

Unit 3



SELF-MANAGEMENT



Prior Knowledge

Students should be aware that emotions can affect their behaviors. They should have an understanding of the concept of *best self*.

Overview

In this unit, students will learn what it means to have a *growth mindset*, and they will practice coaching themselves through difficult tasks with kindness and compassion. They will explore what stress feels like and will identify several stressors in their lives. They will discover that while many stressors are not in their control, they can practice ways to care for themselves in response to stress. They will also explore the concept of one's *best self* and will identify Best Self Strategies they can use in a variety of situations. Then they will practice goal setting and will work with a partner to achieve a goal.

Enduring Understandings

Students will understand:

- Mindfulness is important for their well-being.
- Mindfulness helps them coach themselves through a challenge.
- It is okay to experience difficult emotions, and they can pause before responding to those emotions.
- There are strategies to help them respond to stress.
- They have the power to build healthy habits

Essential Questions

- What is a growth mindset?
- How can I coach myself?
- How can I be my best self?
- How can I respond to stress in my life?
- How can goal setting help me respond to stress?

Lesson Summaries and Materials*

Lesson 1 **pages 132–144**

Lesson 1—Coaching 101:

Students learn to distinguish between a growth mindset and a fixed mindset. Then they practice developing a growth mindset by coaching themselves and others.

- Age-appropriate video clip of highly skilled young basketball player (e.g., Julian Newman) demonstrating skills
- Basketballs (1 per pair of students)
- Balance Coaching Tips poster (create during the lesson)
- Two signs: one labeled Growth Mindset and one labeled Fixed Mindset

Lesson 2 **pages 145–152**

Lesson 2—Coaching 102:

Students practice developing a growth mindset by coaching themselves through difficult tasks. Then they use mindfulness to notice when they lose focus and need to redirect their attention.

- 2–4 low balance beams (4–5 students per beam, only a couple of inches off the floor) or rolls of painter's tape
- 1 bucket of ribbon wands, rolled-up new socks, foam balls, or soft light beanbags per beam
- Focusing objects such as small squares of cardstock, flat glass marbles, or small blocks for students to focus on during the Mindful Movement practice (1 per student)
- Balance Coaching Tips poster from Lesson 1

Lesson 3 **pages 153–162**

Lesson 3—When It's Difficult to

Be My Best Self: Students will identify times when it might be difficult to be their best selves. They will learn a strategy to de-escalate intense emotions and discuss ways to treat themselves with compassion when they don't feel like their best selves.

- Balance Coaching Tips poster

Lesson 4
pages 163–172

Lesson 4—A Stressful

Lesson: Students will explore what stress means and how it feels. They will identify stressors in their lives and discern what is within and outside of their control.

- About 15-20 balls or beanbags
- Balance Coaching Tips poster
- What's In My Control? worksheet
- Pencils
- Three signs that say Not Very Much Help, Some Help, and A Lot of Help, respectively

Lesson 5
pages 173–184

Lesson 5—Responding

to Stress: Students will identify and practice ways of responding to stress.

- Whiteboard or display screen
- Pencils
- Three signs that say Not Very Much Help, Some Help, and A Lot of Help, respectively
- Degrees of Stress worksheet
- Balance Coaching Tips poster
- Soundtrack of people laughing

Lesson 6
pages 185–193

Lesson 6—Ready, Set, Goal:

Students will explore how they can use goal-setting to learn and grow and will partner with a classmate to both create and work toward a specific goal.

- Several hoops or makeshift targets/goals (Can be an X on the wall or floor, or even real basketball goals, if a gym is available)
- Beanbags, balls, or other objects to shoot at/in the targets/goals
- Written goal statement (on board or chart paper)
- Goals for Growth worksheet
- Pencils

Lesson 7
pages 194–202

Lesson 7—The Power You

Hold: Students will review the ways they have the power to be their best selves. They will work with a partner to create a plan to make progress toward their healthy habit goal.

- Written goal statements from students
- Goals for Growth worksheet
- Pencils
- Balance Coaching Tips poster

***All Lessons include:**
Bell or chime
(Optional) Hoberman sphere

New Mindful Movements

Poses

Tree
Stork
Victory
Lever
Pointing Dog
Boat

Sequences

Superhero Sequence

Mindful Moments

Calming and Focusing
Check-In
Mountain Balance
Mindful Listening
Even-In, Even-Out Breath
Calming Breath
Cooling Breath
Tension Release
Lion's Breath
Letting-Go Breath
Kind Mind (for Self)
Pausing for the Positive
Breath of Joy
Rest and Reflection
[Optional] Wiggle and Relax

*Differentiation**

- Differentiation activities offered for high-readiness students follow many of the activities within the unit lessons. When a differentiated activity is available, it is indicated by an asterisk next to the activity title.
- Suggestions for further reinforcement are embedded within the instructions for the activities that address more difficult concepts.

Performance Assessment

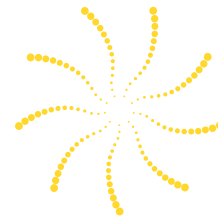
Students will be able to:

- Develop a growth mindset by coaching themselves and others through difficult tasks (Lessons 1-2).
- Use mindfulness to notice when they lose focus and need to redirect their attention (Lesson 2).
- Conclude they can be their best selves even when they have uncomfortable thoughts and feelings (Lesson 3).
- Describe ways someone can be their best self (Lesson 3).
- Describe how stress feels in their body (Lesson 4).
- Identify their favorite Best Self Strategies to use to prevent and respond to stress (Lesson 4).
- Practice strategies to calm and settle their minds and bodies (Lesson 4).
- Create a personalized plan for responding to stress (Lesson 5).
- Set personal goals (Lesson 6).
- Create plans to work toward their goals (Lesson 6).



Lesson 1

COACHING 101



Goal Statement

Students will be able to distinguish between a *growth mindset* and a *fixed mindset*. Then they will practice developing a growth mindset by coaching themselves and others.

Essential Question

What is a growth mindset?

“I Can” Statement

I can demonstrate how to use supportive coaching to develop a growth mindset.

Key Learning Objectives

Students will know...

- A growth mindset is the belief that people's skills and intelligence can grow with learning and practice.
- A fixed mindset is the belief that people's skills and intelligence cannot change.
- Cultivating a growth mindset can help them learn new things.

Students will be able to...

- Develop a growth mindset by coaching themselves and others through difficult tasks.

Materials

- [Optional] Age-appropriate video clip of highly skilled young basketball player (e.g., Julian Newman) demonstrating skills
- Basketballs (1 per pair of students)
NOTE *If you do not have access to a gym or basketballs, another skill can be chosen to modify the activity.*
- Balance Coaching Tips poster (create during the lesson)
- Two signs: One labeled Growth Mindset and one labeled Fixed Mindset

Preparation/Setup

- [Optional] Preload and preview the video segment.
- Place basketballs (or other selected materials) in bins for easy accessibility.
- Set out materials to create the Balance Coaching Tips poster.
- Hang the two signs in different areas of the classroom.

New Mindful Movements

Poses

Tree
Stork

Sequences

None

Mindful Moments

Calming and Focusing
Check-In
Mountain Balance
[Optional] Wiggle and Relax
Rest and Reflection

New Vocabulary

Growth mindset
Fixed mindset
Coach
Coaching
Self-coaching
Proprioception
Balanced
Center of gravity
Base of support

CALMING AND FOCUSING / 2 mins

Begin every lesson with Calming and Focusing practices described in the PRACTICE GUIDE.

- **Calming:** Lead students in taking three deep mindful breaths, using the cues and modeling as described in the PRACTICE GUIDE.
- **Focusing:** Lead students in a Mindful Listening activity to practice focusing their attention on the sound of a chime using the cues as described in the PRACTICE GUIDE.

GROWTH MINDSET / 8 mins

Ask students:

- *What does it mean to grow?*

Invite several students to answer.

Help students conclude that growing means developing, maturing, evolving, etc.

Then write the word **mindset** on the board. Ask students to give a signal (thumbs up) if they've heard that word before and to give another signal (thumbs down) if it is new to them. Then invite students to share their understanding or guess what it means.

After several students have guessed, tell them that mindset means a way of thinking about things.

Finally, invite students to put the two words together. Write the phrase growth mindset on the board and ask students to guess what that phrase might mean. After several students have had an opportunity to share, tell them that a **growth mindset** is a belief that people's skills and intelligence can grow with learning and practice.

Tell students that the opposite of a growth mindset is a fixed mindset. When someone has a fixed mindset they think they can't get better at things, even when they practice.

Then point out the two signs posted in the room. Help them notice that one is labeled Growth Mindset and one is labeled Fixed Mindset. Tell them that you are going to read out several phrases that their own minds might say to them and that you want them to determine whether the phrase represents a growth mindset or a fixed mindset. After reading each phrase, have students respond by standing by (or pointing to) the sign they think the phrase reflects. Use phrases such as:

- *I am afraid I will make a mistake, so I'm not going to try.*
- *New challenges make me stronger.*
- *That didn't work. I'll try a different way to find a solution.*
- *This is so frustrating. I give up.*
- *I'm willing to try new things.*
- *Mistakes help me learn and get better.*
- *That's too hard. I know I won't be good at it.*
- *I practice a lot because I know when I practice I can get better.*
- *See, I made a mistake. I knew I couldn't do it.*
- *She's so good at this. I wonder what I can learn from her.*
- *I don't know how to do this yet.*

Then invite students to gather in a circle and ask them questions such as:

- *If you were learning a new task, do you think a growth mindset or a fixed mindset would be more helpful? Why?*
- *Do you remember a time you had a growth mindset? What happened?*
- *How do you think a growth mindset might help you to feel like your best self?*

SUMMARIZE FOR STUDENTS:

- *A growth mindset is the belief that people's skills and intelligence can grow with learning and practice.*
- *A fixed mindset is the belief that people's skills and intelligence cannot change.*
- *A growth mindset can help us learn new things.*

TEACHING TIP



Use an interactive questioning technique. For example, pass a basketball to students as a prompt to answer the questions. You can have them do a basketball trick after they answer the question.

[OPTIONAL] PHENOM / 5 min

Show age-appropriate video clip of highly skilled young basketball player (e.g., Julian Newman) demonstrating skills.

After the video, ask students to reflect on how Julian (or other athlete selected) might have attained these dribbling skills. Suggested questions:

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- ***How do you think Julian got to be so good at those dribbling moves? Do you think he had a coach? Why or why not?***
 - ***What were some things Julian probably had to think about when first learning to dribble?***
 - ***What would happen to Julian's skill if he practiced without focused attention?***
 - ***Now that Julian has mastered some of the dribbling skills, what do you think he has to do to keep those skills at that level?***
 - ***How might mindfulness help Julian stay focused when he practices?***
 - ***How could mindfulness help someone who is in a big game or performing on a stage?***
-

DRIBBLE IT / 10 min

Ask for a couple of volunteers to demonstrate dribbling the basketball, either fundamentally or, if you showed a video, in one of the ways Julian (or other athlete selected) dribbled. As they dribble, point out good techniques and coach them on other techniques. Offer a lot of encouragement and feedback, especially around what to think about. For example, point out how/what to practice and encourage students not to be hard on themselves if they make mistakes.

If the video was shown, tell students that Julian did have a coach, and ask them what kinds of things they think the coach did and said.

Then write “A good coach _____” on the whiteboard or chart paper, and facilitate a discussion about what a good coach does to support athletes. (If desired, list the things a good coach does as students suggest them.) Try to elicit such qualities as staying present, paying attention to what’s going on, showing care and compassion, being supportive, etc.

Have students pair up for some basketball drills. Tell them they will work on their technique and their coaching together. Give students a choice of two or three dribbling techniques to practice (or introduce another skill), and have one partner coach while the other dribbles. While students are practicing, walk around and coach the coaches. For example, remind them to focus on what their partners’ bodies are doing and to provide encouragement and suggestions. As necessary, stop partners to check in with how the practice and coaching are going. Have the pairs continue to alternate practicing the skill and coaching.

NOTE *If you do not have access to a gym or basketballs, another skill can be chosen to modify the activity.*

When the time is about up, ask students to raise their hands to indicate whether they thought coaching or dribbling was harder.

Then ask them questions such as:

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- ***How can coaching ourselves help us develop a growth mindset?***
 - ***If your mind says something negative like: This is too hard. I can't do this. Do you have to believe it? What could you do instead?***
-

SUMMARIZE FOR STUDENTS:

- *A growth mindset can help us learn new things.*
- *We can develop a growth mindset by coaching ourselves through difficult tasks.*



MINDFUL MOVEMENT / 20 min

Tell students,

- ***We can coach ourselves whenever we learn new, challenging tasks. We're going to practice coaching ourselves today while we learn balancing poses. Balancing poses offer a greater challenge than standing poses. Instead of using two feet as a base of support, we'll move to using just one!***

Mountain/Check-In (UNIT 1, LESSON 1)

Guide students into Mountain pose and lead them in taking three calming breaths, as described in the PRACTICE GUIDE. Remind students to use the qualities of mindfulness, curiosity, kindness, and paying attention when they practice coaching themselves during the movement practice.

Fresh Start Sequence (UNIT 1, LESSON 3)

Lead students through the sequence one time, focusing on alignment. Then repeat the sequence three times, moving at a pace of one breath per movement.

Model coaching yourself as you do so, ensuring that you offer yourself supportive and positive feedback as you move through the sequence.

Mountain Balance

Tell students that learning to balance requires using the body awareness they have been practicing, specifically a skill called *proprioception*.

Invite students to give one signal if they're heard this word before and to give another signal if the word is new to them.

Then ask a few volunteers to guess what it might mean.

