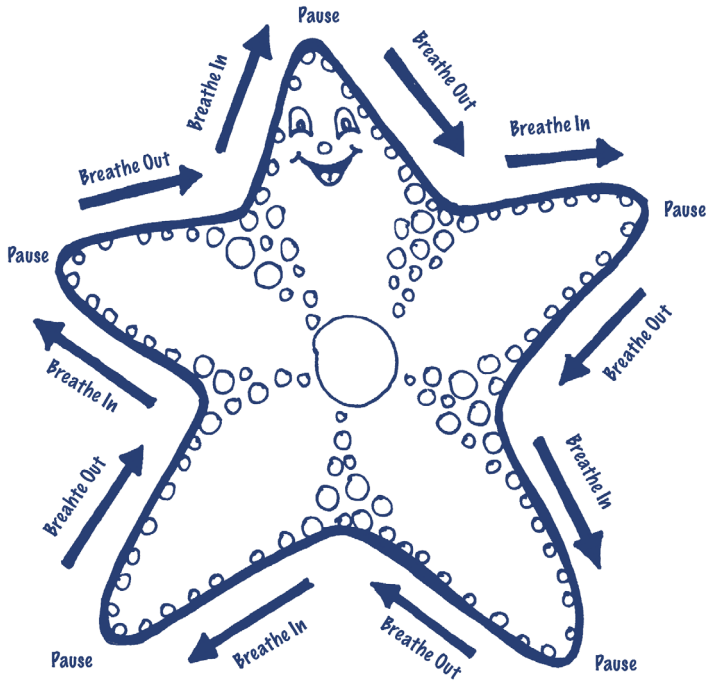
1. Begin in Mountain.
2. Inhale, take feet slightly apart. Lift left arm overhead alongside left ear and press right arm into right side.
3. Exhale, lean to the right. Gaze straight ahead or down toward the feet.
4. Inhale, return to the center.
5. Exhale, lower left arm.
6. Inhale, lift right arm overhead alongside right ear and press left arm into left side.
7. Exhale, lean to the left. Gaze straight ahead or down toward the feet.
8. Inhale, return to the center.
9. Exhale, lower right arm and step feet together into Mountain.
10. Repeat as required.

BREATHE

Starfish Breathing

1. Make a starfish with one hand, fingers spread wide.
2. Put the index finger from the other hand on the outer base of the thumb.
3. We are going to trace the outline of our starfish hand. Keep looking at your pointer finger while you do your breathing.
4. Inhale (finger traces to top of thumb).
5. Exhale (finger traces down the other side of thumb).
6. Repeat until you have traced the outline of the starfish hand.

- *Learners are synchronizing their movement, breath, and gaze. On the inhale, index finger and eyes trace upward along a finger; on the exhale, index finger and eyes trace downward along a finger. Each upward movement is coupled with an inhale, whereas each downward movement is coupled with an exhale.*



REST

Taking in the Good

1. Think of one thing from the day that you feel good about, and be specific—for example, you listened, you were more creative, you lent a helping hand, someone smiled at you, etc.
2. Hold on to that memory for the next 30 seconds. Remember it in as much detail as you can.
3. Allow the feeling associated with the memory to sink into your mind. Act as a sponge, absorbing the memory and the feeling together.

MOVE

Tree

1. Begin in Mountain and bring hands to hips.
2. Keep your eyes focused on a point 3 feet in front of you.
3. Shift your weight to your left foot.
4. Bend your right knee and lift up your right heel.
5. Point your knee out to the side. Keep your weight on your left foot. Take a few breaths here.
6. If you feel steady, you can stay right here or you can lift the right foot and place the sole on the inner left calf. Keep the right knee pointing out to the right. Take a few breaths here.
7. If you are still steady, you can move the foot to the inner thigh, using your hand if you need to.
8. Inhale the arms up overhead as if you were spreading branches. Balance for 5 to 10 breaths.
9. Exhale, return to Mountain. Repeat on the other side.

Glossary

ACTIVATE:
to make something active or more active

AMYGDALA:
a roughly almond-shaped mass of gray matter inside each cerebral hemisphere that is involved with the experiencing of emotions

BRAIN STEM:
the central trunk of the mammalian brain

CEREBELLUM:
the part of the brain at the back of the skull in vertebrates

CEREBRAL CORTEX:
the wrinkly gray outer surface of the cerebrum

CEREBRUM:
the principal and most anterior part of the brain in vertebrates, located in the front area of the skull

DE-STRESS:
to relax after a period of work or tension

DIVERSE:
showing a great deal of variety

FIXED:
fastened securely; not changing

GROWTH:
the process of increasing in size or capacity

LIMBIC SYSTEM:
a complex system of nerves and networks in the brain, involving several areas near the edge of the cortex concerned with instinct and mood, that controls the basic emotions (fear, pleasure, anger) and drives (survival)

MINDFULNESS:
the quality or state of being aware of someone or something, including oneself

MINDFULNESS MUSCLE:
an individual's capacity to direct and redirect attention and awareness

MINDSET:
the established set of attitudes or opinions held by someone

NEGATIVITY BIAS:
the phenomenon by which humans give more psychological value to bad experiences than good ones

NEURON:
a specialized cell transmitting nerve impulses

NEUROPLASTICITY:
the brain's capacity to change and rewire according to environment and experience

NEUROTRANSMITTER:
a chemical substance released at the end of a nerve fiber by the arrival of a nerve impulse

PERSEVERANCE:
steadfastness despite difficulty or delay in achieving success

POINT OF VIEW:
one's particular way of seeing a situation, person, or set of circumstances

PREFRONTAL CORTEX:
the part of the brain that is highly developed in humans and plays a role in the regulation of thoughts, emotions and behavior

RESILIENCE:
to withstand challenges and obstacles

SELF-REGULATION:
the ability to manage your behavior and the expression of your emotions in a way that is appropriate to the environment you are in.

SENSE:
a faculty by which the body perceives external stimulus

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Printing
Printed in the United States of America.