Tell students:

- ***Proprioception is your ability to sense how your body is positioned in space. For example, if you closed your eyes and I told you to lift your arm to shoulder height, would you be able to do that? Your ability to sense that without looking is proprioception. It's the sense that keeps track of where your body is moving and helps you keep your balance.***

Explain that the class will do an exercise together to get tuned into their proprioceptive sense and to prepare for the balance poses they'll be learning. Lead students through the exercise using the following script as reference:

- ***First, stand tall and strong in Mountain pose.***
- ***Next, holding your body strong and tall, begin to lean to the left side. See how far you can lean without losing your balance or moving your feet. Remember, the goal is NOT to lose your balance. If you start to feel too wobbly, stand up straight again or move your feet so that you don't fall. Only you are in charge of your body in this exercise. Now, try to lean forward as far as you can with both feet on the floor. Take it slow, and realize that you might not lean very far before you start to feel wobbly. Now lean to the right. Lastly, try to lean back, holding your body strong and tall. Continue making circles by leaning to each side in this way.***
- ***Notice what it feels like to be moving like this. Do you feel balanced? What does it feel like when you start to get a little off-balance? What does your body do when you start to lean too far in one direction?***
- ***Start to make the circles smaller and smaller. Keep going until you are perfectly balanced with your body tall and strong in Mountain pose. Notice what it feels like to be balanced and stable here. Let's try to carry this sense of balance with us throughout our whole practice.***

Let's Reflect!

Ask students what they noticed during the exercise and invite several students to share aloud.

Ask students:

- ***What information do you think your proprioceptive sense used to keep you balanced?***

Help students conclude that their proprioceptive sense uses information from their muscles, joints, and inner ears (vestibular system) to know where all the parts of their body are and to help them balance.

Then help students explore the concepts of a *center of gravity* and a *base of support* using questions such as:

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- ***Why do you start to lose your balance when you lean too far forward, back, or to one side?***
 - ***Why can you bend over (as in taking a bow), but you can't lean your body very far forward while standing up straight?***
 - ***Think about what you experienced in the experiment. Can you explain what and where a person's center of gravity is? How is this related to balance?***
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Conclude the conversation by summarizing students' observations and helping them conclude:

- *My center of gravity is the place (around my belly button) where half of my weight is above and half of my weight is below.*
- *My base of support is made up of the parts of me that are touching the ground to support my stance.*
- *If my center of gravity extends beyond my base of support, I will lose my balance.*

Balance Coaching Tips

Tell students:

- ***In our experiment today, we learned some important guidelines for balance. We can use these to coach ourselves in developing our balance skills during this unit.***
- ***Today we will learn two balance poses. When you are practicing, coach yourself with these questions:***

1. *Where is my center of gravity?*
2. *Where is my base of support?*
3. *Is my center of gravity directly over my base of support?*

Create a Balance Coaching Tips poster and add the three questions to it. Add them in such a way that you can add to the poster throughout the unit. Project or post the poster so that students can refer to it throughout the practice.



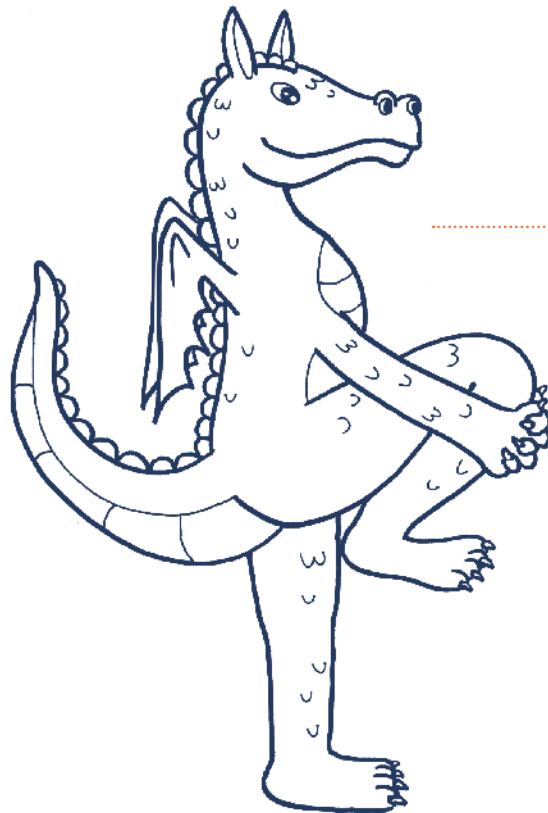
TREE

Tree new

Demonstrate Tree pose, then lead students into the pose. Model coaching yourself as you build the pose and invite students to do the same. Then model catching yourself off-balance and rebuilding the pose. Use the following cues as reference:

1. **Begin in a strong Mountain pose in the middle or back of the mat. Focus your eyes on the front edge of your mat. Keep your eyes fixed on one spot the whole time.**
2. **Place your hands on your hips, turning your right foot to face the side with your right heel against your left ankle.**
3. **Inhale: Imagine sending roots down through your left foot, anchoring you to the ground.**

4. Exhale: Lift the right foot and press the sole of the foot against your left calf or inner thigh. **NOTE** *Make sure not to press into the knee.*
5. Hold the pose for three to five breaths:
 - Breathing in, imagine growing taller.
 - Breathing out, press your left foot into the ground, keeping that leg active and strong.
 - Breathing in, bring your arms up over your head, and reach your fingers toward the sky like branches.
 - Breathing out, keep your arms up as you lower your shoulders away from your ears.
6. If you start to lose your balance, place your right foot down to stay safe. You can always build your Tree again, starting with the first step.
7. Exhale: Lower hands to the sides and right foot to the floor.
8. Repeat on the left side.



STORK

Stork new

Demonstrate the pose and then invite a student to model how to coach oneself into the pose. Invite the entire class to try, and refer students to the Balance Coaching Tips as appropriate. Use the following cues as reference:

1. Begin in a strong Mountain pose in the middle or back of the mat. Focus your eyes on the front edge of your mat. Keep your eyes fixed on one spot the whole time.
2. Inhale: Place your hands on your hips and begin to shift your weight into your left foot.
3. Exhale: Imagine sending roots down through your left foot anchoring yourself to the ground.
4. Inhale: Lift your right leg, bend your knee, and place your right hand on the knee.
5. Exhale: Shift your right bent knee out to the right side.
6. Hold the pose for three to five breaths.
 - Breathing in, imagine growing taller. Can you flex your foot and spread your toes? Notice if this challenges your balance.
 - Breathing out, press your knee and hand together to stabilize your balance.
7. Use mindfulness to pay attention to your body. If you start to lose your balance, release the knee from your hand and touch down on the mat. You can always build your Stork again, starting with the first step.
8. Exhale: Lower hands to the sides and your right foot to the floor.
9. Repeat on the left side.

Closing Sequence (UNIT 1, LESSON 1)

Guide students through the sequence.



REST AND REFLECTION / 5 min

[OPTIONAL] Wiggle and Relax

Tell students that while they are preparing for Rest, they're going to practice calming and focusing their bodies as well as their minds. Use the following script to help guide students through the practice and invite them to coach each part of their body to relax:

- *Today we're going to practice a body scan.*
- *If you'd like, you may close your eyes. If you prefer not to close your eyes, simply choose a spot in the classroom to focus on.*
- *I will lead you through the practice, guiding you to place your attention on various parts of your body. As you bring your attention to each part of your body, wiggle it, and then allow it to relax.*
- *First bring your attention to your toes. Notice what they feel like. Maybe they feel warm. Or perhaps they feel cool. Take a moment to wiggle your toes. Feel them moving against one another. Now pause, and allow them to relax. Notice whether your toes feel different when they are relaxed.*
- *Now bring your attention to your feet. Notice what they feel like. Do they feel like moving? Gently rock your feet from side to side. Notice what it feels like to move them. Now pause and allow them to relax. Notice what it feels like for your feet to be still.*
- *Now bring your attention to your legs. Notice what they feel like as they lie still on the floor. Now begin to wiggle them. Do they like to wiggle? Now pause and allow your legs to relax. Notice whether your legs feel heavy as they sink into the floor.*
- *Now bring your attention to your belly. Notice what your belly feels like. Maybe it feels full and at rest. Maybe it's busy digesting. Or perhaps it's hungry and wanting some food. Place your hands on your belly, and notice how your hands go up and down as you breathe in and out. Take two deep breaths, feeling your hands move with each breath. Now pause, placing your arms back on the floor. Allow your stomach to relax.*
- *Now bring your attention to your hands and arms. Notice what they feel like. Gently wiggle your arms and hands and all of your fingers, noticing what they feel like as they move. Now pause, allowing your arms and your hands to relax. Notice what it feels like for them to be still.*
- *Now bring your attention to your head. Notice what it feels like. Maybe it feels heavy as it lies on the floor. Or perhaps it's busy thinking lots of thoughts. Simply notice what you're experiencing right now. Gently nod your head "yes." Now gently shake your head no. Wiggle the muscles in your face—your eyebrows, cheeks, nose, ears, and mouth. Now pause and relax your face and head. Notice how your head feels when you allow it to relax.*
- *Now bring your attention to your whole body. If any part of your body is still moving, notice it and do your best to make it very, very still.*

- *Now take a moment to simply lie quietly, noticing how relaxed you feel.*

Allow one to two minutes of Rest. Then say:

- *Come up to sitting in Easy pose. If it feels comfortable for you, you may keep your eyes closed.*
- *Gently place your hands on your Anchors.*
- *Silently observe how you are feeling after the body scan.*
- *There's no need to change what you observe, simply notice what you are experiencing.*

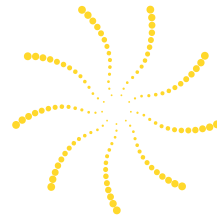
TAKE-HOME PRACTICE

- *Before our next class, practice coaching yourself through a difficult task. Remember to be kind to yourself and to practice a growth mindset.*



Lesson 2

COACHING 102



Goal Statement

Students will practice developing a growth mindset by coaching themselves through difficult tasks. Then they will use mindfulness to notice when they lose focus and need to redirect their attention.

Essential Question

How can I coach myself?

“I Can” Statement

I can use mindfulness to notice when I lose focus.

Key Learning Objectives

Students will know...

- A growth mindset is the belief that people's skills and intelligence can grow with learning and practice.
- Cultivating a growth mindset can help them learn new things.

Students will be able to...

- Develop a growth mindset by coaching themselves through difficult tasks.
- Use mindfulness to notice when they lose focus and need to redirect their attention.

Materials

- 2–4 low balance beams (4–5 students per beam, only a couple of inches off the floor) or rolls of painter's tape
- 1 bucket of ribbon wands, rolled-up new socks, foam balls, or beanbags per beam
- Focusing objects such as small squares of cardstock, flat glass marbles, or small blocks for students to focus on during the Mindful Movement practice (1 per student)
- Balance Coaching Tips poster from Lesson 1

Preparation/Setup

- Set out the balance beams or set up the taped lines.
- Fill the buckets with the materials to use for creating distractions.
- Hang up the Balance Coaching Tips poster from Lesson 1.

New Mindful Movements

Poses

None

Sequences

None

Mindful Moments

Calming and Focusing
Check-In
Mindful Listening
Rest and Reflection

New Vocabulary

Distractions
Focused attention

CALMING AND FOCUSING / 2 mins

Begin every lesson with Calming and Focusing practices described in the PRACTICE GUIDE.

- **Calming:** Lead students in taking three deep mindful breaths, using the cues and modeling as described in the PRACTICE GUIDE.
- **Focusing:** Lead students in a Mindful Listening activity to practice focusing their attention on the sound of a chime using the cues as described in the PRACTICE GUIDE.

COACHING / 5 mins

Invite students to recall what growth mindset means. If necessary, remind them that a growth mindset is the belief that people's skills and intelligence can grow with learning and practice.

Tell students that they are going to practice a physical challenge that requires focused attention. Invite them to come up with several phrases they can use to coach themselves through this new task. Write their suggestions on the board so that students can refer to them throughout the class.

Invite students to practice coaching themselves by setting up low balance beams or laying down narrow strips of painter's tape for students to walk across (on tiptoe for an added challenge). Invite several students to model coaching themselves in positive ways as they cross the beam. For example, they might tell themselves "I can put one foot in front of the other" while they're walking on the beam.

BALANCE AND FOCUS / 20 mins

Tell students they will have to coach themselves through a more difficult task by using mindfulness to stay focused and on the beam. Have students line up behind the beams/tape in small groups. Explain that you are going to add a new challenge: distractions. Provide each group with distracting materials (e.g., ribbon wands, foam balls, beanbags) and tell them that while one person in the group is practicing, the others will try to distract that person's focus by waving the wands, playing catch across the beam with the beanbags, or throwing the foam balls.

NOTE *Tailor the distracting activity to fit the group. Make the balancing tasks more difficult as appropriate.*

Encourage the use of coaching as you circulate to remind students to use

mindfulness practices to concentrate and stay focused on their bodies. If needed, suggest examples of using mindfulness in their self-coaching such as: “I notice I am getting distracted. I can complete this task by focusing on one step at a time” or “I notice the movement around me making me nervous. I can breathe with each step to stay calm and focused.”

After all of the students have several turns, bring the class together and ask them questions such as:

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- ***How hard was it to stay focused with all of those distractions?***
 - ***Were you able to coach yourself to focus on the task?***
 - ***What are some ways you can use mindfulness to coach yourself in other activities?***
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SUMMARIZE FOR STUDENTS:

- *A growth mindset is the belief that people’s skills and intelligence can grow with learning and practice.*
- *Cultivating a growth mindset can help us learn new things.*
- *We can develop a growth mindset by coaching ourselves through difficult tasks.*



MINDFUL MOVEMENT / 15 mins

Mountain/Check-In (UNIT 1, LESSON 1)

Tell students that they are going to continue coaching themselves during the day’s Mindful Movement practice.

Then guide students to check in with their bodies and minds in Mountain pose.

Mountain Balance (UNIT 3, LESSON 1)

Lead students in the Mountain Balance activity from Lesson 1, leaning in all directions to create a circular movement. Tell students that if it feels comfortable for them, you’d like them to briefly close their eyes as an experiment. Ensure that students know that if they do not find this comfortable they can choose to look at one spot in the classroom instead.

Tell students that if keeping their eyes closed becomes too uncomfortable, they can open them up when needed. Remind them that if they feel too wobbly, they should take charge and stand up straight or move their feet to catch themselves before they start to fall.

Repeat some of the cues and questions from Lesson 1 before guiding students back to standing still in Mountain.

Let's Reflect!

Ask students:

- *When was it more difficult to stay balanced—when your eyes were open or closed? Why do you think that is?*

Allow one to two responses. Then tell students:

- *Your eyes give your brain information about where your body is, and that helps it tell your body how to stay balanced. Was it impossible to stay balanced with your eyes closed? Why not? Think of how you felt during that exercise. What could you feel that helped you know whether you might fall?*

Invite several students to share.

Remind students that during the last class they learned that their proprioceptive sense gathers information from lots of different sources, like their muscles, joints, and inner ears (their vestibular systems) to know where all the parts of their body are and to maintain balance. Tell them that the proprioceptive system also uses information the eyes give them, but that even when their eyes are closed, they can use their proprioceptive sense to help them balance.

Fresh Start Sequence (UNIT 1, LESSON 3)

Lead students through the sequence one time, focusing on alignment, and then repeat three times, moving at a pace of one breath per movement.

Model coaching yourself as you do so, ensuring that you offer yourself supportive and positive feedback as you move through the sequence.

Balance Coaching Tips

Remind students that in the last lesson they learned some really important guidelines for balancing postures:

- ***When you are having trouble balancing in a posture, use these questions to coach yourself:***
 - 1. Where is my center of gravity?***
 - 2. Where is my base of support?***
 - 3. Is my center of gravity directly over my base of support?***

Tree Experiment

Explain to the students that they will do an experiment with balancing in Tree pose (Unit 3, Lesson 1).

Phase 1

Pass everyone an object such as a small square of cardstock, flat glass marble, or small blocks. Instruct students to place the objects at the front of their mats and leave them there. Then give the following instructions:

- ***First, stand on one foot.***
- ***Now look all around the room like you are looking for a bug that's flying around.***

To make this more concrete, you can wave a ribbon wand around widely or use a laser pointer to give the students something to look at, pointing it all around the room at a pace that students can follow. Continue for a few moments until most students have had to put their foot down.

Briefly, ask:

- ***What happened there? I noticed lots of people putting their feet down. Did you start to lose your balance? You can be present in Tree pose, but doing another task at the same time is something else altogether, huh?***

Phase 2

Tell students:

- ***Stand directly in the middle of the mat. Your object should be at the front edge of your mat or a couple of feet in front of you. Look at your object. Focus your visual attention on that object—keep your eyes right there without looking at anything else. Now stand on one foot. Pay attention and practice your mindfulness of this object! Notice if your eyes or mind get distracted, and if they do, silently say “Nice catch!” and bring them back to the object.***

Let's Reflect!

Lead students through the following reflection to consider the effect of the visual focus:

- *When we were looking around the room, we were giving our brains a lot of different information about where we are in the space of this room. When we focused our eyes on one spot, it made proprioception and balance easier. We gave our brains a break from all that visual information and made it easier for it to process the information it was getting from our eyes, our vestibular system, and the rest of our bodies.*

Add the following balance coaching tip to the list: “Are my eyes focused on one place?”

Stork (UNIT 3, LESSON 1)

Invite a student to model how to coach themselves into this pose, and then invite the entire class to try. Remind students to refer to the Balance Coaching Tips as appropriate.

Closing Sequence (UNIT 1, LESSON 1)

Guide students through the sequence.



REST AND REFLECTION / 8 mins

Mindful Listening

Guide students to find comfortable positions for Rest and explain that today they will start with a Mindful Listening practice. Invite students to coach themselves through the practice, seeing how long they can maintain focused attention. Use the following script as reference:

- *Today we're going to practice Mindful Listening.*
- *Begin by placing your left hand on your stomach and your right hand on your heart.*
- *Let's take one deep breath together.*
- *As you breathe in, notice how your hands rise as the air fills your lungs.*

- *As you breathe out, notice how your hands fall as the air leaves your body.*
- *Wonderful.*
- *Now let's take a moment to listen to the sounds in the room.*
- *Begin by placing your attention on a sound in the room. First focus your attention on the sound. Then notice whether your mind wanders away from the sound. If it does, coach yourself by silently saying to yourself "Nice catch!" and bring your attention back to the sound. Are you ready to try it?*

For about a minute, let students listen and notice sounds.

- *Every time you notice a sound, silently label it to yourself by thinking, for example, air conditioner, bell, someone moving around. If you don't know what the sound is, simply describe it to yourself by identifying, for example, whether it's loud or soft, sharp or dull. Let's take a minute to just focus on all the sounds in the room.*

For about a minute, let students listen and notice sounds.

- *Next, bring your attention to the sound of your own breath. Can you hear it? What does it sound like? Let's see if we can focus on our breath for one minute.*
- *If your attention gets distracted by another sound in the room, notice it, and then gently coach yourself by saying "Nice catch" and encouraging yourself to bring your attention back to your breath.*

Allow students one minute of silence to listen to their breath.

- *Wonderful.*
- *Now relax your attention and take a deep breath in and out.*
- *Allow your entire body, and your attention, to relax.*

Allow for one to two minutes of Rest.

- *Silently check in with yourself. Do you feel any differently after that exercise?*

Invite students to return to a seated position. Then ask:

- *What was it like to coach yourself through the practice?*

Invite students to share their reflections as a group or in their journals.

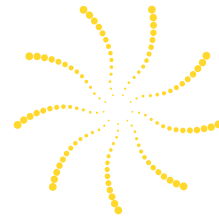
TAKE-HOME PRACTICE

- *Over the next few days, when you encounter a distraction, practice using mindfulness to coach yourself to stay focused.*



Lesson 3

WHEN IT'S DIFFICULT TO BE YOUR BEST SELF



Goal Statement

Students will identify times when it might be difficult to be their best selves. They will learn a strategy to de-escalate intense emotions and discuss ways to treat themselves with compassion when they don't feel like their best selves.

Essential Question

How can I be my best self?

“I Can” Statement

I can describe strategies to help me be my best self when I experience strong emotions.

Key Learning Objectives

Students will know...

- It can be difficult to feel like their best selves when emotions become escalated.
- An important part of being their best self is acting in ways that show care and compassion for themselves and others.
- They can be their best selves even when they experience uncomfortable thoughts and feelings.

Students will be able to...

- Identify strategies to de-escalate strong emotions.
- Practice strategies to calm and settle their minds and bodies.
- Practice taking a pause.

Materials

- Balance Coaching Tips poster

Preparation/Setup

- Hang the Balance Coaching Tips poster.

New Vocabulary

Escalate
De-escalate

New Mindful Movements

Poses

Victory
Lever

Sequences

None

Mindful Moments

Calming and Focusing
Cooling Breath
Check-In
Even-In, Even-Out Breath
Rest and Reflection

CALMING AND FOCUSING / 2 mins

Begin every lesson with Calming and Focusing practices described in the PRACTICE GUIDE.

- **Calming:** Lead students in taking three deep mindful breaths, using the cues and modeling as described in the PRACTICE GUIDE.
- **Focusing:** Lead students in a Mindful Listening activity to practice focusing their attention on the sound of a chime using the cues as described in the PRACTICE GUIDE.

***ESCALATE** / 5 mins

Give students three high-energy movements corresponding to three positions on their mats—front, center, and back. For example, front could be reaching up (like shooting hoops), then bending to touch the toes; center could be running in place; back could be jumping like a frog. Demonstrate these with vigorous repetitive actions. Explain that when you call out locations, students must quickly jump to that location and repeat the movement until you switch again.

Lead the activity through modeling while you call out locations, switching at varying intervals and rotating through each several times in a random order. The game should be quick-paced with vigorous movement.

Call for a time-out, explaining that this activity is intense and you need a pause. Ask students to place their hands on their chests, noticing their heartbeats and their breath. Ask students if they have ever been so angry, upset, or nervous or felt another emotion **escalate** and become so intense that their hearts started racing, their breath quickened, and their face turned red. Invite them to give you a signal (thumbs up) if they've had this experience. Let them know they will come back to that topic in a moment.

DE-ESCALATE / 20 mins

Tell students that they're going to explore strategies to help them **de-escalate** by calming their bodies and minds.

Have students take a few deep breaths before introducing the new breathing technique.

Cooling Breath

Introduce Cooling Breath as a breath that can help them cool down when they are feeling strong emotions. Tell students you are going to show them two different ways to do Cooling Breath and invite them to find the one they like best.

Model and lead students to try both methods using the following cues as reference:

**DIFFERENTIATION**

You may choose to increase the challenge by telling students to do as you say, not as you do. Go back and forth between modeling correctly and challenging the students by calling out one location, but modeling another. Remind students to use their Mindful Listening!

1. **Method 1:** Roll your tongue (curl the right and left sides toward the center to make a roll or taco shape) and stick the tip of the tongue out of pursed lips, making a tube for your breath.
2. **Method 2:** Purse your lips gently and make the shape of the letter O with them. Keep your tongue against the back of your bottom teeth, so that the air can go over your tongue.
3. Inhale slowly.
4. Gently exhale through your mouth.
5. Notice the sound of your breath.
6. Repeat five times.



Let's Reflect!

Guide students in checking in on the effects of this practice. Ask questions such as:

-
- *How did it feel?*
 - *How did it affect your body?*
 - *Is there an animal that you can think of that sticks out its tongue when it is hot?* [Answer: a dog.]
 - *What are some examples of other times when you could use this breath?*
 - *If you were experiencing a strong emotion and you responded by breathing in this way, what might happen?*
-

Escalation

Remind students that they experience emotions in their bodies. Ask students to recall the Degrees of Emotion activity from Unit 2, showing them an example of the diagram they completed. Explain that as an emotional experience becomes stronger (as it goes up on the thermometer), it is **escalating**, or rising in its intensity. Explain that they may feel that escalation in their bodies just like they did when they were doing intense physical activity, and that as that emotion escalates, they might get signals like a racing heart, tense muscles, or changes in their breathing. Discuss how this affects their minds and behavior using questions such as:

-
- *When this happens, how do you feel mentally? What is going on in your mind?* [Answer: We may feel like we can't think clearly, focus, or choose our actions wisely.]
 - *Is it easy or difficult to be your best self in these moments when your emotions have escalated? Why?*
-

The Power of the Pause

Explain that the Cooling Breath, as well as some of the other breathing practices they've learned, like the Calming Breath and the Even-In, Even-Out Breath, can be used to **de-escalate** and create a pause between their emotion and their words/actions. If they feel a strong emotion coming up, a mindful pause to breathe can help them feel more calm and settled and enable them to respond thoughtfully. Then ask them:

-
- ***How can taking a pause help you be your best self when you experience strong emotions? (If it doesn't come up, remind students that an important part of being their best selves is showing care and compassion for themselves and others.)***
 - ***When you take a pause and breathe, do you push the emotion away? How can you respond to the emotion with curiosity and kindness?***
[Answer: Ask what message it is sending; ask myself what I need.]
-

SUMMARIZE FOR STUDENTS:

- *We can be our best selves even when we experience strong uncomfortable emotions.*
- *Pausing can help us calm and settle our minds and bodies.*
- *Taking a pause is one way we can show care and compassion for ourselves and others when we experience uncomfortable thoughts and feelings.*

When It's Still Difficult to be My Best Self

Ask students if they think taking a pause and breathing will always work to help them feel more like their best selves. Then point out that sometimes emotions can hang around even after they've delivered their messages. Illustrate this phenomenon for students by sharing a short story about your own life similar to the following example:

- *Do you remember the storm we experienced a few nights ago? The sound of thunder woke me up, and I felt really startled and afraid. I got up and made sure all the windows in my house/apartment were closed and that I was safe. After tossing and turning for a while, I took a pause, practiced some calming breaths, and finally fell asleep. In the morning, I noticed that the sun was shining and the storm had passed, but when I checked in with myself, I realized I still felt afraid. My body and mind were actually anxious all morning. I was jumpy and my mind was racing and I didn't really understand why. I decided to write down how I was feeling and then go for a walk to remind my body that it was safe until I felt calm and settled again.*

Point out that if they notice uncomfortable emotions hanging around, even after they have taken a pause, they can practice other ways of treating themselves with kindness and compassion. Invite students to brainstorm aloud how they might do this, and make sure that ***talking to someone*** and ***asking an adult for help*** are both included.



MINDFUL MOVEMENT / 15 mins

Explain to students that in today's Mindful Movement practice, they will continue learning new balance poses and coaching themselves in balance poses. Invite them to practice being their best selves as they try out the movements.

Mountain/Check-In (UNIT 1, LESSON 1)

Guide students in checking in with themselves in Mountain pose.

Mountain/Sunrise (UNIT 2, LESSON 1)

Guide students through this mini-sequence. To continue building a connection between breath and movement, lead them in breathing in for a count of three while lifting their arms in Sunrise and breathing out for a count of three while lowering their arms to Mountain pose.

Guide students to understand that sometimes a simple movement can help them to calm themselves.

Even-In, Even-Out Breath (UNIT 2, LESSON 1)

Lead students through this practice and emphasize that Even-In, Even-Out Breath, with or without movement, can be used to create a pause to help them manage their emotional responses.

Fresh Start Sequence (UNIT 1, LESSON 3)

Guide students through the sequence.

Balance Coaching Tips (UNIT 3, LESSON 1)

Show or project the Balance Coaching Tips poster. Remind students that mindful

TEACHING TIP

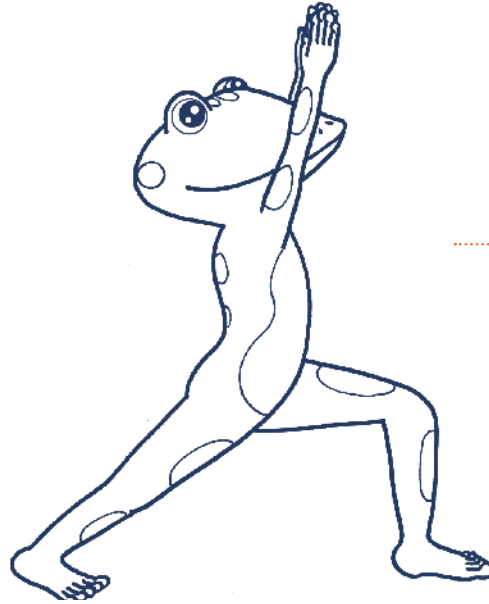


If students feel awkward or silly with the first Cooling Breath method, that is okay! Encourage them to try it once and then choose which method they like best. Remind them that a little laughter and silliness is sometimes exactly what they need when they are feeling stress or a strong emotion.

focus and coaching themselves with the balance tips will help them develop their balance skills. Introduce the idea that everyone's balance is a little different and that their balance might differ on different sides of their body.

Tell students:

- *If you get distracted by the urge to compare your balance pose to someone else's, bring your attention back to your own experience of balance and keep your focus on your breath.*



VICTORY

Victory new

Demonstrate and guide students into the pose using the following cues as reference:

1. Begin in Standing Starfish pose.
2. Notice if your feet are so wide apart that it is uncomfortable to stand and keep upright—then you know to bring your feet in a bit. Notice if your feet are too close. Are you able to move them out without losing your ability to press firmly down into the ground evenly through both your feet?
3. Holding your hands on your hips, turn the hips to face right, simultaneously turning the right foot toward the right and the left foot about 45 degrees to the right. (An alternative entry into the pose is to face the short edge of the mat and take a big step back with the left foot.)
4. Inhale: Straighten your arms up alongside your ears with fingers stretched.
5. Exhale: Press down through both feet and bend your front knee.

Make sure your knee stays aligned with your ankle and doesn't go over the front toes.

6. Hold the pose for three to five breaths.
 - Breathing in, imagine the expansion of your breath lengthening your torso as you reach up.
 - Breathing out, find your balance in your legs, pressing deeply into the ground with the back foot.
7. Inhale: Unbend your front knee to slightly lift up from the pose.
8. Exhale: Turn to face the left, repeating the pose on the left side or jump back to Mountain before starting on the other side.



LEVER

Lever new

Choose one of the two Setup Methods and the cues that follow to demonstrate the pose, name the pose, and guide students into pose. If this is the first time practicing Lever, use Setup Method 2. If time allows, invite the class to try both Setup Methods.

Model falling out of the pose, taking a pause, and then rebuilding it. Ask students how you were able to be your best self by showing yourself care and compassion when practicing this pose. Invite them to do the same on the opposite side.

Setup Method 1 (MORE CHALLENGING)

1. Begin in Victory pose, facing the front of the classroom. Notice which foot is your front foot.
2. Inhale: Straighten your arms up alongside your ears, with fingers stretched.

NOTE Remind students about their center of gravity as they move to the next position.

3. Exhale: Bend into the front knee and press into the earth; keeping

TEACHING TIP



Jumping back to Mountain and starting over will allow you to have the class facing the front of the room for both sides.

your front knee soft, begin to lengthen through your hands; with a long spine begin tilting forward onto your steady, strong front leg.

4. **Inhale:** Feel the toes of the back foot begin to lift and leave the ground and experiment with slowly lifting the leg up, while stretching forward through the hands and extending back through the leg and foot.

Setup Method 2 (MORE ACCESSIBLE)

1. **Begin in Mountain pose.** Shift your weight to center over your right leg.
2. **Inhale:** Lift your arms overhead alongside your ears, reaching up with your palms facing toward each other.
3. **Exhale:** Imagine that the heel of the left foot to the crown of the head is one long lever that stays in a straight line.
4. **Inhale:** Begin to hinge forward slightly at your right hip.
5. **Extend your left leg back,** lifting your foot from the floor.
6. **Exhale:** Continue to hinge forward, lifting your left leg in order to keep a long line from the crown of your head to your heel. Only hinge forward as much as is comfortable and safe. Make sure you don't lose your long straight line!

Next Steps (EITHER SETUP METHOD)

1. **Imagine your body is like a lever/seesaw.** There is one long line from your fingertips to the foot of your lifted leg. When your leg lifts, the upper body shifts forward the same amount. Everyone's seesaw might be in a different place, and that's okay. Some might have the leg low and the arms and spine high, and some might have the leg, spine, and arms parallel with the floor.
2. **Hold the pose for three to five breaths.**
 - **Breathing in,** lengthen your spine, sending your arms forward and heel back.
 - **Breathing out,** press down into the mat through your supporting foot, feeling how strong your supporting leg is.
3. **Go as far as you feel comfortable;** remember that touching down and going back into the pose is not failing but is part of the practice.
4. **Return to Mountain or Victory pose.**
5. **Repeat on the opposite side.**

Mountain (UNIT 1, LESSON 1)

As students stand in Mountain pose, ask them to take a moment to reflect on the previous pose with questions such as:

-
- *How were you breathing while you balanced?*
 - *Do you think your breath has any effect on your balance?*
 - *Do you have any ideas for a Balance Coaching Tip related to your breath?*
-

Briefly discuss and then add the following question to your Balance Coaching Tips poster: *“Is my breathing slow and steady?”*

Closing Sequence (UNIT 1, LESSON 1)

Guide students through the sequence.



REST AND REFLECTION / 3 mins

Guide students to take a position where they feel safe and comfortable for Rest.

Cooling Breath

Guide students to practice a few rounds of Cooling Breath:

- *Shift your attention from your breath to notice how your body feels. Do you feel relaxed? Calm and collected? Allow your mind and body to relax. Continue resting and breathing in any way that is comfortable for you.*

Allow one to two minutes of Rest.

- *Notice how your body feels after Cooling Breath and rest.*

Invite students to share their reflections as a group or in their journals.

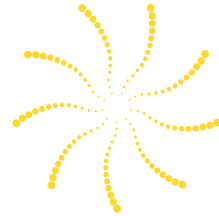
TAKE-HOME PRACTICE

- *Time to chill: Practice Cooling Breath to get more familiar with it, even if you are not feeling a strong emotion. How do your body and mind feel after the practice?*



Lesson 4

A STRESSFUL LESSON



Goal Statement

Students will explore what stress means and how it feels. They will identify stressors in their lives and discern what is within and outside of their control.

Essential Question

Why do I feel stressed?

“I Can” Statement

I can identify stressors.

Key Learning Objectives

Students will know...

- Stress is pressure or strain on their mind or body.
- It is difficult for a person to feel or act like their best self when they experience too many stressors.
- While many stressors are not in their control, how they respond to stress is something they can practice.
- Some stressors are big and cannot be managed alone.

Students will be able to...

- Describe how stress feels in their body.

Materials

- About 15-20 balls or beanbags
- Balance Coaching Tips poster
- What's In My Control? worksheet
- Pencils
- Three signs saying, Not Very Much Stress, Some Stress, and A Lot of Stress, respectively

Preparation/Setup

- Print 1 copy of the What's In My Control? worksheet per student.
- Hang the signs in different areas of the classroom.
- Hang the Balance Coaching Tips poster.
- Set out the pencils.

New Mindful Movements

Poses

None

Sequences

None

Mindful Moments

Calming and Focusing

Letting-Go Breath

Check-In

Cooling Breath

Tension Release

Rest and Reflection

New Vocabulary

Stressors

Stress

CALMING AND FOCUSING / 2 mins

Begin every lesson with Calming and Focusing practices described in the PRACTICE GUIDE.

- **Calming:** Lead students in taking three deep mindful breaths, using the cues and modeling as described in the PRACTICE GUIDE.
- **Focusing:** Lead students in a Mindful Listening activity to practice focusing their attention on the sound of a chime using the cues as described in the PRACTICE GUIDE.

PAUSE FOR A HEALTHIER CHOICE / 13 mins**Thinking About Stress**

Hand out two sticky notes to each student as they are entering the classroom. Before or after the Calming and Focusing exercise, ask them to write one **stressor**, or something that makes them feel pressure, on each sticky note. In other words, tell students you want them to write one thing that causes stress for kids their age on each note. Model this for students as appropriate. Point out the signs on the wall that say Not Very Much Stress, Some Stress, and A Lot of Stress. Invite students to place each of their sticky notes under the sign that feels appropriate.

Juggling Stress

Divide students into two or three groups and ask them to stand in circles.

Give each group one ball (or beanbag) to start and explain that the objective of this game is to keep the ball moving without letting it touch the ground. When they have the ball, they can toss it to anyone in the circle except for one of the people directly next to them. Encourage students to take steps for safety (saying a person's name and making eye contact before tossing the ball to them).

Explain that the ball (or beanbag) they are tossing is a stressor, and give it a name from the examples of stress that students have generated (e.g., homework).

Then add another ball to each group, and give it the name of another stressor (e.g., arguing with a friend) or ask them to name it from one of their own examples.

Continue adding balls in this manner until each group has a lot/ too much to handle. Tell them once a ball hits the ground, to leave it on the floor. After a few minutes of the game, call time and ask each group to see how many balls they were able to keep in the game.

Reflect on the Game

Invite several students to share what they think the word **stress** means. Help students conclude that stress means anything that puts pressure or strain on their bodies or minds (physically, mentally or emotionally).

Then explore the effects of stress by asking students question such as:

-
- **How did you feel when you started the game and you only had a manageable number of balls?** [Answer: became focused or motivated, made an effort to perform well.]
 - **How do you think a little bit of stress affects people?**
 - **[Point out some of the stressors listed under the heading Not Very Much Stress.] Would these feel the same or different if you were already juggling several other stressors?**
 - **What happened and how did you feel when you started to get too many balls in the game?** [Answer: felt overwhelmed; started to lose track of what was happening; felt physical feelings like tension or increased heart rate; gave up.]
 - **What do you think happens when a person has too much stress?**
NOTE Make sure to mention that a person with a lot of stress would not feel or act like their best self.
 - **How does stress feel in your mind and body? Do you think stress affects everyone in the same way?**
-

SUMMARIZE FOR STUDENTS:

- Stress is pressure or strain on our minds or bodies.
- It is difficult for a person to feel or act like their best self when they experience too many stressors.

*WHAT CAN I CONTROL? / 10 mins

Tell students that one way to show themselves care when they feel stress is to notice what is in their control and what is outside of their control.

Have students stand up and tell them that you will name potential stressors, and they should sit down if the stressor is something that is within their control.

Help students notice that many of the stressors they listed are, unfortunately, outside of their control.

Have students stand again and tell them that you are going to go through another list and they should sit if what you name is something within their

★ DIFFERENTIATION

If they haven't already come up in the conversation, ask if students know of any big stressors that affect whole communities. Collect answers (e.g. natural disasters, violence, poverty, food insecurity, racism, job insecurity) and ask if these stressors are in their control. Ask how these stressors might make it hard for someone to feel like their best self. (Consider using a hypothetical student their age to frame the conversation. Do not ask any students to share personal experiences. Accept all ideas students suggest.) Ask if they practiced breathing and Mindful Movement everyday, if that would take the stress away. Ask if they asked an adult for help, if that could solve the problem. Conclude that some stressors will take the whole community working together to really change. Ask if there are ways people show care and compassion to each other when they experience those big stressors. Explain to students that later in the year they will have a chance to think more about community and how they can work together to make a positive contribution.

control. List several potential responses to stress that could either make things better or worse (their attitude, their behaviors, the words they speak to themselves, the words they speak to others, expressing their emotions, asking for help, etc.).

Help them notice that while the stressors they experience in their lives are often outside their control, they do sometimes have a choice in how they respond to those stressors.

Then pick one of the most common everyday stressors that students mentioned and invite the students to brainstorm as a class or turn and talk with a partner for one to two minutes about how they could coach themselves through that particular stressor. Help students identify specific actions they can take to relieve stress, using examples from class when possible.

Remind students that an important part of being one's best self is acting in ways that show care and compassion for themselves and others. Then ask students:

-
- ***How can you be your best self when you experience stress?***
NOTE Make sure that asking for help is included as a strategy.
 - ***How could taking actions to reduce stress help someone be their best self?***
 - ***Are there some stressors that are too big to manage by yourself?***
-

SUMMARIZE FOR STUDENTS:

- *An important part of being our best selves is acting in ways that show care for ourselves and others.*
- *While many stressors are not in our control, the way we respond to stress often is within our control, and we can practice ways to respond to stress.*
- *Some stressors are big and cannot be managed alone.*
- *Asking for help can help us be our best selves.*



MINDFUL MOVEMENT / 15 mins

Remind students that both exercise and relaxation are great strategies to show care for themselves when they are feeling stressed. They are also very helpful as habits to prevent stress. Explain that today they will continue coaching themselves in balance poses and that they will also learn two new strategies for relaxation.

Letting-Go Breath

Tell students:

- *One great strategy to de-escalate, release stress, and calm and relax your body is to take a deep breath in and a longer slower breath out. That long slow breath out helps tell your mind and body to slow down. As we breathe out in Letting-Go Breath, imagine you are letting go of all the stresses we discussed today.*
- *Sitting comfortably, gently place one hand on your heart and one hand on your belly.*
- *During this practice, we're going to breathe in while we count to three. Then we'll breathe out while we count to five.*
- *Breathe in for one, two, three.*
- *Breathe out for one, two, three, four, five.*
- *Breathe in for one, two, three.*
- *Breathe out for one, two, three, four, five.*
- *As you breathe out, imagine letting go of anything that's bothering you.*
- *(*Repeat this three to five times.)*
- *Silently check in with your body and your mind. Do you notice any changes?*

After practicing a few rounds, ask students to check in and notice how they feel in mind and body. Invite a few to share.

Mountain/Sunrise (UNIT 2, LESSON 1)

Guide students through this mini-sequence.

Fresh Start Sequence (UNIT 1, LESSON 3)

Guide students through this sequence.

Balance Coaching (UNIT 3, LESSON 1)

Show the Balance Coaching Tips poser. Remind students that mindful focus

and coaching themselves with the balance tips will help them develop their balance skills. Remind them of the new Balance Coaching Tip: “*Is my breathing slow and steady?*” Add this tip to the poster and explain that slow, steady breaths like Even-In, Even-Out Breath or Calming Breath will support their balance poses, especially when students are nervous or uncertain.

Victory (UNIT 3, LESSON 3)

Guide students through this pose.

Lever (UNIT 3, LESSON 3)

Guide students through this pose.

See-Saw Challenge

After practicing Lever pose on the both sides, introduce the following challenge:

- *If you'd like to challenge your balance practice, turn your Lever pose into a seesaw. First, choose the side where you feel most stable and get back into Lever pose. Keeping your supporting leg steady, try to keep your balance while you seesaw the rest of your body up and down. Your seesaw might be barely moving, or it might be shifting up and down quickly. Did you know it's sometimes more challenging to move slowly?*

Remind students that they are in charge of keeping their bodies safe in this pose. If they feel unstable, they should place their foot down and rebuild the pose.

Remind the class that everyone's balance is a little different and that their balance might even differ from one side to the other.

Mountain/Check-In (UNIT 1, LESSON 1)

Lead students through a Check-In exercise in Mountain pose to reflect on what they're feeling after the new challenge. Ask questions such as:

-
- *Did you feel your center of gravity shifting?*
 - *How challenging was it?*
 - *Did you feel yourself getting frustrated?*
 - *How did you coach yourself through the pose? What phrases did you use to develop a growth mindset?*
-

Cooling Breath (UNIT 3, LESSON 3)

Ask students if they remember the new breathing practice that helps them cool down when they feel strong emotions.

Model the breath and then lead students through it for a few breaths, inviting them to choose the method that feels most calming for them.

Closing Sequence (UNIT 1, LESSON 1)

Guide students through the sequence.



REST AND REFLECTION / 8 mins

Invite students to find a safe and comfortable position for Rest, preferably lying down on their backs.

Remind students that one important Best Self Strategy is to show themselves care when they are feeling stressed through relaxation. Explain that relaxation is a skill they can practice and improve and that today they will learn a new tool for relaxation that they can use when they feel stress in their bodies.

Tension Release

NOTE *The Tension Release exercise helps students build body awareness and skills for managing stress through relaxation. In the Tension Release exercise, you will direct attention in a scan of the body like you would in the body scan. However, you will also be instructing students to bring tension to their muscle groups and then relax them completely using the breath as a guide.*

Tell students:

- *We're going to do this practice while lying on our mats.*
- *First, take a look around the room, then lie down in a way that feels safe and comfortable for you. Close your eyes if it's comfortable. If you would rather not close your eyes, you can find one place to rest your eyes.*

- *Place your attention on your feet. Notice the soles of your feet, your toes, your heels, and the tops of the feet. Notice where your feet are touching the mat.*
- *Now take a deep breath in, and as you do so, squeeze all the muscles in your feet. Point your foot, curl your toes, squeeze!*
- *And now breathe out slowly like in Letting-Go Breath, and as you do, let all of that tension go. Relax your feet. Notice how your feet feel after you allow them to relax.*
- *Place your attention on your legs. Notice your calves, knees, and thighs; notice the weight of your legs on the mat.*
- *Take a deep breath in, and as you do so, lift your legs off the mat and gently squeeze all the muscles in your legs. Allow your legs to hover over the mat for a moment.*
- *And now take a slow Letting-Go Breath out and let all of that tension go. Relax your legs. Notice how your legs feel after you release all that tension.*
- *Place your attention on your stomach. Notice how it moves up and down with your breath.*
- *Take a deep breath in and squeeze all the muscles in your stomach. Pull your belly button and squeeze!*
- *Breathe out slowly, and let all of that tension go. Relax all the muscles around your stomach. Notice how your stomach feels now.*
- *Now place your attention on your arms and shoulders. Notice your fingers, your hands, your elbows, and your shoulders; notice the weight of your arms on the mat.*
- *Take a deep breath in, and squeeze all the muscles in your arms. Squeeze your hands into fists and pull your shoulders up toward your ears!*
- *Breathe out slowly and let all of that tension go. Relax your arms, loosen your hands and fingers, and sink your shoulders down to the floor. Notice how your arms and shoulders feel after you allow them to relax.*
- *Now place your attention on your face and head. Notice your mouth, your eyes, and your forehead; notice the weight of your head on the mat.*
- *Breathe in and squeeze all the muscles in your face. Squeeze your eyes shut, clench your jaw tight, and scrunch up your eyebrows!*

- *Breathe out a long slow Letting-Go Breath and let all of that tension go. Relax your face. Open your mouth just a little bit so that there's some space between your teeth. Notice the difference in how your face and head feel.*
- *And now place your attention on your whole body. Notice the weight of your entire body on the mat.*
- *Breathe in, and as you do so, squeeze all the muscles in your body. Squeeze your feet, legs, belly, arms, shoulders, and face! You can even lift your head and arms and legs off the mat. Feel all that tension!*
- *Now take a long slow Letting-Go Breath out and let all of the tension go. Relax your whole body. Let it be heavy on the mat. Imagine all of your muscles are getting soft and heavy, sinking toward the floor. Notice how your body feels after you allow it to relax.*
- *And now take several Letting-Go Breaths in and out, allowing yourself to rest. Notice what your body feels like after this practice.*

After a few silent breaths in Rest pose, guide students to turn to one side and then find their way back to seated.

- *What did you notice during the Tension Release practice? How does your body feel when it is relaxed?*

Invite students to share as a group or in their journals.

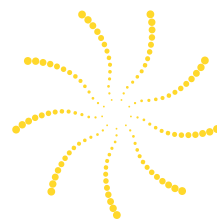
TAKE-HOME PRACTICE

- *Relax and Let Go: Choose either the Letting-Go Breath or the Tension Release exercise to relax before bed.*



Lesson 5

RESPONDING TO STRESS



Goal Statement

Students will identify and practice ways of responding to stress.

Essential Question

How can I respond to stress in my life?

“I Can” Statement

I can identify two Best Self Strategies to use to respond to stress.

Key Learning Objectives

Students will know...

- While many stressors are not in their control, they can practice strategies to care for themselves in response to stress.

Students will be able to...

- Identify their favorite Best Self Strategies to use to prevent and respond to stress.
- Practice strategies to relieve stress.

Materials

- Whiteboard or display screen
- Pencils
- Three signs that say Not Very Much Help, Some Help, and A Lot of Help, respectively
- Degrees of Stress worksheet
- Balance Coaching Tips poster
- Soundtrack of people laughing

Preparation/Setup

- Preload laughter soundtrack.
- Make 1 copy per student of the Degrees of Stress worksheet.
- Set out pencils.
- Load or post the list of stress busters from Lesson 4.
- Hang up the Balance Coaching Tips poster.

New Mindful Movements

Poses

Pointing Dog
Boat

Sequences

Superhero Sequence

Mindful Moments

Calming and Focusing
Check-In

Lion's Breath
[Optional] Letting Go Breath
Rest and Reflection

New Vocabulary

Proverb
Best Self Strategies

CALMING AND FOCUSING / 2 mins

Begin every lesson with Calming and Focusing practices described in the PRACTICE GUIDE.

- **Calming:** Lead students in taking three deep mindful breaths, using the cues and modeling as described in the PRACTICE GUIDE.
- **Focusing:** Lead students in a Mindful Listening activity to practice focusing their attention on the sound of a chime using the cues as described in the PRACTICE GUIDE.

HA, HA / 5 mins

Begin the lesson by playing a soundtrack of people laughing (or have it playing when students enter the room). Play it until students begin to giggle and laugh along with the soundtrack.

Put up the proverb *laughter is the best medicine* and ask students what the proverb means and what physical or emotional conditions laughter might be a good medicine for. To focus on stress relief, ask questions such as:

-
- ***Would laughter help a sickness such as the flu?***
 - ***What about a really bad sore throat?***
 - ***What conditions do you think laughter could help the most?***

NOTE Students should recall the concept of stress from the last lesson.

Emphasize with students that laughter is one way to help relieve stress, and ask students to raise their hands or give some other signal if they know more strategies to respond to stress.

***BEST SELF STRATEGIES / 10 mins**

Ask students to recall for you what it means to be one's best self. Accept a variety of answers. Remind students that they have been learning, discussing, and practicing lots of strategies in this class to help them feel and act like their best selves. Explain that these Best Self Strategies are often very helpful ways to respond to stress.

Hand out several sticky notes to each student. Tell them that you want them to write on each sticky note at least one Best Self Strategy that helps them show care to themselves when they feel stressed. Explain these could be strategies they learned in class or any other strategy that helps them to feel safe, healthy, and calm. Tell them to think of activities they do regularly that bring them joy and to think of activities or practices that they use specifically when they are feeling upset, challenged, or frustrated (practicing Calming and Focusing, cuddling with a pet, taking a walk, playing with friends, etc.).

Model this for students as appropriate.

Invite students to place their sticky notes on the board. If students did not include “Take a pause,” add it and recall with students why you find pausing to be an important Best Self Strategy to use in times of stress. If students did not include “Ask for help,” add it and emphasize the importance of asking for help when you need it, especially when stressors are out of our control

Point out the three signs on the wall that say Not Very Much Help, Some Help, and A Lot of Help, respectively. Tell students that you are going to read some of the strategies that they identified and that you want students to move to the part of the room that represents how helpful that strategy would be in a stressful situation.

Point out that there’s no right or wrong answer, that different people have different strategies to feel like their best self, that some strategies can help bring a sense of calm and safety in a moment of stress and can be done as habits to prevent stress. Emphasize that right now you want them to think about which strategies work best for them in their own lives.

Remind students that:

- While many stressors are not in their control, they can practice strategies to care for themselves in response to stress.
- They can use Best Self Strategies to respond to the stress they experience.

DEGREES OF STRESS / 15 mins

Hand out the Degrees of Stress worksheet. Tell students that during this activity, they’re going to put together what they’ve learned about stress to create their own stress-response plan.

Invite them to recall the Degrees of Emotion activity that they did in Unit 2. Remind them that the thermometer represented different **degrees of intensity**. Tell them that the same is true of this thermometer: The hotter regions represent more intense experiences of stress while the cooler regions represent less intense experiences of stress.

Ask students to begin by recording in the center of the thermometer what different degrees of stress feel like in their bodies. Model this for students by explaining that when you feel a little bit of stress, you notice that your jaw starts to clench. When you feel a medium amount of stress, you notice that your stomach gets tight. And when you feel a lot of stress, you notice that your heart starts to beat very fast, you get headaches, or you have trouble sleeping. Invite students to reflect on their own experiences of stress and then give them several minutes to complete this portion of the worksheet.

★ DIFFERENTIATION

Ask students what it means to **prevent** something and what it means to **respond** to something. Ask the whole group or small groups to sort the Best Self Strategies into two groups: (1) strategies that will help prevent stress and (2) strategies that will help them respond to stress in the moment. Ask:

- What are the differences between the strategies in the two groups?
- Are there any strategies that belong in both groups?
- Would these lists change if we were talking specifically about stress at home? What about stress at school?

Next, tell students that you'd like them to fill out the left side of the worksheet by identifying stressors in their lives that cause different degrees of stress; in other words, you want them to identify stressors that cause a small amount of stress, a medium amount of stress, and a large amount of stress. Remind students that they can choose what they feel like sharing for this activity, and that if something is very personal, they do not have to write it down or share with the class. Invite students to revisit their sticky notes from Lesson 3 if necessary. Remind students that different people respond differently to stressors and that there are no right or wrong answers so they should write what is true for them. Then give students several minutes to complete this task.

Finally, invite students to recall the Best Self Strategies the class suggested for responding to stress. Ask them to identify one Best Self Strategy they can use when they're feeling a small amount of stress, one strategy they can use when they're feeling a medium amount of stress, and one strategy they can use when they're feeling a lot of stress. Remind students that different strategies work differently for different people. Invite them to develop a plan that works for them.

Once students have completed their worksheets, ask them questions such as:

-
- ***How can knowing what stress feels like in our bodies help us respond mindfully to stress?***
 - ***How can identifying the stressors in our lives help us show ourselves care and compassion?***
 - ***Do we have to wait until we experience stress to use our Best Self Strategies? What happens when we practice these strategies regularly during times when we aren't feeling stressed? [Answer: It can strengthen our skills; help us form a positive habit; help us feel more healthy and happy/like our best selves; prevent some future stress.]***
-

Then invite students to share parts of their worksheets aloud if they wish. This can be a personal experience, so remind students they can decide what they feel comfortable sharing.

To conclude the activity, summarize for students:

SUMMARIZE FOR STUDENTS:

- *While many stressors are not in our control, we can practice strategies to care for ourselves in response to stress.*
- *We can use Best Self Strategies to respond to and limit stress in our lives.*



MINDFUL MOVEMENT / 15 min

Tell students:

- *In this unit we've talked a lot about how pausing, taking deep breaths, and exercise are great strategies for responding to stress—so let's get to practicing! We'll also learn a new funny breathing practice to help us de-stress as well!*

Mountain/Check-In (UNIT 1, LESSON 1)

Guide students to stand in Mountain pose and take a moment to check in with how their bodies are feeling in the present moment.

Fresh Start Sequence (UNIT 1, LESSON 3)

Guide students through the sequence.

Lion's Breath

Tell students that they will learn a new breathing practice called Lion's Breath that they can use to release stress. Explain that not all of the breathing techniques have to be quiet and serious. This is a fun breathing technique that gives them a chance to get silly together. Use the following cues as reference:

1. **Begin by sitting on your heels with your hands on your knees.**
2. **Inhale: Lift your head and chest and roll your shoulders back. Tense the muscles in your face.**
3. **Exhale forcefully through your mouth as you lean forward and stretch the whole face, opening your mouth as wide as you can and sticking out your tongue. Imagine opening your mouth to roar like a lion, but letting the breath be your only sound.**
4. **> OPTIONAL: Add hand movements: On the inhalation, squeeze your fists up by your shoulders; on the exhalation, stretch your arms forward, opening your palms and fingers wide.**

Explain to students that Lion's Breath is a great way to let go of anger or worry. Students can imagine gathering up all the tension in their bodies and minds and releasing it with their powerful Lion's Breath.

Guide students to check in with how they are feeling in body and mind after the Lion's Breath. Have them share their reflections.

Acknowledge that students may not always be able to do Lion's Breath because they may not be alone or around people who understand what they are doing. Ask students to name some breathing exercises that they can do anytime anywhere (Even-In, Even-Out Breath, Letting-Go Breath).

Cat/Cow (UNIT 1, LESSON 1)

Guide students through this mini-sequence.



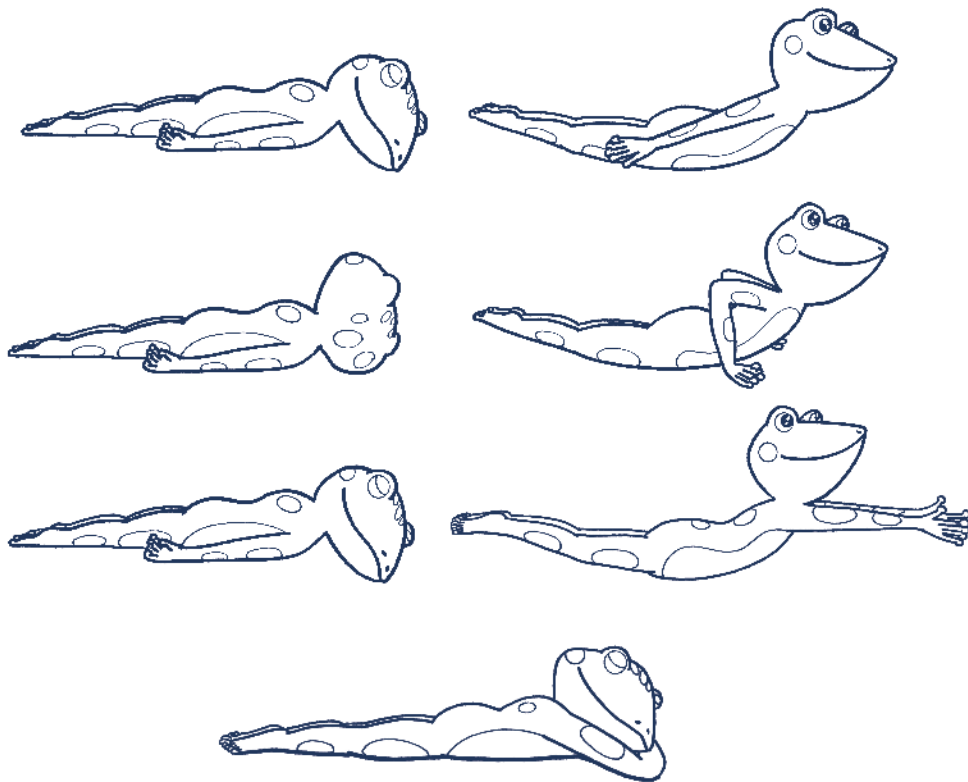
Pointing Dog new

Explain that Pointing Dog is a balancing pose that they do on the ground. Demonstrate the movement once, and then model as students follow along. Encourage students to focus on finding steady, even breath to guide the movement.

- 1. Begin in Hands and Knees pose, with your shoulders stacked above your palms and your hips stacked above your knees. Keep your spine long and neutral and your head looking down.**
- 2. Inhale: Lift your left arm and then your right leg, stretching them out from the body, level with your spine. Pause here.**
- 3. Exhale: Lower your arm and your leg slowly and return to neutral on your Hands and Knees.**
- 4. Inhale: Lift your right arm and your left leg, stretching them out from your body, level with your spine.**
- 5. Exhale: Lower your arm and leg slowly and return to neutral on your Hands and Knees.**

6. Repeat for three to five breaths, alternating sides with each inhalation.
 - Breathing in, imagine a long line extending from the heel of the raised foot to the fingertips of the raised arm.
 - Breathing out, engage the belly to support the spine.
 - Breathing in, feel all the muscles working to keep the body balanced.
 - Breathing out, find stability around your center of gravity before lifting and balancing again.
7. For an added balance challenge, hold the pose for several breaths on each side instead of alternating sides with each inhalation.

SUPERHERO SEQUENCE



Superhero Sequence new

Model and guide students through Superhero Sequence including Superhero A, B, and/or C as you choose. You may choose to demonstrate all Superhero poses in this lesson or to focus on one and add other options into the sequence in future lessons. As you demonstrate, name the poses (Superhero A, B, and C) and lead the students through the sequence at least once. In at least one repetition, hold each pose for about three to five breaths.

While the students are resting their heads to one side between the poses, remind them to recognize this time as a moment of pause. Ask them:

-
- *What is this pause good for?*
 - *Why is it important?*
 - *How can it help us show our bodies care and compassion?*
-

Use the following cues as reference:

- 1.** Begin by lying on your belly, with legs together, and your arms long by the sides of your body.
- 2.** Inhale (Superhero A): Lift your legs, chest, and head. Keep your legs together and your toes reaching for the wall behind you. Count three to five breaths:
 - Breathing in, lengthen your back, arms, and legs.
 - Breathing out, lift your belly button up toward your spine to support your back, sending your shoulders back away from your ears.
- 3.** Exhale: Release down. Rest your head to one side.
- 4.** Inhale (Superhero B): Place your palms flat on the mat beside your rib cage, with your elbows pointing back. Lift your legs, chest, and head.
- 5.** Exhale: Release down. Rest head on one side.
- 6.** Inhale (Superhero C): Reach your arms forward alongside your ears. Lift your legs, chest, and head.
- 7.** Exhale: Release your arms down to the mat and rest your head on your arms or to one side.

Not So Serious!

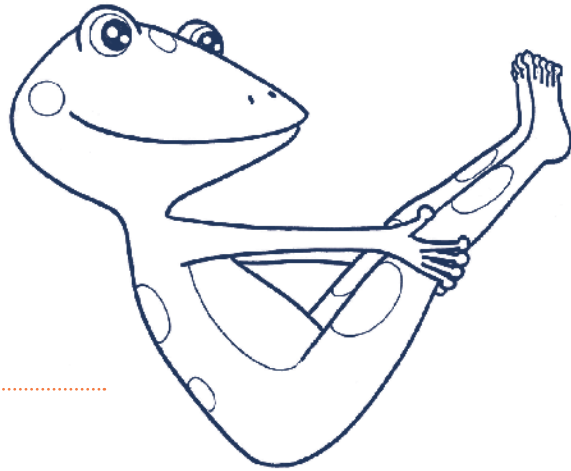
Remind students:

- *Even though what we do in this class is very important, it doesn't always have to be serious. It's also important for us to have fun in our practice and to bring a sense of humor to it. When we are practicing something challenging like holding a pose for a long time or doing a difficult balance, it is always helpful to have a sense of humor. Often when we are very focused and trying really hard, we can start to get tense, clench our jaws, and furrow our brows.*

[Demonstrate by taking a pose and exaggerating with a serious face.]

- *We might even start to be hard on ourselves with our self-talk.*

When we notice this happening, smiling or even laughing can help us relax and relieve stress. To remind us of this, we'll add "Have a sense of humor" to our Balance Coaching Tips poster today.



BOAT

Boat new

Model and guide students through the new pose using the following cues as reference:

1. **Begin by sitting tall with the crown of your head lifted, your knees bent, and your feet flat on the mat in front of you. Wiggle on the mat and feel your two sit bones pressing into the mat.**
2. **Inhale:** With your hands at the side of the knees, lift your heart.
3. **Exhale:** Engage your tummy muscles by pulling your belly button closer to your spine. Begin lifting one foot off the floor and then the other, pointing your toes toward the floor. Balance your Boat pose on your sit bones.
4. **Inhale:** Extend your arms, pressing through your fingertips, with your palms facing the knees.
5. **Hold the pose for three to five breaths:**
 - **Breathing in,** lengthen your spine, lifting your head and heart.
 - **Breathing out,** engage your belly muscles to support your spine.
 - **Breathing in,** lift and lengthen your legs.
 - **Breathing out,** relax your shoulders down away from your ears.

NOTE *As students feel balanced and strong, guide them to raise their shins so that they are parallel with the earth keeping their spines and heads straight. Bring attention to their presence in this posture. If it feels too difficult, cue them to bring their toes down toward the mat.*

6. Exhale: Release the pose, transitioning back to seated.

NOTE *If students would like a challenge, suggest starting to straighten the legs while keeping the heart lifted and arms extended forward.*

Closing Sequence (UNIT 1, LESSON 1)

Guide students through the sequence.

Laughing Lion

Create laughing lions with the class. Ask volunteers to demonstrate a deep belly laugh, a funny laugh, etc. After each volunteer demonstrates, have the students take a deep breath as they would for Lion's Breath, and on the exhalation, copy the laugh that was just demonstrated.

NOTE *If students seem reluctant, you could have the whole class laugh at the same time instead of copying individual volunteers.*



REST AND REFLECTION / 5 mins

As you wrap up the Laughing Lions activity, in the seated or kneeling position, have students place hands on their Anchors in Easy pose. Tell students:

- *Notice what laughter feels like in your body. Does it feel light? Does it feel warm? What other feelings do you notice in the body?*

Ring the bell and instruct them to let their laughter transition to silence as the sound of the bell shifts to silence.

Guide students through the following silent reflection as they continue to sit with hands on their Anchors. Give some time for students to reflect on each question silently. Optionally, have them write down their reflections in their journals afterward.

- *Focus your attention inward on your body.*
- *What does your body feel like after all the laughing we've done today?*
- *What types of thoughts or images are running through your mind?*
- *What emotion word describes how you feel right now?*

Invite students to lie down for Rest.

If students need help settling down after all the laughing, lead a few Letting-Go Breaths. Encourage students to focus on their breath if the mind is restless and wandering.

Allow one to two minutes of Rest.

Invite students to share their reflections with the group or in their journals.

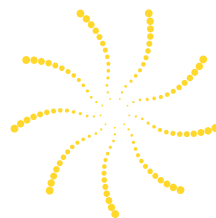
TAKE-HOME PRACTICE

- *Spend some time at home practicing one of the Best Self Strategies you've chosen for responding to stress. Notice how you feel before and after.*



Lesson 6

READY, SET, GOAL



Goal Statement

Students will explore how they can use goal-setting to learn and grow and will partner with a classmate to both create and work toward a specific goal.

Essential Question

How can goal setting help me to feel like my best self?

“I Can” Statement

I can state and explain one personal goal.

Key Learning Objectives

Students will know...

- Setting and working toward goals can help them learn and grow.
- Learning and growing healthy habits can help them to feel like their best selves.

Students will be able to...

- Set personal goals.
- Create plans to work toward their goals.

Materials

- Several hoops or makeshift targets/goals (Can be an X on the wall or floor, or even real basketball goals, if a gym is available)
- Beanbags, balls, or other objects to shoot at/in the targets/goals
- Written goal statement (on board or chart paper)
- Goals for Growth worksheet
- Pencils

Preparation/Setup

- Decide on student partners with respect to the goal coaching.
- Choose objects and goals and set up the space accordingly.
- Preload or hang a Goals for Growth worksheet.
- Print one copy per student of the Goals for Growth worksheet.
- Set out pencils.

New Mindful Movements

Poses

None

Sequences

None

Mindful Moments

Calming and Focusing

Check-In

Letting-Go Breath

Lion's Breath

Kind Mind (for Self)

Rest and Reflection

New Vocabulary

Goal

Habit

Strategy

Partner

CALMING AND FOCUSING / 2 mins

Begin every lesson with Calming and Focusing practices described in the PRACTICE GUIDE.

- **Calming:** Lead students in taking three deep mindful breaths, using the cues and modeling as described in the PRACTICE GUIDE.
- **Focusing:** Lead students in a Mindful Listening activity to practice focusing their attention on the sound of a chime using the cues as described in the PRACTICE GUIDE.

AIM HIGH / 12 mins

Point out the baskets/targets for students to shoot or throw a beanbag, paper wad, etc., into. (If you are in a gym, you can use basketballs and goals.) Then have students get into pairs.

Tell students that one person will set a goal for themselves and practice throwing the beanbag, paper wad, etc. The other will be the coach and keep count (and time if desired). Briefly have students share what coaches can do to support their partner.

Tell students to choose a goal for how many times they can hit their target within a set amount of time (e.g., five baskets in one minute or 20 baskets within three minutes). If they complete their goal within that time, they can set a new goal and continue practicing. Give students about three minutes each to practice and attempt to reach their goal(s).

To focus on the purposes of goal setting, debrief the activity by asking questions such as:

-
- ***Did anyone choose a goal that they were able to complete on the first try? Did you feel like you learned or grew your skill? If you had to choose a goal now, what would you choose? Why?***
 - ***Did anyone choose a goal that they were never able to complete? How did you and your partner spend your time? Did you feel like you improved? What do you think would help you reach your goal?*** [Answer: practice, focus, coaching, being kind to ourselves.]
 - ***What if you set a goal, you practiced every day, and you still felt like you were never going to reach that goal? How would that feel? Would it mean you failed? What could you do?*** **NOTE** Make sure to mention setting a more attainable goal or a series of smaller steps toward the goal to make it manageable.
 - ***How can cultivating a growth mindset be helpful in reaching a goal?***
-

SUMMARIZE FOR STUDENTS:

- *Setting and working toward a goal can help us learn and grow new skills.*
- *Identifying small steps can make a goal manageable.*
- *Regular practice helps us learn and grow toward a goal.*

GOALS FOR GROWTH / 10 mins

Remind students that they have been learning and practicing lots of strategies for being their best selves. Introduce the idea of setting personal goals as another Best Self Strategy and explain that setting and working toward a goal can be a really powerful strategy to help them learn new things or grow their skills.

Explain to students that they are going to set a personal goal to build a healthy habit with one of the Best Self Strategies they've identified during this unit. Suggest using one of the three they chose in the last lesson, but allow them to choose something different if desired. Students can work with a partner and check in with each other on how they are progressing. Project the following goal statements and go over the examples as necessary. Let students know it is okay to modify the statements some.

- *The Best Self Strategy I would like to grow into a healthy habit is _____.*
- *My goal is to practice this strategy _____ times per week.*
- *What I will do: _____.*
- *Where I will do it: _____.*
- *When I will do it: _____.*
- *My partner can help me by _____.*

Examples

- *The Best Self Strategy I would like to grow into a healthy habit is exercising. My goal is to do this three times per week. I will run around at school during recess. My partner can help me by running with me during recess.*
- *The Best Self Strategy I would like to grow into a healthy habit is breathing to feel calm. My goal is to do this five times per week. I will do 10 Letting-Go Breaths or 10 Cooling Breaths at home before bedtime. My partner can help me by asking me if I did my breathing when they see me in the morning.*

- *The Best Self Strategy I would like to grow into a healthy habit is asking for help with my stress. My goal is to do this three times per week. I will talk with my mom at home before dinner about what I need to get done and why things feel stressful to me. My partner can help me by reminding me on the bus.*

After going over the goal statements and examples, give students Goals for Growth worksheet and have them discuss and write goal statements with their partners. Consider having a few students share their goals with the class. (Collect students' goal statements so they can be used in the next class session.)

SUMMARIZE FOR STUDENTS:

- *Setting and working toward a goal can help us learn and grow healthy habits.*
- *Learning and growing healthy habits can help us to feel like our best selves.*



MINDFUL MOVEMENT / 18 mins

Guide students to sit in Easy pose and reflect silently for a moment on the qualities of a good coach:

- ***How will you treat yourself when you coach yourself toward your goal?***
- ***How will you treat your partner when you support them?***
- ***What role does compassion play in coaching yourself or someone else toward a goal?***

Offer students an opportunity to share their reflections and/or write them down in their journals. Tell them that during Mindful Movement they will be challenged to hold the poses a bit longer, and they can practice coaching themselves with care and compassion as they do so.

Mountain/Check-In (UNIT 1, LESSON 1)

Invite students to stand in Mountain pose and check in with how their bodies are feeling in the present moment. Have them notice if any feelings (e.g., excitement, nervousness) arose from their goal-setting activity or from the thought of holding poses for a longer period of time.

Tell students:

- *Notice whatever feelings or thoughts come up, reminding yourself that it is okay to feel this way no matter what emotion you are experiencing.*

Letting-Go Breath (UNIT 3, LESSON 5)

Guide students in practicing the breath three times. Tell them:

- *Practice letting go of any worries, stress, or judgment about yourself as you breathe out.*

Fresh Start Sequence (UNIT 1, LESSON 3)

As you guide students through this sequence, have them hold each pose for a few or more breaths.

Let students know that especially during Dog pose, they should practice listening to their body and come down to their knees or Child's pose to rest if they need to. Remind them that every day is different and it is okay to be gentle with themselves.

Pointing Dog (UNIT 3, LESSON 5)

Hold the pose longer on each side to make it more of a challenge for the students. Remind students to notice how they feel while doing this pose.

Remind students that in the last class they added "Have a sense of humor" to their Balance Coaching Tips. Ask students to share what they think this means, cultivating the understanding that they need to bring gentleness and kindness to the pose.

Tell students:

- *If we are wobbly and falling out of the pose, having a sense of humor about it reminds us that this is okay. We don't need to be harsh or critical of ourselves or push too hard. We can always try again, with self-compassion and a smile.*

Let’s Reflect!

After completing the practice of this pose, ask students to explore how the “Have a sense of humor” Balance Coaching Tip can apply to self-coaching while working toward other goals, not just balancing their bodies. Continue discussing by asking if/how each of the other Balance Coaching Tips could be rephrased or applied to self-coaching in other situations.

Superhero Sequence (UNIT 3, LESSON 5)

Guide students through the sequence, holding each pose for longer than usual.

Boat (UNIT 3, LESSON 5)

Guide students through this pose.

> **OPTIONAL:** Suggest students silently set a goal for themselves in this pose. For example:

- 1. Straighten one leg up.
- 2. Straighten both legs up for three seconds.
- 3. Hold the pose with bent legs up for three to five breaths.
- 4. Keep the heart lifted.

Let them know that this goal is for themselves only; there is no need to share it with anyone else. Allow students to practice the pose. Invite them to silently coach themselves through the pose. Remind them to breathe!

When students have finished, have them take a few breaths and tell them:

- *Notice how you feel about how you did in this pose. Whether you accomplished your goal or not doesn’t matter—what matters is that you did the practice and you put in the effort!*

Lion’s Breath (UNIT 3, LESSON 5)

Guide students through this practice and ask if they’re able to release any remaining tension, worry, or stress through the Lion’s Breath.

TEACHING TIP



Model setting an unattainable goal and show students how you can use humor and kindness with yourself as a way to respond to your inability to achieve the goal and to help yourself be resilient. Remind them to stay light-hearted and kind to themselves, set a more realistic goal, and give it a go!



REST AND REFLECTION / 5 mins

Kind Mind (for Self)

Introduce students to the Kind Mind practice:

- *Have you ever had a goal that you didn't quite reach? We can be pretty hard on ourselves sometimes, so it's important to remember to be kind to ourselves while we are working toward a goal just like we would be kind to a friend. Let's try a kind mind practice today to train our minds to be kind to ourselves. Remember that an important part of being our best selves is showing care and compassion to ourselves.*

Guide students to find a comfortable position for Rest, seated or lying down. Begin by having students take a few calming breaths. Use the following script as reference:

- *Imagine a time when someone was very kind to you.*
- *Call to mind what it felt like to receive that kindness. Take a few breaths and focus on that feeling of receiving care and kindness.*
- *Now imagine a time when you showed care and kindness to someone who needed it.*
- *Remember what it feels like to experience caring and kindness for someone in need.*
- *Now we will practice giving ourselves caring and kindness. I will say a kind thought, and then you repeat it out loud once, and then repeat it again silently in your mind several times.*

Between offering each thought, have students take a few deep breaths and feel the kind thought sinking in. Have them repeat the phrases silently to themselves:

May I be healthy and strong.

I hope I experience joy and have fun.

I hope I feel peace of mind.

May I feel relief from stress.

May I show myself kindness today.

Allow one to two minutes of Rest.

Reflection

Ask students how it feels to offer kind thoughts to themselves, even silently. Ask if this could be useful when they feel stressed. Allow students to share and/or record their thoughts in their journals if desired.

NOTE *If some students felt awkward or found the practice difficult, remind them that it is okay to feel that way. Explain that unfortunately they might be so in the habit of saying harsh or critical things to themselves that being kind to themselves feels like a challenge but that they may become more comfortable with practice.*

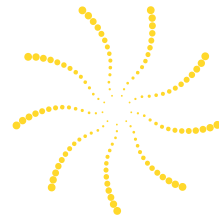
TAKE-HOME PRACTICE

- *GET GOALING! Share your goal with a family member and take a first step toward reaching your goal.*



Lesson 7

THE POWER YOU HOLD



Goal Statement

Students will review the ways they have the power to be their best selves. They will work with a partner to create a plan to make progress toward their healthy habit goal.

Essential Question

How can I be my best self?

“I Can” Statement

I can make a plan to progress toward my healthy habit goal.

Key Learning Objectives

Students will know...

- They have the power to pause when distractions, emotions, or stress make it difficult to feel like their best self.
- They can pause to savor positive experiences.
- They have the power to build healthy habits.
- They have the power to show themselves kindness and compassion.

Students will be able to...

- Create a plan for making progress toward a goal.
- Practice savoring a positive experience.

Materials

- Written goal statements from students
- Goals for Growth worksheet
- Pencils
- Balance Coaching Tips poster

Preparation/Setup

- Hang the Balance Coaching Tips poster.
- Print 1 copy of the Goals for Growth worksheet per student.
- Set out pencils.

New Mindful Movements

Poses

None

Sequences

None

Mindful Moments

Calming and Focusing
Pausing for the Positive
Check-In
Breath of Joy
Kind Mind (for Self)
Rest and Reflection

New Vocabulary

Tracking

CALMING AND FOCUSING / 2 mins

Begin every lesson with Calming and Focusing practices described in the PRACTICE GUIDE.

- **Calming:** Lead students in taking three deep mindful breaths, using the cues and modeling as described in the PRACTICE GUIDE.
- **Focusing:** Lead students in a Mindful Listening activity to practice focusing their attention on the sound of a chime using the cues as described in the PRACTICE GUIDE.

THE POWER TO BUILD HEALTHY HABITS / 10 mins

Tell students:

- *In our last unit, we spent time getting to know ourselves better, and in this unit, we've spent a lot of time focusing on the skills we can grow to be our best selves. When you know yourself and you practice learning and growing your skills, you have the power to be your best self. You have the power to build healthy habits. You have the power to pause. You have the power to show kindness and compassion. Today, as we wrap up this unit, we're going to focus on the power you have.*

Invite students to reflect and contribute their ideas about other powers they hold. Record and display a list for the class of the powers they hold, referencing and adding to it in future discussions.

- *You have the power to grow healthy habits. Setting and working toward a goal is one way you can do that. Today we will return to the goals you set in the last class.*

Have students pair with their goal partners (from Lesson 6) and bring their Goals for Growth worksheets with them. Provide them with Goals for Growth worksheet. Ask students to do a Q&A with their partners to help determine what they will do today and tomorrow toward meeting their goals. (Circulate to see if there are any questions about the tracking sheet.)

-
- ***When will you find time to _____ today? Tomorrow?***
 - ***What will you do if you get off track?***
 - ***How can you continue working toward this goal after today and tomorrow?***
 - ***What are some roadblocks that might get in your way? How will you deal with those when they show up?***
-

Debrief with students, inviting several students to share their plans. Ask questions such as:

TEACHING TIP

Be sure to continue monitoring students' progress by having them check in during classes over the next several weeks. Creating a way to record and display individual and/or class progress over time is recommended. This will help keep students excited about their goals, and it will communicate the importance of practice and perseverance.

- *What are some roadblocks that might get in your way and how will you deal with them?*
- *What if you get really off track with your goal? How can you respond like a good coach?* **NOTE** Emphasize treating themselves with kindness and encouragement rather than criticism and changing their goal to make it more attainable if necessary.

SUMMARIZE FOR STUDENTS:

- *Setting and working toward goals can help us learn and grow.*
- *When we get off track with a goal, we can return to it with kindness and compassion.*

THE POWER TO PAUSE / 15 mins

Review with students examples of times that are difficult to be their best selves, using examples from the unit. Create a list, making sure to include:

- *When they are hard on themselves or have a fixed mindset (Lesson 1)*
- *When they are distracted (Lesson 2)*
- *When they experience intense emotions (Lesson 3)*
- *When they are experiencing a lot of stress (Lesson 4)*
- *Other examples generated by students (e.g., when they are not feeling well physically)*

The Power to Pause

Guide students in understanding that during all of these times, they have the power to pause. Ask questions such as:

- *What does it mean that you have the power to pause?*
- *What happens when we don't pause?* [Answers: We don't notice what's happening/what we're doing; we act or speak without thinking; we get distracted from our purpose; our emotions or stress might escalate, etc.]
- *What can you do when you pause?* [Answer: Do a Check-In; notice how we are feeling; ask ourselves what we need; decide to use a Best Self Strategy, etc.]
- *What if you pause and you don't know what you need? Or you pause and use a strategy but you still feel stressed (or have an emotion hanging around after it's already given you its message)?* **NOTE** Emphasize that they also have the power to ask for help when they need it.

Invite several students to lead one of their favorite Best Self Strategies that they have learned in this class. Ask each to share how this strategy is helpful for them.

The Power to Pause for the Positive

Tell students:

- *Don't forget that you also have the power to pause when you DO feel like your best self.*
- *Do you remember a word from Unit 2 that means to take in or pay attention to pleasant experiences? [Answer: Savor]*
- *What are some positive experiences that you can pause to savor? [Generate a list with students of positive experiences to pause and savor such as when they learn something new; when they feel joy; when someone does something kind; when they are proud of themselves; when they achieve a goal.]*
- *Let's take a moment to practice pausing for the positive. Place your hands on your Anchors, and close your eyes if that is comfortable for you, or look down and rest your eyes on one spot.*
- *Bring to mind a time when you were successful—when you did well in a performance or a sport or when you mastered something you had been trying hard to learn or when you did something else that you were proud of. [Give students a few moments to bring a memory to mind.]*
- *Notice as much as you can as you remember this experience.*
- *Where are you? What can you see and hear?*
- *Now focus your attention on what it feels like in this memory. What emotions come up for you? Do you feel joy? Pride? Excitement?*
- *Breathe in and out and savor this positive memory. Imagine soaking in those positive feelings with each breath. [Give students a few moments to breathe and savor the memory.]*
- *Now bring to mind the goal you set for yourself in this class. Imagine yourself a little bit in the future, working toward your goal, and then achieving your goal. What will it look like when you achieve the goal you set? How does it feel? Do you feel any joy? Pride? Excitement? Do you feel stronger? Healthier? Breathe in and out and savor those positive feelings as you picture yourself experiencing this success. [Give students a few moments to breathe and savor the feelings.]*
- *Now release that image and just breathe. Check in with yourself. How did that practice feel for you? Open your eyes.*

Invite students to share about their experience of pausing for the positive. Remind them that they have the power to pause for a moment to savor a positive experience right in the moment it happens.

SUMMARIZE FOR STUDENTS:

- *We have the power to pause when distractions, emotions, or stress make it difficult to feel like our best selves.*
- *Pausing can help us respond mindfully to our thoughts and feelings.*
- *We can pause to savor positive experiences.*



MINDFUL MOVEMENT / 15 mins

Tell students:

- ***When we practice Mindful Movement, we are practicing our power to build healthy habits, our power to pause, and our power to show our minds and bodies kindness and compassion.***

Mountain/Check-In (UNIT 1, LESSON 1)

Guide students to stand in Mountain pose and tell them:

- ***Let's use our power to pause for a moment and check in with ourselves. How is your body feeling today? How is your mind? What parts of you feel powerful today? What parts of you need some extra kindness or compassion?***

Mountain/Sunrise (UNIT 2, LESSON 1)

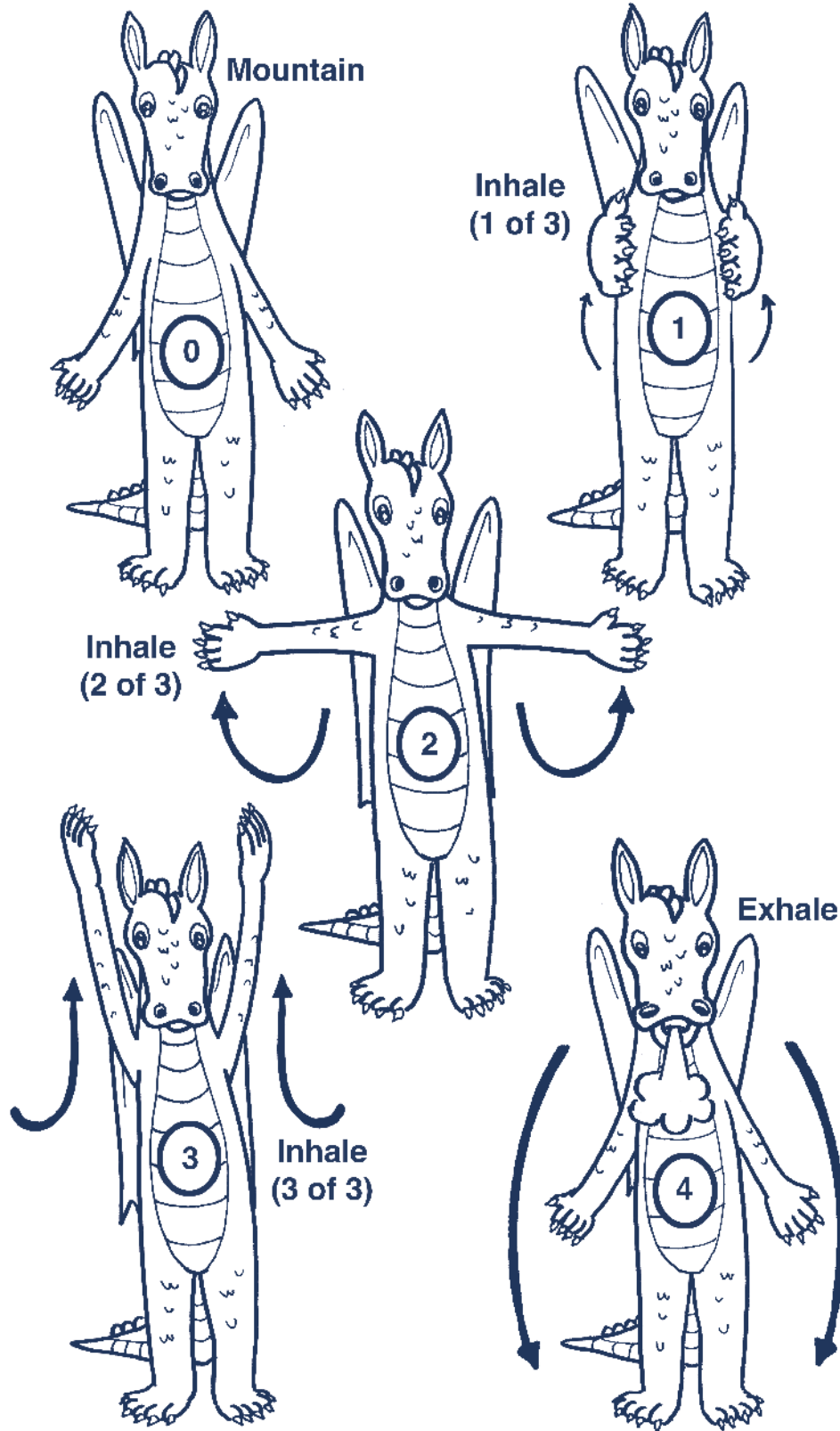
Guide students through this mini-sequence.

Breath of Joy

Tell students:

- ***We have learned a lot of breathing practices so far. Who can name a few? Many of those have been breathing practices to help us feel***

BREATH OF JOY



calm, focused, or relaxed, or to release strong emotions or stress. Today we are going to learn and practice a new one that can help us to feel more energized or even lift our moods.

- *For Breath of Joy, first you'll take three short breaths in, and then you'll take one long breath out. Try breathing in through your nose and out through your mouth.*
- *Begin by standing comfortable with arms at your sides in Mountain pose.*
- *As you take a short breath in, extend your arms straight out in front of you so they're parallel to the floor.*
- *Without exhaling, take another short breath in as you swing your arms down in front of you and then out to your sides.*
- *Inhale for a third time as you swing your arms up over your head.*
- *Now breathe out as you bend at your hips into a standing forward fold.*
- *Gently return to Mountain pose. Check in with your body to see if you notice any changes.*

Repeat this exercise several times if desired. Then tell students:

- *Place your hands on your Anchors and check in. Notice how this breathing practice feels in your body and mind. Has it increased your heart rate, helped you wake up a little, or maybe even brought a smile to your face?*

Invite students to share answers to questions such as:

-
- *How did the practice feel for your mind and body?*
 - *Can you think of any situations where this strategy could help you feel more like your best self?*
-

Around the World: Fresh Start Sequence (UNIT 1, LESSON 3)

If possible, arrange students in a large circle for this activity. It will also work in rows.

Lead students through the sequence once, focusing on alignment.

Now ask students to take turns leading each pose one at a time, going around the circle or up and down the rows. Do this until they have completed three to five full sequences.

Creative Balance

Stay in the circle arrangement, if possible.

Ask students to name the Balance Coaching Tips for review.

Start a round of the Fresh Start Sequence, asking students to lead the pose one at a time, going around the circle or up and down rows. Give students the challenge to transform any of the poses they can into balancing poses. For example, they might lead Mountain on one foot or on tiptoe.

After going through a couple of rounds of the Fresh Start Sequence, give students the freedom to lead any pose they want to, keeping the challenge to turn the poses into balance poses.



REST AND REFLECTION / 8 mins

Guide students to find a position that feels safe and comfortable for Rest.

The Power to Show Yourself Kindness and Compassion

Tell students:

- *Remember that the most important part of being your best self is showing care and compassion to yourself and others. You have the power to be kind to yourself. You have the power to show yourself care and compassion. Only you have the power to teach the voice inside your own mind to be kind and caring. You can notice when that voice is being unkind or critical and you can practice teaching that voice to be kind and compassionate. Let's end this unit with a Kind Mind practice to show ourselves care and compassion.*

Kind Mind (for Self) (UNIT 3, LESSON 6)

Guide students through the Kind Mind (for Self) practice from Lesson 6. Then allow one to two minutes of Rest.

Invite students to share what they've learned in this unit as a group or in their journals.

- *What skills are you growing? How do you have the power to be your best self?*

TAKE-HOME PRACTICE

- *Keep Goaling: Keep working toward your goal! Track your progress. If you get off track, be kind to yourself.*

Lesson Extensions

Wellness Coach

Lessons 1–2

Invite students to imagine their new job is to be a younger student's wellness coach. Lead a group discussion or journaling activity, reflecting on what it might look like to be a wellness coach. Use questions such as the following to guide their thinking:

- *Think of the skills you've been learning in this class. What skill would you share with a younger student to help them be happy and healthy?*
- *How would you encourage them to practice? Be specific about what the practice would look like, where it would happen, and how often.*
- *How would you make it fun to grow this new skill?*
- *How would you encourage them to practice and to have a growth mindset?*

Emotional Escalator Art

Lesson 3

Provide drawing materials. Guide students to think of one difficult emotion that someone their age might face, e.g., feeling anxious, worried, angry, disappointed, or frustrated. Tell students they will create an infographic that might help kids their age know some helpful strategies to use when they feel a difficult emotion.

First, they will draw a simple outline of an escalator or stairs. (Invite creativity if learners have other ideas about how they would like to depict their infographic.) At the top, they will draw a person or face to represent a difficult emotion, and at the bottom they will draw the person or face feeling more calm or relaxed. They can also add an in-between face at the middle of the escalator if they choose. Along the steps of the escalator, they will add a few strategies they think might help the person respond to the difficult emotion in order to feel more calm or relaxed.

Invite students to share and have others contribute their own ideas for strategies that might be helpful. Be sure to remind students that it is okay to feel difficult emotions, and that no emotions are bad or wrong. If not mentioned, suggest strategies like asking for help or talking to a trusted adult.

Tuning Tension

Lesson 4

Explore the concepts of tension and stress by investigating tension in one or more musical instruments. Use one or more instruments or accessories that depend on tension for pitch and playing, such as a guitar or other stringed instrument, a violin bow, or a drum head. Demonstrate the role of tension in the musical instruments. For example, tune one of the guitar strings while plucking it, play the violin before and after tightening the bow, or tap the drum before or after pulling the drumhead tighter. Then, ask students to reflect on what is happening in the tuning/tightening process. If no one names it, introduce the concept of increasing tension. Discuss how tension affects the instruments, and what the effects are of too little, enough, and too much tension. Help students make a connection between tension and stress, and discuss what the effects of varying levels of tension/stress are in people.

Best Self Science

Lesson 5

Lead students in researching the science of the Best Self Strategies you've discussed in class. Encourage learners to use the resources available to them in the library to identify whether there is evidence for benefits of strategies like deep breathing, exercise, rest, walking in nature, spending time with friends and family, relaxation, laughter, etc.

Involve student choice in determining how you would like them to share the information they find.

Scaffold this process according to the readiness of your learners. For example, consider their readiness to find information independently vs. providing resources that you have selected.

Consider involving your library specialist as a resource.

Kind Mind Messages

Lesson 6

After students have been introduced to the Kind Mind practice, lead a brainstorm about kind words to say to yourself. If this is difficult, have students imagine kind words they might share with a friend if that person was struggling with a difficult experience. As you guide the discussion, make sure to include some phrases that reflect intentions of health, wellbeing, peace, happiness, strength, growth, etc. Phrase these messages in the first person, as intentions or hopes (e.g., I hope I grow a little everyday; May I have moments of peace and calm; I will not forget how strong I am!). Provide materials for students to record and display the kind words generated by the class on a poster or in some other creative way. Consider including some of these student-generated phrases in future Kind Mind practices.

Powerful Reminders

Lesson 7

Lead students in creating Powerful Reminder Cards. Provide index cards or strips of card stock the size of bookmarks. Guide students to think of specific ways they can practice the powers they discussed in Lesson 7: 1) the power to be your best self, 2) the power to build healthy habits, 3) the power to pause, and 4) the power to show kindness and compassion to themselves and others. Provide examples to support understanding. Then have students record one way they would like to use to remember to practice each of these four powers on their reminder card. Invite learners to share ideas of where they might keep this Powerful Reminder Card so that they will see it frequently.

Compassion Board

Continued from previous unit

Create a bulletin board in your classroom to record acts of kindness, caring, and compassion spotted by you or your students. Encourage students to be compassion detectives, noticing the kind words and actions they see around them. This can also be done using an online whiteboard. Continue adding to this board throughout the year.